

Erasmus University

Master's in International Public Management
and Public Policy

*Topic: Effect of Securitization on militarization and defence policies through
the case study of the South China Sea Dispute*

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Abstract

Securitization is considered as both a widely powerful explanatory theory on critical security studies and a widely contested framework. The small amount of research on the actual concrete consequences of this theory on security matters pushed for this study. This thesis aims at analysing the effect of successful securitization on the defence and militarization policies of a nation. To do so, the case study of the South China Sea dispute will be analysed through three different claimant countries. The study uses the covariational method of analysis to find the relationship between securitization and the defence policies. This method of analysis led us to choose 3 claimant countries which are Vietnam, the Philippines and Malaysia due to their respective differences in securitizing the South China Sea dispute while having the lowest differences in the control variables. The different level of securitization will be analysed through a speech analysis of local media articles which reflects the government's position and speeches. The effect on the defence policies will be analysed through a triangulation of primary and secondary sources such as speeches, articles and official government policy papers. The speech analysis combined with the covariational analysis revealed the correlation between higher securitization and higher militarization policies accompanied by a higher defence budget as expected. This relationship seems to be accentuated or attenuated through the different regime types that a nation belongs to ranging from authoritarian to democratic. The findings enabled for a better comprehension of possible correlation between securitization and defence. This is a first step into knowing more about the effect of securitization in other policy areas.

List of Abbreviations

- ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations)
- COC (Code of Conduct)
- DOC (Declaration of Conduct)
- EEZ (Exclusive Economic Zones)
- FONOPs (Freedom of Navigation Operations)
- GDP (Gross Domestic Product)
- MDT (Mutual Defence Treaty)
- PLAN (People's Liberation Army Navy)
- PRC (People's Republic of China)
- SCS (South China Sea)
- SLOC (Sea Lane of Communication)
- UNCLOS (United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea)
- VFA (Visiting Forces Agreement)

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Chapter 1- Introduction

The Securitization theory of the Copenhagen school created by Barry Buzan and Ole Weaver is considered to be a breakthrough research in contemporary critical security studies as it provides a powerful explanation on key decision-making process but is also widely controversial for various reasons (Williams, 2003). The supporter of this school of thought considers it to be “the most thorough and continuous exploration of the significance and implications of a widening security agenda for security studies” (Huymans, 1997, p.186). Securitization can be defined as the way through which certain threats are framed and constructed as an existential threat to the survival of the state which then paves the way for governments to take measures without the consent of its domestic population (Buzan et al, 1998). This research will look into the effects of securitization on the military and alliance policies of a nation using the case of the South China Sea (SCS) dispute. We are interested to find out through this study whether the arms race of the region is partly due to the securitization discourse of the SCS dispute.

The 3.5 million square kilometres of the South China Sea (SCS) with a land surface of solely 15 square km has become one of the most strategically important maritime disputes of the 21st century (Kim, 2016). The People’s Republic of China (PRC) claims over 80% of this ocean patch with over 200 islands, coral reefs and lagoons located in between the coasts of The Philippines, Vietnam, Malaysia, Brunei and Taiwan who are all claimant countries to parts of the SCS (Fels& Vu, 2016). This dispute has the potential to lead to a political and military conflict of international scale if not handled carefully (Fels& Vu, 2016). Gregory Poling of the Centre for Strategic and International Studies sums up the situation in the following way; “*the South China Sea is the site of one of the globe’s most contentious, and probably its most complicated, sovereignty disputes.*” (Poling, 2013, p.1).

The complexity of this dispute stems from several underlying factors of high strategic importance. The SCS is one of the busiest maritime trade shipping routes which accounts to more than 33% of global trade to a cumulative amount of \$5.3 trillion passing through these waters including \$1.2 trillion in trade solely with the United States which thus makes this route primordial for the global economic stability (Ohnesorge, 2016). As this maritime economic trade route of the Asia-Pacific links several parts of the globe together, it is in the interests of the claimant countries to control these waters for its regional growth (Ohnesorge, 2016). This strategic factor also brings several non-claimant actors such as Japan and South Korea directly to the discussion as it is a maritime highway responsible for the quasi totality of these countries’ exports and vital imports in resources such as gas and oil for the country’s survival (Sakaki, 2016).

The vast amount of natural resources that are present under the SCS is another factor of international tension over the sovereignty of the region. There is a consensus on the importance of oil and gas reserve under the seabed of the SCS, however, the exact amount is unclear at this point. The Chinese National Offshore Corporation published a report in 2012 that states the SCS contains more or less 17 billion tonnes of oil and up to 14 trillion cubic meters of natural gas (Yamaguchi, 2016). China's exponential rise in economic power further increases its claim to these waters as China seeks to be strategically autonomous for its energy consumption without over relying on middle eastern countries for its continued development (Ibid). Each claimant countries are aware of the potential resources under the SCS which naturally reinforces their claims.

The SCS is also home to around 12% of the global fish catches and it is estimated that over 50% of the world's fishing vessels are operating in these areas (Poling, 2019). This adds another layer of complexity towards the dispute as several million people from the coastal claimant countries directly depend on the fishing industry and a greater number are indirectly affected by it (Poling, 2019). This dimension of the dispute adds the pressure from the domestic society in each claimant countries into the equation further complicating any discussions towards a peaceful resolution. The Centre for Strategic and International Studies analysed 45 major incidents in the SCS between 2010-2016 and concluded that 71% of the incidents involved fishing vessels in altercations with the Chinese Coast Guard ships (Zhang & Bateman, 2017).

China has shown to have "securitized" the topic of the SCS dispute by using a discourse of "indisputable sovereignty" and thus framing the issue as a matter of core national interest for its survival (Odeyemi, 2015). The Copenhagen school of securitization refers to "the positioning through speech acts of a particular issue as a threat to survival, which in turn enables emergency measures and the suspension of normal politics in dealing with that issue" (Zhang & Bateman, 2017, p.302). The way an issue is solved follows new sets of principles once the issue is securitized. For instance, securitized issues are treated with greater priority and is framed under a nationalistic discourse which can thus be solved outside the frame of democracy and legality (Kivimäki, 2016). The securitization discourse of the SCS by China seems to have started a network effect of securitization by the other claimant countries and increased the tension in the area.

There is a vast amount of literature on securitization, but its concrete effect and consequences has yet to be studied in great numbers. The different countries involved in the SCS dispute has had different securitization strategies. Securitization can have different consequences that not always concern an increase in military spending or militarization. There are some circumstances when securitization is used in the aftermath of an event that allows the government to implement controversial policies with ease (Eroukhmanoff, 2018). For example, on the aftermath of the Paris terror attacks in 2015, the French President Francois Hollande issued a state of emergency that gave French security

forces controversial powers (Ibid). It also allowed the government to conduct air strikes and declare war by putting the issue out of the realm of normal politics. Other examples of securitization can consist of Hungary securitizing immigrants as an existential threat to the nation in order to close its borders. Depending on the scope and nature of the securitized topic, the actions may differ greatly.

The goal of this thesis is to prove empirically that the SCS dispute is being increasingly securitized and that this influences defense policies in the region which fundamentally makes it more difficult to achieve a peaceful and durable solution. The following research question will thus be answered; ***What is the effect of securitization on the claimant's defence policies?*** With the following sub question; *To what extent is the SCS dispute being securitized in the first place by the claimant countries and what are the consequences for their defense policies?*

This study will be presented through 6 different sections. After looking at the societal and theoretical relevance of the research in Chapter 1, the securitization framework will be looked at along with the different previous studies on securitization in the SCS in the literature review section of Chapter 2. The different theories that the study will be using to provide guidance on the expectations will be presented in the theoretical framework section of Chapter 3. Chapter 4 will present a brief case study of the situation in the SCS with the position of the different parties involved followed by the research design and methodology which will be used. This section will also present the operationalization of the different variables and the selection of cases. Chapter 5 consists of our analysis, the results of the speech analysis and its relationship with the defense policies will be presented. Then follows the discussion in which the three case studies will be compared and related back to the theories with the concluding remarks and limitations of the study in Chapter 6.

1.1- Societal and Theoretical relevance of the research

According to Lehnert et al ' *socially relevant research furthers the understanding of social and political phenomena which affect people and make a difference with regards with explicitly specified evaluative standards*' (Lehnert et al, 2007, p.27). Simplifying this definition gives us "a topic that citizens and policymakers care about or might care about" (Lehnert et al, 2007, p.26). The growing influence of China in the current interdependent globalized economy makes it an important actor for whole of society. As mentioned above, the economic importance of this region in terms of trade with more than \$5 trillion in goods passing through these waters makes it a vital region for the global economy (Ohnesorge, 2016). The international community simply cannot afford this dispute to end violently. Furthermore, as the SCS is considered to be a critical Sea Lane of Communication (SLOC) for the world, it is even more primordial to ensure its stability (Garcia & Breslin, 2016). This research aiming at explaining the effect of securitization on defence policies will also help shed light on the current tension and can thus provide an insight on what must be done to promote development and

peaceful discourse between the concerned parties. As the US is indirectly involved as one of the non-claimant actors by maintaining its presence in Asia to protect its allies and is in its national interest to maintain the freedom of navigation in the SCS, it is in everyone's interest to avoid a conflict that would involve two military superpowers (Regilme, 2018). Furthermore, this research may have further implications for the claimant country's civil society as to understand the reasoning behind the government policies better.

A research is said to be theoretically relevant if it is able to "contribute to the specific scientific discourse and to the advancement of the knowledge produced by it" (Lehnert et.al, 2017, p.25). The literature on the SCS dispute is vast and covers several different areas of this complex maritime dispute. Whereas many literatures on the topic is descriptive in nature, there exists an abundance of articles which analyses the dispute from an international relations theoretical perspective such as realism or liberalism. A growing literature takes the example of the SCS dispute to assert the theory of the global power Shift from the US towards China. To date, very little research has been conducted on the securitization of the SCS and its effect of the dispute compared to the other theories. The use of the Copenhagen school of securitization theory in this dispute from the perspectives of China and the claimant actors has yet to be studied in depth. This research could thus contribute to the specific scientific discourse by providing an empirical example of the effect of securitization in a conflict which results in applying a theory to a new empirical domain.

Chapter 2-Literature review

Securitization can be defined as the way through which certain threats are framed and constructed (Buzan et al, 1998). This process greatly relies on speech acts which moves politicized or non-politicized issue out of the public debate into the security realm by insisting on the sense of urgency/threat of the issue. In other words, successful securitization places issues beyond normal politics and beyond debate to make decision based on “impulse”. Thus, framing the issue as an existential threat paves the way for governments to take “extraordinary” measures in order to solve the issue (Ibid). These measures in other words refers to policies that otherwise would be subject to a high level of political contestation in democratic debates. There is a consensus amongst security scholars that securitization is fundamentally negative for decision making as it leads to faster and reckless decisions (Fischhendler, 2015). There is no general consensus among scholars concerning a list of what securitization leads to since it is very case oriented.

One can distinguish between two main types of securitizations. Namely, strategic and tactical securitization. Strategic securitization concerns matter that affects the fundamental national security of a state such as its borders and sovereignty which thus leads to more resource and effort being used to solve the issue (Fischhendler, 2015). Tactical securitization on the other hand involves the process of low politics issues (such as fishing, oil extraction) being linked with the high politics of strategic matter such as sovereignty (Ibid). Furthermore, the ability to make a link between resource scarcity and strategic issues exponentially raises public awareness in favour of securitization (Ibid). In the example of the SCS dispute, we have again the combination of these two types of securitizations as the complexity of the various underlying reasons of the dispute is being used in the framing of the dispute by the different states. For example, all the claimant countries claim their “sovereignty” over the different islands and waters of the SCS making it a strategic issue. Furthermore, the issue of fishing rights and the presence of a large amount of natural resources makes it a tactical securitization as well.

There are various types of threats that a state can make use of to securitize their issue. Firstly, there is the military security threats which concern the “*physical integrity of the state*” (Williams, 2003). A second type of threat concerns the structural threat which arises when “*the organizing principles of two states cannot simply ignore each other’s existence thus playing a zero-sum game with each other*” (Williams, 2003, p.516). Lastly, there is the societal threat which concerns the identity from a state centric perspective. This last type of threat is considered to be very dangerous as a threatened state will prepare for the worst-case scenario and escalates the securitization to dangerous levels (Ibid). All 3 types of threats can be seen to some extent in the case study of the SCS dispute as the different claimant countries securitizes the threat from different perspectives. There are also multiple main drivers of

securitization, some of them concerns core values of a nation (Vuara, 2008). The role of core value in national security is extremely important as is mentioned in the following quote “*a nation is secure to the extent to which it is not in danger of having to sacrifice core values*” (Vuori, 2008, p.69). In this logic, securitization is the process to identify a threat to these core values in order to push policies to defend them (Ibid). Another important driver of securitization is resource scarcity (Fischhendler, 2015). The shortage of environmental resources can have important implications for the security of a state (Ibid).

As mentioned in the introduction, there is a relatively small amount of academic literature published on the securitization of the SCS compared to other aspects of the dispute. The article by Garcia and Breslin published on the *Journal of Asian Security and International Affairs* mentions the mutual securitization of claimant and non-claimant countries between each other. This article took a unique perspective by analysing the effect of securitization or desecuritization on policy directions from claimant and non-claimant countries between each other and towards China (Garcia & Breslin, 2016). This study focuses on the reaction of the different countries in the region towards China which is being increasingly securitized as it continues to assert its dominance in the SCS by militarizing its artificial islands and modernizing its military fleet (Ibid). The study also demonstrates the desecuritization processes of countries that were previously securitized by the claimant countries due to historical factors such as Japan that has now gained a more proactive political and military role in the SCS dispute through its alliance with Indonesia and the Philippines (Ibid). The desecuritization dynamics of Japan thus changed to some extent the security balance in favour of claimant countries against China. Furthermore, the non-securitized status of South Korea also enabled this country to join the discussion in favour of the claimant countries against China to provide a counterbalancing power to the dominant Chinese fleet (Ibid). This article argues that the increased securitized status of China by the claimant countries resulted in these smaller countries to push for strong alliances and proceed in the militarization of its own in the region to build capacity and credible defence to deter China from taking harsh actions. The study showed the securitization of a country through an analysis of speech acts and official government sources such as white papers and policy documents published in the respective ministry.

Zhang and Bateman took an interesting perspective on the securitization of the SCS dispute by looking at the Securitization of Fishery (Zhang & Bateman, 2017). There is an increasing presence of Chinese fisherman in the SCS sparking tension along the claimant countries which then led to the rise of the fishing militia narrative by the mainstream media as well as in academic literature. There have been several clashes between Chinese fishing vessels and claimant country’s vessels as well as coast guards which has created increased diplomatic tension on several occasions (Ibid). The article demonstrates that the fishing militia is used as one of the instruments of domestic policy in this dispute.

Using the Copenhagen School of securitization, it aims to analyse whether these militias are being securitized. Two types of securitizations have been distinguished in the area of resources and conflicts. The authors argue that this issue concerns tactical securitization as it occurs when “lower-level political issues such as fishing, are linked with the high political issues of national survival, such as war and peace, and territorial integrity and sovereignty” (Zhang & Bateman, 2017, p.302). It is said that the securitization of fishery legitimizes the presence of the United States through its Freedom of Navigation Operations (FONOPs) in the region thereby increasing the tensions with China. As this issue is highly securitized by governments and by the domestic opinion in which nationalism is rising considerably, it creates an obstacle to cooperation and trust which is fundamental towards the peacebuilding process of the region (Ibid).

Timo Kivimaki argues in his article that although securitization of the SCS disputes has been the dominant framework, there is a shift in which two other types of framing have emerged (Kivimaki, 2016). He argues that an economic framing which emphasizes on development at the expense of militarization is on the rise concerning this dispute. Furthermore, a legal approach is said to be developing at the expense of the militarization and securitization discourse (Ibid). The use of words such as sovereignty by the claimant’s states are still dominant in the current discourse which shows that securitization is still present. The author however demonstrates a shift towards these alternative frameworks through empirical examples such as the creation of the Declaration of Conduct (DOC) soon to be Code of Conduct (COC) by ASEAN or the increasing interdependencies of the region’s economy with China. The author compares the historical amount of violent and deadly clashes which occurred in the SCS since the 1960’s compared to the present day to demonstrate the decline in securitization (Ibid).

The literature review provided a general overview on securitization. We saw the definition of this framework along with the two main types of securitizations namely strategic and tactical. The different types of threats that securitization often arises along with its different drivers were then explained. The section is then followed by a review of literature on the securitization of the SCS that has been published. Garcia and Breslin has analysed the securitization and desecuritization chain of countries involved in the SCS and managed to explain the involvement of nations such as Japan in the equation due to its desecuritized nature. The article also argued that due to China’s aggressive stance and securitization discourse of its own, it pushed the claimant states to build up their capabilities. The article was not able to provide causation between securitization and the build-up of capacities due to the nature of its methodology. Zhang and Bateman studied the securitization of a specific aspect in the SCS dispute which is the fishery. It argues that China is increasing its fishing militia fleet in the SCS which resulted in its securitization by claimant actors such as Vietnam and the Philippines. The article does not provide the effect of this securitization in terms of government policies but came to the conclusion that the securitization of fisheries increased the tension with China. Timo Kivimaki analysed

the two-emerging framework of analysis in addition to the securitization framework. He argues that the economic and legal framework is increasing in importance and is slowly replacing the securitization discourse in the SCS. We have thus seen that there is a gap in the knowledge on the effect of securitization discourse from the claimant countries on the defense policies of the region.

Chapter 3-Theoretical Framework

This thesis will use the Securitization Framework to analyse its effect on national defence policies. We have seen an overview of the securitization framework in the literature review, however, securitization in itself does not have enough explanatory power to hypothesise the causal relation between Securitization and the rising militarization of the region. That is why this section will be completed by providing additional underlying theories that acted as the foundation to the Securitization School of thought such as Speech Act theory, Social Constructivism and lastly the Realist school of thought. The Speech Act theory will provide us with deeper insights on recognizing the existence of securitization and whether it has been successful or not. The Constructivist and Realist theory will in turn provide us with expectations on the future findings.

Securitization theory has some of its roots from the constructivist and speech act theory (Williams, 2003). The idea behind “framing” an issue as an existential threat for the state’s survival can be understood through speech act and language theory developed by Austin and Searle. The main argument behind the speech act theory is that by saying the words, you not only describe reality, but you construct it to make it reality (Buzan et al, 1998). We however need to take a step back from this simple assumption that words constitute reality as it does not consider the complex interdependencies and influences of world politics which influences speeches (Balzacq, 2005). Buzan et al (1998) formulated three conditions for a securitization speech act to succeed; The speech act is structured around the grammar of security (Use of words such as sovereignty, threat, under attack), the person making the speech must have a certain authority in the state and lastly, the securitized objects are to be held as a threat.

As securitization can only be established through successful discursive legitimation, it is greatly linked to the constructivist view which at its core defends the argument that the social world is constructed by society at large and leaders (Risse, 2000). There are various different definitions and views on constructivism which has evolved over time, however for the purpose of this research we refer to constructivism as an approach to social analysis with the 3 following assumptions “(a) *Human interaction is not shaped by material factors, but primarily by ideational ones;* (b) *The most significant ideational factors in this context are “intersubjective” beliefs as shared collective understanding; and* (c) *These beliefs construct the actors’ identities and interests”* (Finnemore & Sikkink, 2001, p. 393). Following this theory, if a nation securitizes an issue as a threat, it becomes part of the empirical reality and therefore new policies will come to the surface in order to counter and defend the nation from the threat. The main scholars of the Copenhagen securitization approach themselves demonstrated the link with the constructivist approach “*even the socially constituted is often sedimented as structure and becomes so relatively stable as practice that one must do analysis also on the basis that it continues, using one’s understanding of the social construction of security not only to criticize this fact but also to*

understand the dynamics of security and thereby manoeuvre them.” (Buzan et al, 1998, p.36). For the Copenhagen School, security discourse refers to a specific kind of speech act “*In security discourse, an issue is dramatized and presented as an issue of supreme priority; thus, by labelling it as security an agent claims a need for and a right to treat it by extraordinary means*” (Williams, 2003, p.513). The constructivist approach thus goes hand in hand with securitization as an issue is securitized when the audience (domestic population) largely agrees on the threat framed by the state and thus becomes reality (Ibid). The speech act and constructivism will thus allow us to effectively recognise securitization in our case study on the SCS by analysing specific speech rhetoric and language.

The other underlying theoretical foundation of securitization which comes from Schmidt’s realist tradition will allow us to hypothesise the effect of securitization in the SCS. The main reasoning behind this school of thought refers to the anarchic world in which we live in where the principal actors of international relations are the state (Schuett, 2010). For realists, there is no authoritative body higher than the state to turn to in case of major issues which is why they will pursue their self-interest and will engage in a struggle for power. There are several different schools of thoughts within the realist tradition, however, there is a consensus on the pessimist side of human nature that will always pursue its self-interest and lead to violent conflicts (Kim, 2015). The German Jurist and political theorist Carl Schmidt who then influenced Hans Morgenthau of the realist school of thought has had its influence on the reasoning behind securitization (Williams, 2003). Realism to Morgenthau can be considered as “*The realization that political life is based on the pursuit of power and if the national interest is to be served this can only be achieved by the pursuit of power*” (Williams, 2007, p1). Morgenthau’s argument on the pursuit of power by higher authorities and the state is driven by a concern that this would legitimize the use of violence both in a domestic setting and at the international level (Williams, 2004). Schmidt is the forefather of the radical form of realpolitik which then turned to the post-war realism school of thought. The idea behind putting an issue of security “beyond public debate” has clear similarities with Schmidt’s thought on the politics of emergency. Schmidt has a considerably more pessimistic view on the outcome of such politicization which is based on the principle of enmity and conflict to remain in power (Ibid). The survival of the state is a central issue in both securitization and realist tradition as it gives way for states to pursue unlimited struggle and sacrifice for its survival or for its hegemonic dominance (Ibid). Hence, use of the word sovereignty clearly illustrates the state’s willingness to defend its state whatever it takes. The perception of threat through the demonstration of power is also a central issue concerning both securitization and realist school.

The increasing militarization of the SCS exacerbates the tension creating a vicious cycle as the involved states continuously show its power in the effort to intimidate the other with its material capability (Garcia & Breslin, 2016). The balance of power between nations in realism is another important factor that needs to be considered. If a nation fails to balance its power and is in the minority side, they will be exploited by the superpower (Rosecrance, 2006). This aspect of realism would provide

us further insights into the alliance politics of the claimant countries we will be analysing as they seek to counterbalance China's great power characteristics. China's economic superpower characteristics makes it the number one trading partner of South-East Asia which in turn enables the nation to influence certain policies of other nation through the fear and pressure of economic withdrawal (Rosecrance, 2006). To account for this factor, we will add the presence and relation of the claimant countries with China as a control variable to increase the internal validity of the study.

Neorealism must also be looked into in order to provide a complete theoretical foundation for our study. Most of the assumptions from classical realism holds in this evolved theory, however, several other factors such as laws, institutions, norms and ideologies are also taken into account into the variables that influences international politics (McKeown, 2014). This means that the type of institution amongst the country we will be analysing as well as the ideology of the government in power also greatly affect the defence policies that we will look into. These regime types will thus be considered in our analysis as a moderating variable. A study from 2015 pursued an empirical study on this phenomenon and found that countries that scored the highest in the democracy index spend 40% less on the military than their counterparts which scored lowest in the index (Brauner, 2015). There are two main hypothesis which goes hand in hand concerning the argument of autocratic regimes spending more in the military and democratic regimes spending less. The first one concern democratic regimes where the decision makers prefer providing more resource into areas that benefit its citizens directly such as healthcare and education in the hope of winning the re-election (Fordham & Walker, 2005). There is thus a preference to use the scarce resources towards an area that is valued by the citizens as a social good (Ibid). The second hypothesis concerns the autocratic regimes and their rent seeking behaviour (Mbaku, 1991). The competition for scarce resources in autocratic regimes is radically different than in democracies (Ibid). The military tend to have higher bargaining power to earn more resources in exchange of political support and repression of the population (Ibid). This would partially help explain the discrepancy between democratic and non-democratic regimes in terms of their military spending.

Based on the theoretical background discussed above, we can create preliminary expectations on the findings of this study. As discussed previously, the purpose of this study consists in determining the effect of securitization on the defence and militarization policies of the claimant countries in the SCS dispute. The speech act and constructivism theory will enable us to determine whether securitization has taken place in the first place and whether it has been successful. The realism and neorealism theory provided us with insights behind the theoretical foundation of securitization. The pessimistic view on human nature and on the constant struggle of power of the realism theory would suggest the following relationship; *A positive correlation between high securitization and increased policies towards higher military capabilities for combat readiness.*

The neoclassical realism would suggest that the type of regime and ideological norms of the country would be a moderating variable to the defence policies. We thus expect an autocratic regime to have higher priority in the military build-up than its democratic counterpart due to the inability for the domestic population to be involved in the debate, but this matter goes beyond the effect of securitization solely. The following relationship is expected; *A democratic regime will have a lower focus on defence policies than its autocratic counterpart.*

The securitization framework has its fair share of criticism that we need to keep in mind while conducting our analysis. Even though the theory provides a good understanding on the dynamic behind how issues are securitized, it does have less explanatory value in explaining by itself the consequences of such securitization both at the local and meso level of analysis (Fischhendler, 2015). Firstly, due to its broad nature, there is a lack of consensus on the methodological rigorousness with which this theory was created and more importantly on the application of this theory (Balzacq, 2005). Furthermore, Balzacq pointed out that securitization theory would be considerably more complete if the sociological aspect through context/audience is taken into consideration (Ibid). The speech act in itself is considered to be limited if we do not look into the crucial role of the audience. However, it is a difficult task both conceptually and methodologically to account for the audience in such analyses. Furthermore, by focusing solely on speech acts, there is a risk of ignoring several other aspects that are becoming increasingly important in the modern world such as audio-visual sources, images, and policies (Balzacq, 2005). Another important issue is that the big majority of literature on securitization has focused on democratic political systems (Vuori, 2008). The Europeanness approach to this theory makes it conceptually harder to apply it to non-democracies such as China and Vietnam. Does this mean we cannot adopt a securitization framework for autocratic regimes such as Vietnam? Scholars have tackled this issue and concluded that although such regimes do not go through a democratic process, it is nevertheless very important to legitimize its actions (Ibid). Any autocratic regime needs a minimum of persuasion and coercion to successfully survive. This means that even autocratic countries such as China needs to legitimize the issue to eventually be able to use extraordinary measures (Ibid). Although China's government is relatively secretive and undemocratic, they still have a pressure to appeal to the mass which has power to some extent in order to keep its legitimacy (Vuori, 2008).

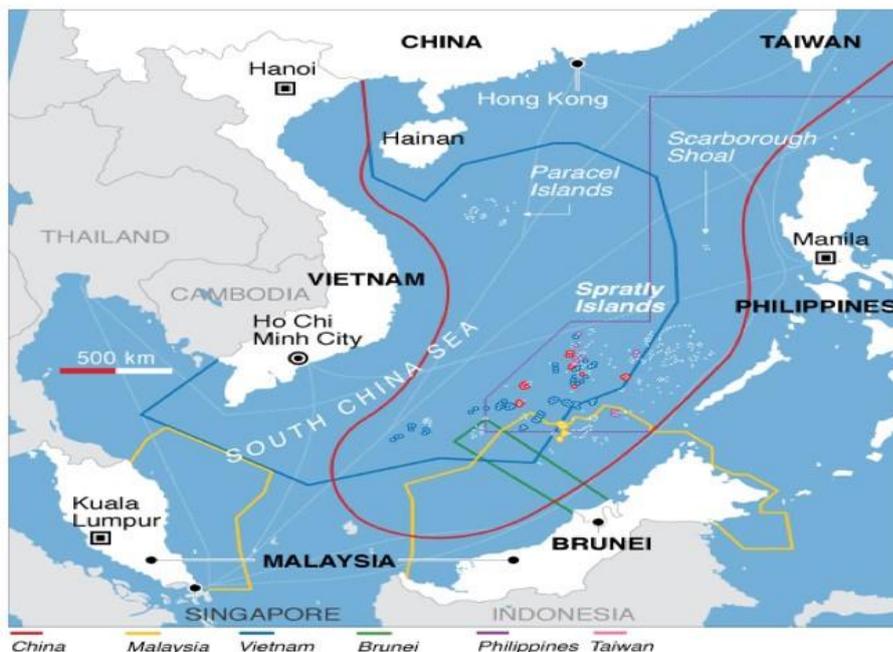
Chapter 4- Research Design and Methods

This section will look into how the research question will be analysed by explaining the specific design of the study as well as the methods which will be used. Firstly, a brief case description of the dispute and the different actors will be discussed, then the variables and its measurement used in the study will be explained. Finally, this section will further present how the data will be collected by keeping into account the reliability and validity of the data collection and results.

4.1- Background information

This section will provide further background information towards the actors and the nature of this dispute. The South China sea dispute's complexity stems partly as several actors are involved claiming the same resources and maritime rights over the area. The tragedy of the commons can be applied here as several parties want to use the limited fishing and oil resources available in these waters. These actors are not only directly involved in the international discussion of the maritime dispute, but their domestic public is also very much engaged in the discussion and adds a layer of complication in negotiations (Weissman, 2010).

Figure 4.1: Actors and claims of the South China sea dispute.



Source: UNICEF Cambodia

The rise of China's influence in terms of economic, political and military power is at the forefront of this maritime dispute. The PRC has managed over the course of 60 years to elevate 800 million people out of the line of poverty as its GDP per capita increased from \$89 to \$10000 between 1960 to today (Early, 2019). With an average annual GDP growth of over 7 %, China can double its GDP every 8.5 years (Ibid). This economic growth has had several consequences on Chinese foreign policy which drastically changed over the course of the last decade (Regilme, 2018). As a result of this growth, China is actively modernizing its military and naval power by having the second highest military budget spending behind the US (Furuoka et al, 2016). This modernization is being conducted in the aim to become a major naval power to safeguard its interests and "maritime rights" (Heginbotham, 2019). The appointment of Xi-Jinping as president in 2013 greatly shifted the rhetoric and discourse towards the SCS dispute through the militarization of the region (Kim, 2015). China's stance on the dispute shifted from trying to delay the resolution of the conflict towards actively asserting and emphasising its sovereignty over the waters and maritime objects (Fels & Vu, 2016). China has extensively run dredging operations in the disputed coral shores and reefs to create 3000 acres of artificial islands with high military equipment which has angered the claimant and non-claimant countries considerably in the region (Kim, 2016). The constructions of these military installations on manmade islands also greatly intensified the sense of "insecurity" amongst the claimants and non-claimants' countries such as Japan and Australia (Regilme, 2018).

Aside from the PRC, Vietnam is one of the principal claimants of a large part of the Islands and reefs in the South China sea with the Philippines. It has entered several deadly clashes with China in the past to protect its sovereignty (McEwen-Fial & Brand, 2016). Vietnam has conducted several approaches so far to resolve this issue and protect its interests. It is the only direct actor that handles the issue with a combination of hard and soft strategies to counter Beijing's assertive stance. It has upgraded its defensive military missile equipment in Vietnamese controlled islands and deployed its forces to safeguard Vietnam's Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZ) from Chinese oil rigs projects (Mourdoukoutas, 2019). Furthermore, to show its hard stance on the issue, Vietnam has made a deal with the Russian oil giant Rosneft to start searching for oil reserves in areas disputed by the Chinese Government (Mourdoukoutas, 2019). These strategies put a high amount of pressure towards China that seems to not know how to respond to these actions adequately. It is also trying to find a solution through the help of the international community through actions at the United Nations and is reinforcing its alliance with the US. In 2013, Vietnam and the US established a 'comprehensive partnership' which includes strengthened military and security cooperation (McEwen-Fial & Brand, 2016). The US is said to be taking strategic opportunities through the anti-China sentiment to create closer relationships with the claimant countries with the 'pivot to Asia' foreign policy of Obama (Ibid).

The Philippines has played a major role in this maritime dispute as it is the only country that decided to take legal actions against China at the Hamburg international tribunal for the law of the sea and at the permanent court of arbitration at the Hague in 2013 (Heydarian, 2016). This made a strong international political stance as the Philippines were ready and confident to take the issue into court. However, China has decided from the beginning to not take part in any of the court's sessions and hearings as it does not recognize its legitimacy/ jurisdiction and is in its policy to not accept interference from external parties in an issue that concerns the "sovereignty" of China (Heydarian, 2016). Most of the members of ASEAN also refrained itself from showing support towards the court proceedings by fear as China is the main engine of the regional economy (Kim, 2015). The Court procedure was used for two important factors. The first one is to invalidate the historical nine-dash claims of China as it does not follow the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) that gives maritime rights to extract resources up to 200 nautical miles (nm) from a country's coast (ASIL, 2016). This would mean that China cannot have claims on a large part of the South China sea as it is further away than 200 nm whereas the other claimant countries would legally have claims on the disputed territory. The second reason for the court procedure is to characterize what objects in the South China sea can be considered as an Island and thus be entitled an EEZ of 200 nm and what are rocks that are entitled to 12nm of EEZ and low tide elevations that have no maritime rights (ASIL, 2016). The tribunal considers the feature to be an island if it has the capacity to sustain human life without human intervention in the island. This definition greatly reduces the number of legally "real islands" in the South China sea. This second reason is also extremely important as an Island will thus legally have claims on a large radius of EEZ that can change the dynamics of the South China sea dispute (ASIL, 2016). The court ruling has ruled in favour of the Philippines by invalidating China's nine-dash line historical claims based on insufficient proof and information of historical Chinese influence in the islands of the South China sea (Heydarian, 2016). Unfortunately, China has boycotted the ruling and has not changed its stance towards its claims in the region and on the contrary has increased militarization and tension (Ibid).

Malaysia is another major claimant country of the sovereignty dispute in the SCS. Unlike China and Vietnam, it does not assert its claim to the whole of South China Sea but only to parts of the Spratly Islands. Malaysia plays the role of a middle power in the region and is proactively seeking to solve the issue through multilateral negotiations with ASEAN and through bilateral talks directly with China due to their close relationship. ASEAN, considered to be the peace-making integration institution of Southeast Asia has failed to deliver substantive progress in negotiations towards the SCS dispute (Hörhager, 2016). In 2012, both parties have signed a non-binding declaration of conduct (DOC) in the SCS but it did not prevent the several conflicts and the increased militarization in the years that followed (Ibid). China has for long tried to stall this process of negotiation while it continues to assert its sovereignty in the SCS (Fels & Vu, 2016). The negotiation process is very difficult as on the one hand, the ASEAN non claimant countries such as Myanmar and Thailand do not wish to go against the will

of China and on the other, China remains firm in resolving the territorial issues on a bilateral basis so it can use its leverage and can intimidate its opponent (Kim, 2016). Chinese international relations scholars are sceptical about the possible outcome of bilateral negotiations on this matter as no possible outcome will please one party or the other (Quang et al, 2019). For instance, domestic opinions will be severely damaged if one party is to give up the sovereignty over the area (Ibid).

This overview on the SCS dispute briefly showed the divergent national interests, the dynamics of the different regional alliances and the lack of a clear road towards peaceful resolution through a multilateral framework of negotiations based on mutual trust. Instead, the current structure of the dispute seems to give preference towards Realpolitik and rising tensions/distrust that is captured in the form of securitization discourse.

4.2- Methodology

The underlying research strategy which will be used in this study corresponds to the covariational analysis approach. This approach seeks to find the evidence of co-variation between the independent and dependent variable to infer causality through empirical evidence (Blatter & Haverland, 2012). The purpose of this design which seeks to find out the effect of a specific factor in the social reality with a small-n design perfectly suits the aim of our study which is to seek out the effect of securitization on the defence policies of the South China Sea. Two other potential methodology which could have been used in a case study research design are Congruence Analysis and Causal process tracing. The congruence analysis consists in “the use of case studies to provide empirical evidence for the explanatory relevance or relative strength of one theoretical in comparison to other theoretical approaches.” (Blatter & Haverland, 2014, p.144). This research design indeed does not suit our study as our aim is not to provide the explanatory relevance of securitization but finding its effect. Process tracing is another research design that aims to trace causal mechanisms (Beach & Pedersen, 2013). Process tracing is a tool which is useful when analysing a single case study which is not our case since we will be analysing multiple case studies.

For the reasons stated above, we will be using co-variation analysis which consists in studying multiple cases and comparing the differences between them by attributing different scores to the variables of the study. This research design is versatile enough as it is suitable for both practically oriented studies as well as more theoretically oriented studies such as this (Blatter & Haverland, 2012). This methodology is also said to be convenient when trying to understand a phenomenon in which the researcher has no control over the events (Yin, 2013). To have a high reliability and validity in the results, this research methodology gives a lot of importance in the case selection process (Blatter &

Haverland, 2012). The cases which have to be carefully selected by taking into consideration the control variables and the variables of interest will be crucial in determining a reliable causal link between X and Y. This methodology further gives importance towards a thorough knowledge and past works on the topics for three different functions. Firstly, this allows to specify what could be the main independent and dependent variables. Secondly, it provides a plausible expected relationship which will be further tested and lastly, it enables to identify potential rival explanations to account for it in the study thus increasing the validity (Blatter & Haverland, 2012).

4.3- Variables

4.3.1- Independent Variables

The independent variable in our study concerns the degree of securitization of the topic of the South China Sea according to the claimant countries. As we have seen in the theoretical framework, the major limitation to the securitization theory is its lack of a rigid methodological path. As a result, there is no clear operationalisation that is a “must use” in securitization studies. As a matter of fact, Buzan et al mentioned that no theory on security to this date has been able to give an objective measure of security (Buzan et al, 1998). It is believed that even if the measurement problem is solved and an objective indicator is created, it would not be ideal as different states and regions possess different threshold for considering a threat (Ibid). This in turn allows us to be relatively flexible in the operationalisation of the degree of securitization. This study will thus largely focus on the speech act element of securitization. To do so, the first variable concerning the securitization of a country would be the “**Securitization Vocabulary**” concerning the South China Sea analysed from diverse media outlets and national government speeches. We will describe in further details what the securitization vocabulary entails.

The words and meanings (And its synonyms) we are looking for in these documents are the following:

Figure 4.2 Securitization Vocabulary

| | | | |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Sovereignty/Sovereign Jurisdiction | Territorial integrity | Security/National security | Urgency/Emergency |
| Illegal Occupation | Threat | Provocation | Strategic interests/Security interests/Vital interests/National interests |
| Protect | Confront | Violation | Non-Securitized terms |

All these words and terms above refers to the vocabulary of securitization as it evokes a sense of urgency, existential threat and danger which should put the issue into the realm of securitization so that governments will thus be able to make rapid decision with the resources it needs. The choice of words was arbitrary as there is no strict methodology for speech analysis concerning the securitization framework. The initial list of words for the speech analysis was comprised of 5 more terms, however these terms were used extremely rarely in the media and policy documents, so we ended up with the 12 terms above. The use of the term sovereignty is treated as a separate term than the rest of the securitized vocabulary in the speech analysis as it shows the stance of a claimant country concerning the dispute. The high use of the term sovereignty would allow decision makers to frame the area as a “national territory” that needs to be safeguarded. Furthermore, this term is treated separately as it is a term that is used as an example of securitization amongst the scholars of the Copenhagen Securitization framework.

Furthermore, the speech analysis will also be looking for “non-securitized” terms to get a clearer overall picture on the securitization policies of the claimant country. Here again the terms which will be used to account for the non-securitized terms are arbitrary. It consists of terms such as “Friendly, cooperation, peaceful solution, peaceful negotiations, mutual agreements etc”. In other words, it consists of terms that would bring the claimant country closer together instead of framing the former as a threat.

The frequency of these speech will thus be taken into consideration when categorizing the countries which securitized the issue. For the sake of clarity, we will divide the speeches into two

categories. On the one hand we have cooperative themes which mentions non securitized terms such as “cooperation” and “peaceful solutions” whereas on the other hand we have competitive themes which includes all the securitized terms mentioned in the research design. Using coding to conduct the speech analysis has its limitation as it will not be able to take into account the subtlety of speeches and could wrongly count the vocabulary. That is why, the speeches and media articles will be manually studied and read individually in order to have a reliable and valid result.

Buzan et al also mentioned in the securitization framework that for an issue to be successfully securitized, the audience who are in this case the domestic population, must have integrated and accepted the threat formed by the state. To account for this factor, another variable that will be looked into concerns the “**domestic sentiment**”. This variable will be measured through the analysis of domestic sentiment surveys available in some of the claimant countries such as Vietnam, the Philippines and Malaysia. Furthermore, we will look into the domestic sentiment through nationalist manifestation of the population showing support towards measures taken in the SCS or showing anger against measures of other claimant states. The domestic sentiment variable will be categorized into 3 different categories ranging from 1-Integrated the threat, 2-Partially integrated the threat and 3-non-Integration of the threat.

To sum up, the measurement of our independent variable which is securitization, is captured through the speech analysis of the media and through the surveys of the domestic sentiment. The speech analysis will consist of both a quantitative measure through word counting as well as qualitative through quotes and ways of framing the issue. There is a need to use both measurement in order to have a reliable and valid overall overview on the successful or failed securitization of the SCS. These two measures will give a reliable overall overview on the successful or failed securitization of the SCS dispute amongst the claimant states.

4.3.2- Dependent Variables

The dependent variable in our study concerns the “the militarization and defense policies” in the South China Sea area. In terms of military capabilities, it is said that the distinction between defensive and offensive installations are unimportant as both are perceived as a threat to the other (Holsti, 1963).

The first variable will concern the “**military budget**” of the claimant countries along with its effort of modernizing the military. Military budget is a reliable indicator of the military capacity of a nation (O'Neill, 2001). We expect that after a successful securitization of the SCS issue, the military

budget should increase as the claimant countries need to expand their military capacity in order to protect “their sovereignty”. In the military budget, both the absolute value in current US\$ and the percentage of the GDP is used. The absolute value is used as it gives a clearer picture on the military spending policies as these Southeast Asian countries have a very high GDP growth that results in the increase not being necessarily reflected in the percentage of GDP measure. The following hypothesis can thus be anticipated; *Higher securitization leads to higher military budget.*

The second variable we will look into is the increase and presence of “**military installations**” in the contested islands and reefs of the SCS by the different actors. These installations which are said to be only defensive in nature is also an important source of tension in the region. The following expectation can thus be made; *Higher securitization would lead to higher military installations in the contested islands.*

The third and fourth variable concerns the increase in “**military alliances**” and “**military exercises**” by the claimant states in order to prepare themselves better in case of a conflict. Military alliances are often used to create a balance of power that ultimately acts as a deterrence towards the attacker (Heydarian, 2016). These kinds of exercises are always an important source of tension as it shows the military capability for offensive and defensive purposes. This kind of acts also serves as a deterrence towards any offensive plans of the attacker (O’Neil, 2001). The hypothesis is thus; *Higher securitization would lead to more efforts in alliance politics and an increased number in military drills in the region.*

These four measures will provide a more complete overview of the general tendencies of the claimant countries in terms of their defense policies. Simply looking at the defense budget alone will not result in an accurate stance on the country’s policies as a result of securitization. Having these four measures would allow for a more detailed comparison on the underlying differences of defence policies between countries.

4.3.3- Control Variables

Having the right control variables is crucial in a covariational analysis as it is a fundamental element of the case selection. To have a valid and reliable result of the causal inference, we need to see how compelling it is that the independent variable is the one causing the change in the dependent variable rather than the other potential causes of change represented by the control variables (Blatter & Haverland, 2012). The selection of cases which will be further described in the next section, is partially determined by the similarity in the variables we seek to control. One advantage of the SCS is the geo-spatial closeness between each other as studies have demonstrated that the “*The likelihood of finding*

cases that have similar control variables is quite high because countries in a specific geographical area share certain historical, cultural, and - indeed - geographical characteristics” (Lijphart 1971: 688-9).

In our study the control variables will be the potential explanatory factors that could change the military capabilities of the claimant countries. Among many others, the defense budget expenditure is a function of 1) How threatened a government feels, 2) How much it can afford spending (Griffin et al, 1982). The first function is greatly related to securitization with the framing of a certain threat. The second function is greatly related to the economic power of the concerned country. “**Economic development**” is thus the main control variable which will be used in this study. Indeed, there is a direct link demonstrated by various studies which shows that economic strength contributes to military spending. The measurement of this variable will be split in two different parts. Firstly, we will look into the **GDP growth** and secondly the **GDP per capita** of the claimant countries.

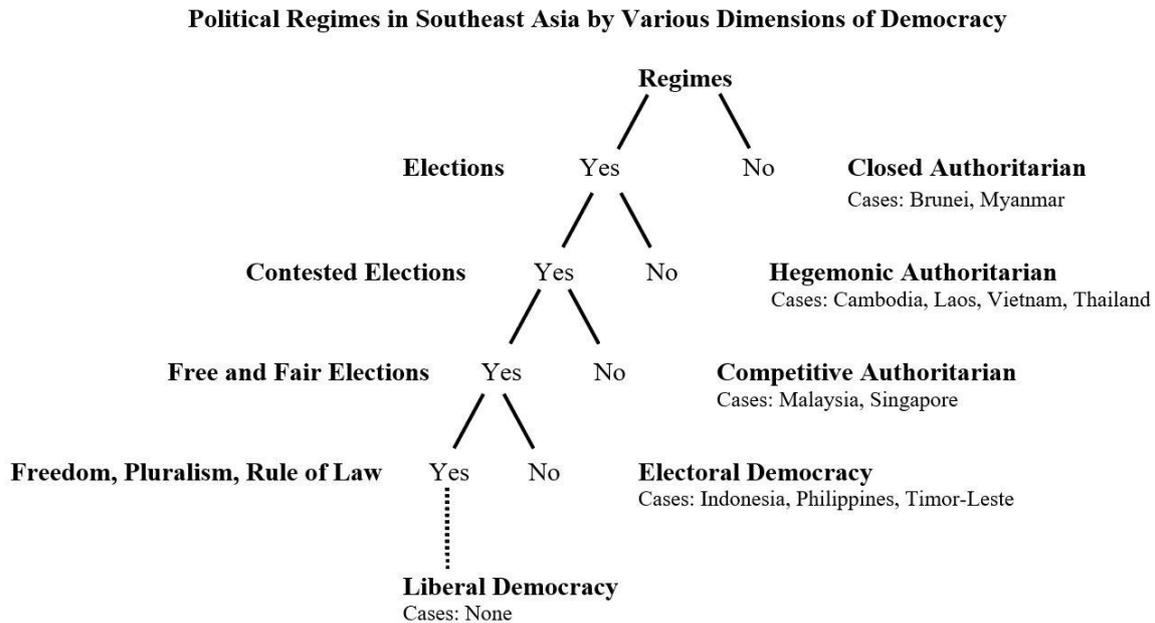
Another control variable that would be accounted for as it has the potential to influence the policies of our dependent variable concerns *the relationship* of the claimant country with *China*. The expectancy is that the more China has economic, political, cultural and historical ties towards a certain country, the less that specific country would securitize China as an existential threat to the nation’s sovereignty. That is why we need to account for this factor to increase the explanatory power of securitization by choosing countries with the relatively same level of economic interdependency towards China. The relationship with China will be operationalized through the interdependency of their economy which would be translated in the percentage of imports/exports they engage with each other.

China is Vietnam’s biggest economic partner with 34.6% of its imports coming from China and 14.4% of its exports going towards the former (OEC, 2020a). In terms of FDI’s, China is only the 8th top investor in Vietnam behind Japan, South Korea and Singapore (Ha, 2019). Once again, China is one of the major economic partners to the Philippines. It exports 15.7 % of its products towards China and 28.6% of its imports comes from China (OEC, 2020b). China is also a major investor towards the domestic infrastructure of the Philippines (Vera, 2020). Lastly, China is a major economic partner of Malaysia with 17% of its export going to China and 20% of its import coming from the former (Chang, 2020).

4.3.4- Moderating variables

We have a moderating variable which will be included in our study that has been briefly mentioned in the theoretical framework section. *The types of regimes* will be considered as our moderating variable. The different claimant countries in the South China Sea all have their own type of specific regimes which would influence the decisions concerning the militarization and the defence policies.

Figure 4.3 Political Regimes in Southeast Asia



The figure above has been retrieved from a study of Lee Morgenbesser (2020), a political scientist who is an expert in Southeast Asian politics. We thus expect that the closer the regime is to an authoritarian type, the more it is able to militarize and spend on defence compared to its democratic counterparts as we have shown in the theoretical framework section.

Figure 4.3 shows the type of regime Vietnam is currently governed in. Although there is an election in Vietnam it is not contested which makes it a hegemonic authoritarian regime. This makes Vietnam the least “democratic” amongst the three claimant countries of our case studies. The two nations also share normative affinities to some extent through their regime types which consists of a single communist party rule. The Philippines’s regime type corresponds to the electoral democracy which is the most democratic amongst the three cases. The two nations are connected through their economic links, however, unlike Vietnam and Malaysia, they do not share considerable normative, political and historical ties. Malaysia’s regime status is competitive authoritarian as there are elections which are contested, however, the elections are not free and fair (Morgenbesser, 2020). The ties between the two nations are not solely confined to economic interdependence but they also share a considerable amount of cultural affinities and historical ties (Hellendorf, 2016). There is a considerable Chinese diaspora present in Malaysia as they represent approximately 23% of the Malaysia population.

4.4- Case Selection

In a covariational analysis, case selection is said to be one of the crucial elements for the validity of the causal inference to be high (Blatter & Haverland, 2012). There are certain criteria for case selection that a study needs to be followed. First, one needs to choose cases that vary as much as possible according to the independent variable. In this case, we need to choose cases with various degrees of securitization in the SCS. The second criteria are that cases must be as similar as possible regarding the variables we want to control for which could potentially explain the change in the dependent variable. In other words, this refers to the Most Similar System Design. Our study engages in a cross-sectional comparison as we will compare cases by exploiting spatial variation with the different claimant countries. We must leave out China from one of the case studies as its power and economy is unlike any other claimant states. In the same measure we must leave out Brunei as this smallest claimant country cannot be comparable in our control variables. Taiwan is a special case as it claims the same territory as China as is not recognized internationally as a sovereign state. This leaves us with 3 of the main claimant countries which are Vietnam, The Philippines and Malaysia. As can be seen from the table below, the three different cases have a high variation in the independent variables as the three nations securitized the SCS to very different levels. Concerning the control variables, although the average GDP growth of the three nations is similar, there is a considerable disparity in the GDP per Capita average between the three countries but especially with Malaysia. The last control variable will provide us with reliable results as all three countries have a high economic dependence towards China which thus negates the influence of this effect on our variable of interest.

Table 4.4- Case selection criteria

| Variable | | Vietnam | Philippines | Malaysia |
|-----------|----------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|----------------------------|
| IV | Securitization Vocabulary | High | Medium | Low |
| IV | Domestic Sentiment | Threat Integration | Threat integration | Partial threat integration |
| CV | GDP growth (Average between 2010-2018) | 6.23% | 6.44% | 5.45% |
| CV | GDP per Capita Current US \$ (Average between 2010-2018) | 1984\$ | 2849\$ | 10530\$ |
| CV | Economic Interdependency with China | High | High | High |
| DV | Defence Policies | ? | ? | ? |

4.5- Collection of Data

The reliability of small-n research designs is based on the ability of a researcher to reproduce the results of a study using the same measurements and the same case study. We will thus explain the data collection process in the following part.

The data for this study will consist in the use of primary and secondary data through the conduction of desk research. For all parts of the study, various sources will be collected in order to cross check data and proceed in data triangulation to eliminate measurement error as much as possible. An important element of desk research using various types of documents is to “*corroborate and augment evidence from other sources*” (Yin, 2009, p.87). This is especially important when analysing facts from secondary sources such as news as it is inherently biased towards a certain view. On the other hand, securitization is also an inherently biased concept as it depends on how a certain issue is framed and how the population integrates it whether it is true or not. The primary data for this study will consist mainly in official government documents such as policy papers, speeches and white paper accessed through the website of the concerned governments. For example, primary data on the claimant country’s policies concerning the South China Sea will mainly be taken from the respective ministries such as the ministry of foreign affairs or defence. The secondary data will consist of media articles and documents from think tanks involved in the SCS dispute. To get access to media documents, the Lexis Nexis database will be used as it has a very large and complete news dataset that has been published in every country. The following filters will be used to narrow down the search of news documents:

- Search bar: South China Sea
- Search within results: “Country Analysed”.
- Timeline: 2010-2018
- Location by publication: International
- Sources: BBC monitoring international, Malaysia General News, New Strait times

The following filters leads to a newspaper sample of 10000+ articles which are related and unrelated to our topic. To further reduce the sample of 10000+ articles in order to proceed with our analysis we proceed in a further selection of articles to proceed with the speech analysis. The selection process consisted in determining the relevance through the title of the article whenever it mentions the country concerned and the SCS dispute. The major source of information comes from BBC monitoring international which provides transcription of local news outlets which thus provides direct quotes from government officials concerning the South China Sea issue. This thus means that our source of

information is biased towards the claimant country in question as we cannot triangulate the information with major news outlets such as the Guardian and The New York times as they do not always cover small such localized events in the SCS. However, this is fundamentally not an important problem as the goal of securitization is to analyse this biased way of framing an issue.

After the selection process, the database for the speech analysis consisted in approximately 50 newspaper articles per country with a total of 150 articles of 1 to 4 pages each. Furthermore, the data is triangulated and completed with official policy documents such as white papers from the relevant ministries.

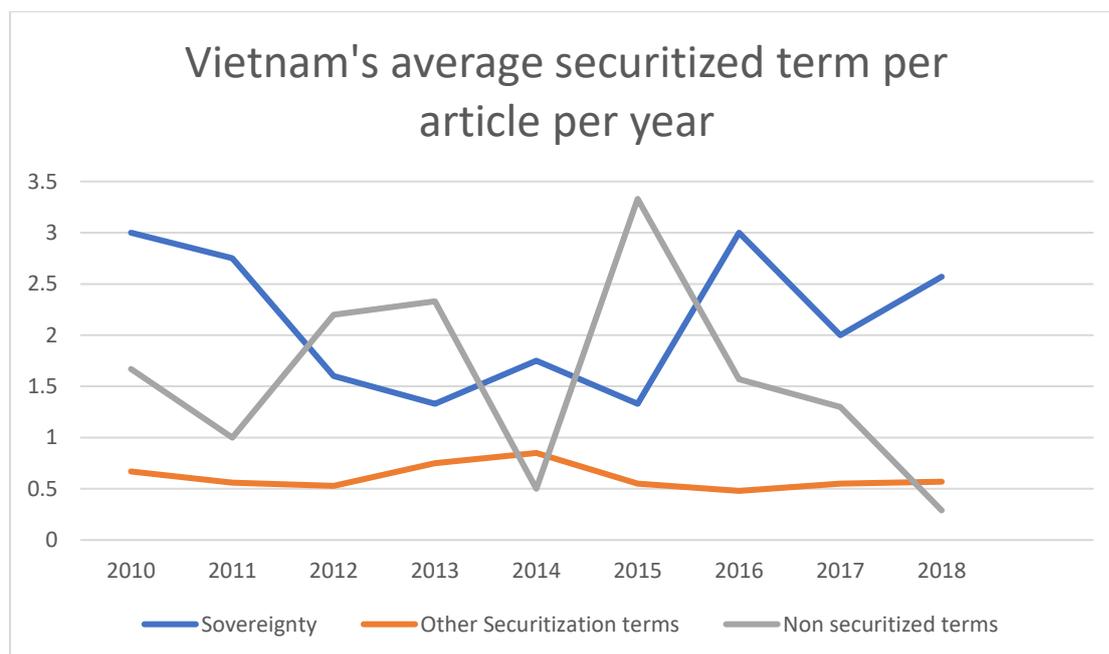
Chapter 5 – Analysis

Following the case selections and data gathering, this section will present the results of the analysis on a case-by-case basis starting with Vietnam. Firstly, the speech analysis results will be shown to determine the level of securitization on the concerned country followed by its effects on our dependent variables.

5.1- Vietnam

Vietnam is the one of the most assertive to its claim in the maritime features and territorial seas of the South China Sea along with the superpower that is China. To prove this claim, it is expected that Vietnam's speech analysis shows the highest number of securitized words used amongst the two other cases which are the Philippines and Malaysia. A total of 46 media articles between 2010 and 2018 retrieved from the BBC international monitoring report has been gathered for the analysis.

Figure 5.1- Average of securitized and non-securitized terms per article per year



Over the 8 years, the analysis shows us that Vietnam's media article concerning the South China Sea has on average the word sovereignty over 2.41 times per article and an average of 1.78 non-securitized terms per article. This is the highest number amongst the two other case studies which has 0.714 for the Philippines and 0.161 for Malaysia. This analysis thus shows that for Vietnam over 79.75 % of the terms in the speeches corresponds to the competitive securitized terms whereas only 20.24 % are cooperative non securitized terms. Figure 5.1 shows quite a high variation in the changes of the

number of cooperative and competitive terms over the years as various incidents and events passed by. An interesting pattern can be seen through the graph showing a negative correlation between the use of the term “sovereignty” with the use of non-securitized terms. Indeed, the two concerned lines moves in opposite direction as for example between 2011 and 2012 as the number of terms “sovereignty” decreases drastically per article, the number of non-securitized terms are on the rise. Again in 2014, as an important crisis between Vietnam and China erupted over the Haiyang Shiyou 981 crisis the number of securitized competitive terms rose as non-securitized cooperative terms sharply decreased. The following year was accompanied by the reconstruction of ties with China to lower the overall tensions in the SCS which then resulted in a sharp increase of non-securitized terms to 3.4 terms per articles from 0.5 in 2014.

In 2014, Beijing approved the China National Offshore Oil Corporation to deploy the Haiyang Shiyou 981 (HYSY 981, a deep-water movable drilling platform) in the South China sea 140 nautical miles from Vietnam, therefore, entering Vietnam’s exclusive economic zone (Yamaguchi, 2016). Vietnam responded by sending its naval forces and several collisions were reported between the Chinese and Vietnamese navy ships (Yamaguchi, 2016). This incident sparked a very tense period amongst Southeast Asian Countries as it was the first time that China started drilling operations in another country’s EEZ without their permission (Ibid). This incident comes to prove the successful securitization of the topic by the Vietnamese government as it is followed by intense large scale anti-China violent backlashes by Vietnamese supporters (Hoang, 2019). Even prior to 2014, Vietnam’s domestic population is the most engaged towards the situation in the SCS and particularly against China. Already in 2011, there has been another anti-China backlash when a Chinese surveillance vessel cut underwater cables of Vietnamese vessels in its territorial waters (Ibid). Even during the calm period of 2012 and 2013, there has been a few minor protests of Vietnamese nationals in front of the Chinese embassy in Hanoi following minor incidents concerning Vietnamese fishing ships getting bullied by the People’s Liberation Army Navy (PLAN) of the Chinese forces (Ibid).

After major incidents in the SCS, the Vietnamese government is not afraid to reaffirm its sovereignty and condemn Chinese action as for example in the immediate aftermath of the Haiyang Shiyou crisis, the ministry of foreign affairs issued the following statement *“Once again, Vietnam resolutely demands China respect international law, immediately stop violations of the sovereign right and jurisdiction of Vietnam in its exclusive economic zone and continental shelf, withdraw the Haiyang Shiyou-981 oil rig and escort vehicles from Vietnam's waters, and never repeat similar acts in the future.”* (BBC Monitoring Asia Pacific, 2014a). Quotes from the government such as the opening quote from the opening session of the 12th National Party Congress which is the highest governing body of the country shows that the issue of the SCS is at the core of the national policy. For example, Secretary Nguyen Phu Trong addressed this opening speech with the following remarks *“Vietnam has a duty to resolutely and tenaciously safeguard the country’s sovereignty, unity and integrity”* (BBC Monitoring

Asia Pacific, 2016a). Even minor incidents in the SCS pushes the foreign ministry to issue official statements showing its disapproval and discontentment towards the concerned country which is mainly China and to a lesser extent Taiwan. For example, in the aftermath of the visit of Taiwan's leader to one of the contested islands, Vietnam's foreign minister Le Hai Binh issued the following statement *"The Taiwanese leader's visit to Ba Binh [Itu Aba] island in Vietnam's Truong Sa (Spratly) archipelago seriously violates Vietnam's sovereignty and runs counter to the Taiwanese side's recent statements hoping to contribute to maintaining peace and stability in the East Sea"* (BBC Monitoring Asia Pacific, 2016b). Several similar statements has been issued concerning Vietnam's concerns over the continued militarization and dredging operations of islands in the SCS by China which creates official statements such as these *"Vietnam is deeply concerned about the aforementioned information and affirms that any militarization activities, including the installation of missiles on Vietnam's Truong Sa Archipelago, seriously violate our sovereignty over the islands, go against the agreement on basic principles guiding the settlement of sea-related issues between Vietnam and China, and infringe the Declaration on the Conduct"* (BBC Monitoring Asia Pacific, 2018a) and *"Vietnam requests China to put an immediate halt to these aforementioned actions and not proceed with militarization activities, seriously respect Vietnam's sovereignty over the Paracel Archipelago, seriously abide by the Vietnam-China agreement on basic principles guiding the settlement of sea-related issues"* (BBC Monitoring Asia Pacific, 2018b). The quotes above clearly shows Vietnam's position on the issue and its continuous effort to securitize the topic in the aim of integrating the perception of threat towards its domestic population and towards the international community to increase its leverage and policy spectrum.

This securitization effort from the government seemed to have been successful as the domestic population has integrated the perception of threat. The various demonstrations and protests mentioned previously supports this statement. Furthermore, results of surveys which aimed at understanding the views of domestic population towards Asian countries from the PEW Research Center of 2014 further proves this statement. The PEW research centre conducted a multi-stage cluster sample stratified by region and urbanity of over 1000 Vietnamese 18 plus adults to get a representative sample of the population. The margin of error is estimated to be at +/- 4.5%.

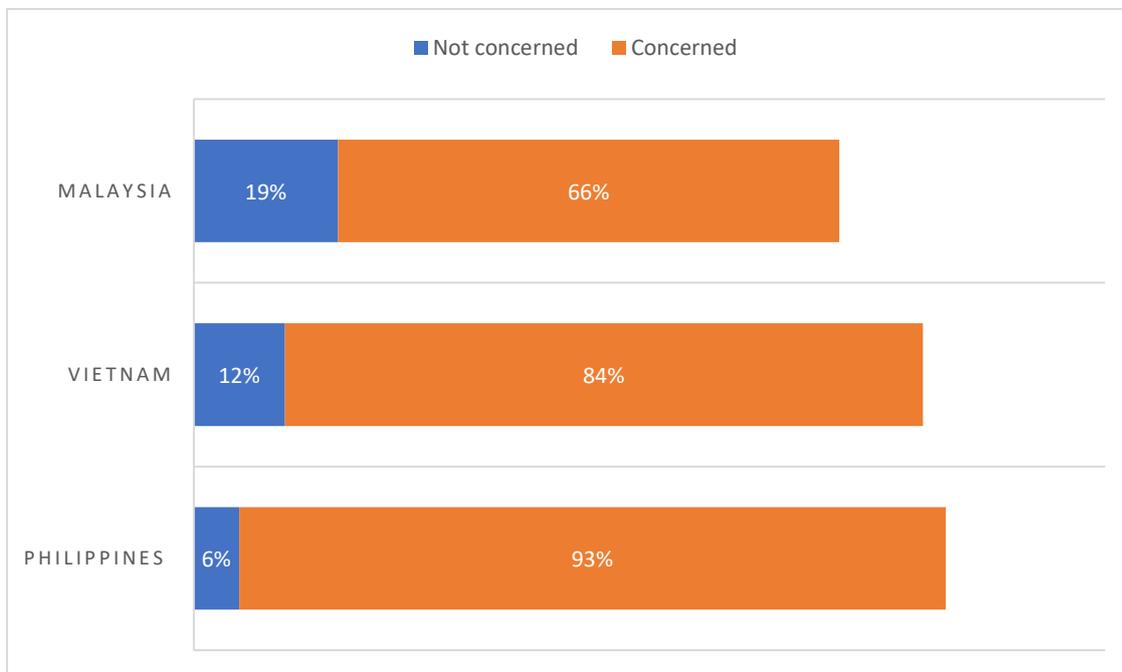
Figure 5.2 Favourable views of Asian Countries towards China, Japan and the US.

| | China | Japan | US |
|--------------------|-------|-------|----|
| Views in: | % | % | % |
| Philippines | 38 | 80 | 92 |
| Malaysia | 74 | 75 | 51 |
| Vietnam | 16 | 77 | 76 |
| Indonesia | 66 | 77 | 59 |
| Japan | 7 | - | 66 |
| China | - | 8 | 50 |

Source: Pew Research centre (2014)

This graph clearly shows that amongst the 3 countries in our case study, Vietnam has the lowest percentage of its population that has a favourable view of China with only 16%. After Japan, Vietnam is the second country with the lowest appreciation rate of China could suggest that the securitization effort of the government worked as Vietnamese perceives China as a serious security threat towards the nation's sovereignty. Figure 5.3 also further proves the successful securitization as over 84% of the Vietnamese population are concerned that the territorial dispute with China could lead to a military conflict.

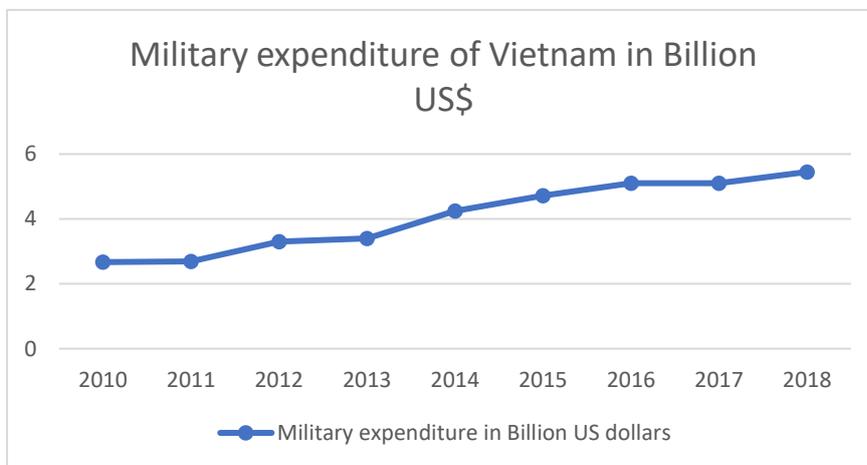
Figure 5.3 Percentage of the domestic population concerned with the SCS territorial dispute.



Source: Pew Research centre (2014)

We will now look into the changes in the dependent variables to determine the effect of a successful securitization on the policies of Vietnam. We will first look into the effect that securitization has on the military budget of Vietnam before delving into its military modernization and its several new “alliances”. Furthermore, concerning the relations with China, the former is Vietnam’s top economic partner (OEC, 2020a). In 2019, 14.4% of Vietnam’s export was sent to China and 34.6% of Vietnam’s import arrived from China. The importance of China towards Vietnam’s economic wellbeing must thus be considered into our study as it may influence the outcome of militarization and defence policies. Vietnam has also historical and political ties with China as both nations are run by a single communist party.

Figure 5.4 Military Expenditure Vietnam in Billion US\$



Source: The World Bank (2020)

Figure 5.5 Vietnam Percentage of GDP in Military expenditure



Source: The World Bank (2020)

With an average military spending of 2.3% of the GDP, Vietnam is one of the biggest spenders in defence budget in the region without accounting for China. Vietnam's military spending as a % of the GDP is nearly twice as much as that of Malaysia and the Philippines. Between 2010 and 2011, the military budget of Vietnam has more than doubled from US\$ 2.67 Billion to US\$5.45 Billion. This increase in the military budget shows Vietnam's effort to modernize its military in order to have a credible defence capability against countries which undermines its sovereignty. This 203% increase of the military budget was fuelled by a tremendous economic growth that Vietnam experienced during these years with an average GDP growth of 6.23% during 2010 and 2018 which pushed Vietnam's GDP from US\$ 115.9 billion to US\$ 245.2 billion in 2018. It is important to keep in mind that Vietnam is the smallest economy amongst the two other claimant states in our study which are the Philippines and Malaysia. This increase in the military budget is in line with our expectations which states that high securitization leads to higher military spending. A white paper published by the defence ministry of Vietnam in 2009 illustrates the position Vietnam is in concerning the increasing threats at its border and the need to rapidly modernize an army which has obsolete USSR military equipment from the 1980's and 1990's which does not correspond to the needs and the combat readiness of modern-day warfare (BBC Monitoring Asia Pacific, 2010a). It is clearly stated in the defence white paper that "*Vietnam only maintains military strength necessary to conduct self defence against dangers that threaten national security and interest.*" (Ibid). This policy resulted in Vietnam gradually upgrading its military equipment by buying materials from its partners. Vietnam signed a US\$ 3.2 Billion deal with Russia for the procurement of six Kilo-Class submarines and a submarine facility by 2017 (Hiebert and Nguyen, 2015). Furthermore, Vietnam ordered two Gepard-class guided missile stealth frigates from its Russian counterpart in 2011 for US\$ 300 Million which is increased to 6 frigates by 2017 (Ibid). Vietnam's air force is also undergoing a modernization with plans to have 36 Su-30 MK2 Russian jets by 2015. Although Russia is the main arms supplier to Vietnam, it has made deals with Canada, the Netherlands, Japan and the US to upgrade its military package (Ibid). The majority of the modernization in Vietnam's people's army concerns the navy and the air force in order to have a credible combat capability in the South China Sea.

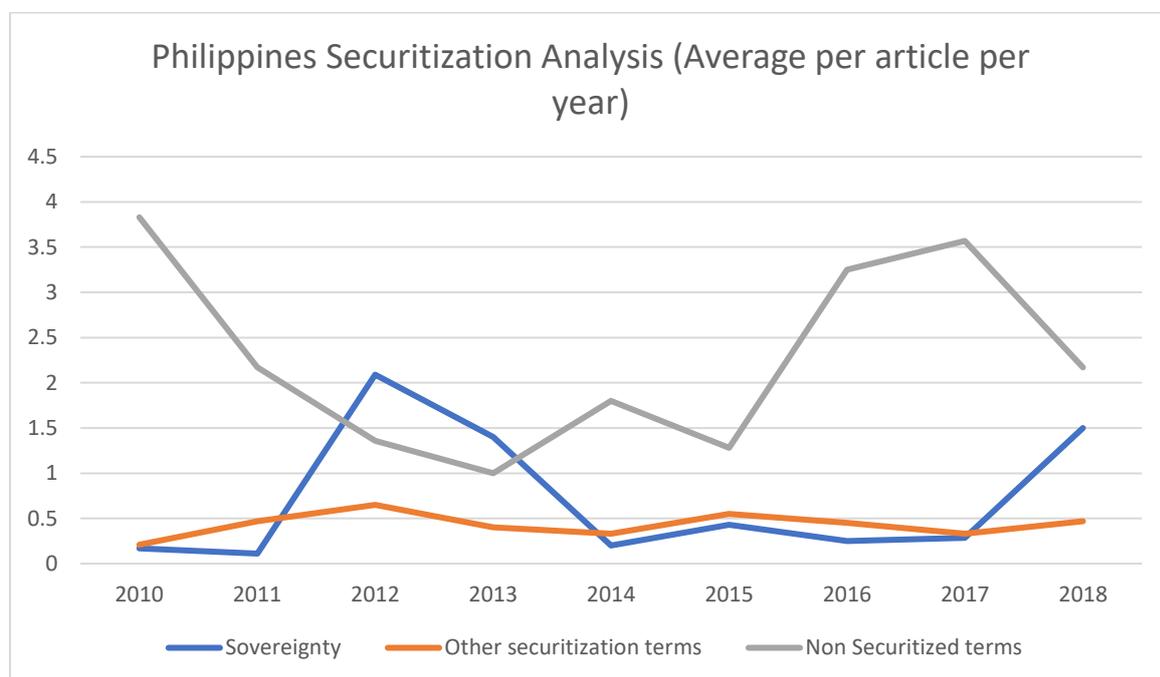
The initial policy of Vietnam concerning military allies is summed up with the following three no's "*Vietnam's policy is not to join any military alliance, not to allow any foreign country to establish a military base in Vietnam and not to take part in any military action that uses force or threatens to use force against another country*" (Ministry of defence 2004, p.5). However, Vietnam has consistently been seeking to make informal security ties and partnership to be able to counter China's aggression and increase its leverage. The events of the 2014 Haiyang Shiyou crisis considerably made Vietnam realize the seriousness of the Chinese threat and resulted in a considerable effort to counterbalance China's assertiveness in the region (Hiep, 2016). Vietnam thus shifts its foreign policies towards an

alliance politics. Vietnam has historically had a very bad experience with alliance politics in the past with Russia as it tied the policy making freedom of Vietnam for a considerable amount of time (Ibid). However, with the successful securitization of China, which is now perceived as a serious security threat, the government has the means to justify the alliance politics policies. Vietnam thus created ties with several major military powers in the region and in the other side of the globe such as with Australia, India, Japan, South Korea, France, the UK, the US, Singapore and Russia (Hiep, 2016). With all these countries, Vietnam is not pursuing a formal ally with defence treaties but is creating ties with informal alliances disguised in the form of “comprehensive partnerships” in defence cooperation (Ibid). Amongst all the countries mentioned above, Vietnam has the closest relations with Japan, the US and the Philippines. Japan has been Vietnam’s informal ally since 2007 as they signed a Joint Cooperation Strategic Partnership agreement to safeguard the region’s peace (Thayer, 2014). Although Japan is not a direct claimant to the SCS territorial dispute, it has its own territorial dispute with China, and it has its interest in safeguarding the freedom of navigation in the area (Ibid). The US is another major ally and the most important for Vietnam. With Obama’s pivot to Asia policies, Vietnam and the US enjoyed closer relations and improved their defence and strategic cooperation. The Philippines are natural allies to Vietnam as it shares the same interests, and they share the common struggle against a bullying superpower that is China (Hiep, 2016).

5.2- The Philippines

The Philippines is an interesting case that is in the middle ground between Vietnam's highly securitized approach to the SCS dispute and Malaysia's highly non-securitized approach. Unlike countries like Vietnam and China which claims almost the entire SCS and its maritime features, the Philippines claims 8 islands in the Spratly Archipelago and its rights to the 200 nautical miles exclusive economic zone from its continental shelf in the SCS. We will look into the securitization speech analysis results from the 62 articles analysed for the Philippines retrieved from the BBC international monitoring report between 2010 and 2018.

Figure 5.6- Average of securitized and non-securitized terms per article per year



Over the 8 years, the securitization analysis shows us that the Philippines media article concerning the South China Sea has on average the word sovereignty over 0.714 times per article and an average of 2.27 non securitized terms per article. The average mention of the word sovereignty is much lower than Vietnam's 2.41 per article. The analysis also shows us that for the Philippines, only 27.74% of the terms in the speeches corresponds to competitive securitized terms whereas 72.25% corresponds to cooperative non securitized terms. Similar to the case in Vietnam, figure 5.6 shows quite a high variation in the average numbers of competitive and cooperative terms over the years. The different incidents concerning the Philippines and China in the SCS accounts for these variations as well as a major shift in government policy with the arrival of a new president in power from 2016. Again, similar to the case in Vietnam, we have a pattern in the graph which shows a negative correlation between the use of the term sovereignty and the use of non-securitized terms. As we see from the graph, the spike of the word "sovereignty" in 2012 is accompanied by a 200% drop in the use of non-

securitized terms that same year. As the use of non-securitized terms increases again in 2014, the use of the word sovereignty drops to nearly zero. In 2017, as the use of securitized terms increase again, the non-securitized terms drastically drop.

The Philippines uses considerably more non-securitized terms when addressing issues of the SCS territorial dispute. While conducting the speech analysis, it has been remarked that the Philippines uses very often legal language from the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) to back its claims and also refers to ASEAN to stand as a united group against China. Previous to the major incidents between the Philippines and China in 2011 and 2012, statement from the department of foreign affairs such as the following are very common “*We must maintain peace and unhampered tranquillity in the South China Sea. The Philippines is committed to resolve disputes in the South China Sea in the most peaceful way together with China and ASEAN countries*” (BBC Monitoring Asia Pacific, 2010b). However, as China increases its assertiveness in the region with a more aggressive approach from the middle of 2011, it pushes the Filipino government with President Aquino at its head to protest publicly against China through the use of securitized terms. Statements such as the following are becoming more common towards China from the government of the Philippines “*China should heed calls that it stops taking provocative action in the West Philippine Sea [South China Sea] as countries with claims in the resource-rich waters are still working out a code of conduct to keep stability in the region*” (BBC Monitoring Asia Pacific, 2012a). The first incidents involved two PLAN patrol boats ramming a Philippine surveillance ship in its own territorial water on the 2nd of March 2011 (Pham, 2016). In April of 2012, a major incident heats up the tension between the Philippines and China as well as the entire SCS. After the identification of several Chinese fishing militia boats at Scarborough Reef in the Philippines territorial waters, the Philippine Navy sent its biggest warship to the area to chase out the Chinese boats. In retaliation, the PLAN also sent its warship to Scarborough Reef creating a stalemate situation with the intervention of the US to mediate and reduce the tension between the two nations (Pham, 2016). After an agreement between the two nation was made to reduce the tension by withdrawing their navies from the area, China decided to come back to the reef after the withdrawal of the Filipino navy. This provocative act greatly angered the Filipino government leading to a surge in the use of securitized words between 2012 and 2013. The spokesperson to the Armed Forces of the Philippines Colonel Arnulfo answered to interviews following these events with the use of the word sovereignty multiple times “*We will not waiver in our commitment to uphold the integrity and sovereignty of our national territory, with or without the Americans, we will take a stand. We will pay the cost to defend that. We owe that much to our men and women out there*” (BBC Monitoring Asia Pacific, 2012b). This shows the slight change in the government’s behaviour towards securitizing China as a threat as the superpower continues to take provocative actions towards this smaller nation by slowly creeping into its territorial waters and militarizing the maritime features in the Spratly Islands.

This incident is also the factor which pushed the Filipino government to take the issue of territorial sovereignty rights to the Tribunal of arbitration in the Hague thus delegitimizing China's nine dash line historical argument in the South China Sea. As the Philippines started its arbitration process in 2013, the government kept a low profile with an increase in non-securitized terms as to not anger China more than it has by pursuing the arbitration. The Philippines thus entered a game of patience by waiting for the court's ruling in order to have a better negotiating bargain against China in future bilateral talks. Furthermore, the Philippines government has tried to communicate to the international community that there are 8 islands to which the country claim its sovereignty in the SCS dispute and there are features in the Spratly's to which the sovereignty is non questionable and non-negotiable as would suggest the statement from the Department of Foreign Affairs "*Pag-asa island is part of the Kalayaan Island Group in the Spratlie's over which the Philippines exercises territorial sovereignty, jurisdiction and effective administration in accordance with international law*" (BBC Monitoring Asia Pacific, 2013a).

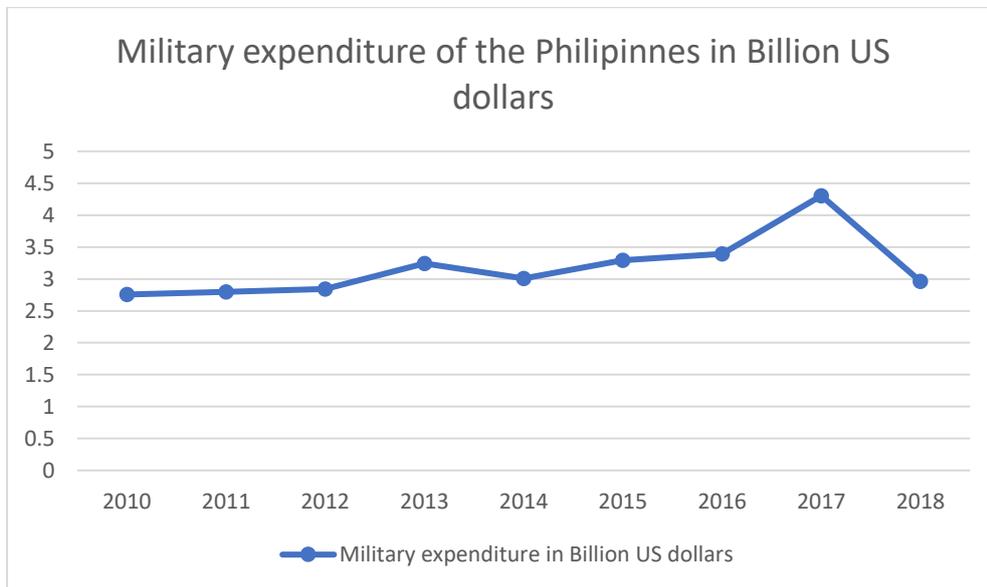
With the arrival of the new President Duterte to power in 2016, there has been an important shift in the rhetoric of the government concerning the SCS. Duterte Engages in a pivot to China to take advantage of its economic superpower in order to increase the development of the nation. In one of the first interviews of the President concerning the issue of the SCS he says, "*I hope the Chinese... treat us as... brothers, not enemies, and take note of our plight*", "*I thank China profusely, and they have really lightened up the economic life of our country*", "*You can really feel the sincerity of the Chinese*" (BBC Monitoring Asia Pacific, 2016c). With Duterte in power, most of the incidents in the SCS is now being protested very discretely through diplomatic means such as a note verbal sent to the Chinese embassy in Manila (BBC Monitoring Asia Pacific, 2017a). Furthermore, President Duterte largely dismisses the ruling from the Hague court of arbitration in order to create a better relationship with China "*I will never bring the matter (Arbitration Court Ruling) because it may lead to the suspension of the talks in China, and that is not good... So, I propose that we just have a soft landing everywhere*"(BBC Monitoring Asia Pacific, 2016d). This discrete policy from the government led to complaints and protests from the domestic population who seek more transparency and assertiveness from its government.

The several protests against the soft stance of President Duterte towards China suggest that previous securitization campaigns have managed to frame China as a threat to parts of the domestic population. Comments such as the following from the civil society and opposition government are increasingly common under Duterte's first years of Presidency "*The Duterte government has chosen a soft stand on China, opting for a defeatist and meek attitude towards China's aggression and hogging of our territories. Duterte remains mute and has failed to assert the international tribunal ruling*" "*In effect, the government is gift-wrapping our sovereignty and territory in exchange for being the next debt colony of China*" (BBC Monitoring Asia Pacific, 2018c). Furthermore, the results of surveys from the PEW Research Center of 2014 also shows to some extent that the domestic population of the Philippines

sees China as a security threat. For example, figure 5.3 is the most striking as 93 % of the domestic population of the Philippines are concerned about the territorial dispute with China compared to 84% for Vietnam. However, if we look at figure 5.2, we can see that a higher rate of Filipinos sees China as a favourable country with 38% compared to Vietnam with 16%. This would suggest that although previous securitization campaign has been successful in making China to be perceived as a threat, the abundance of non-securitized words such as “Peace, Cooperation, Friendship, Good relations” and so on contributed to the domestic population to have a higher favourable view of China than the domestic population of Vietnam.

We will now look into the changes in the dependent variable to determine the effect of semi-securitization on the military and defence policies of the Philippines. We will first look into the relation between the semi to low securitization and the military budget before looking into the modernization of the military and its new alliances. Since the Philippines has not securitized the issue of the SCS dispute to the extent that Vietnam has, we would expect a lower military expenditure and lower efforts to the modernization of its army.

Figure 5.7 Military Expenditure in Billion US\$



Source: SIPRI (2021)

Figure 5.8 The Philippines percentage of Military expenditure



Source: SIPRI (2021)

The Philippines has an average military spending between 2010 and 2018 of 1.14% which is considerably lower than Vietnam's 2.3% of the GDP. This gap is however slightly reduced when we compare the absolute spending in Billion US\$ as the average spending of the Philippines amounts to US\$ 3.22 Billion and Vietnam US\$ 4.07 Billion. The higher GDP of the Philippines accounts for the relatively similar military budget while the spending in terms of percentage of the GDP is considerably lower. From 2010 to 2017 the military budget rose by 160% from US\$2.7 Billion to US\$ 4.3 Billion before decreasing drastically back to US\$ 2.9 Billion in 2018. Although the Philippines military budget gradually increases over time, its pattern is not as clear cut as Vietnam's. The percentage of military expenditure on the other hand is decreasing over time from 1.222% in 2010 to 0.859% in 2018. The year following the Scarborough shoal incident with China, the percentage of military budget did not decrease but instead rose by 8%. This low military budget increase and decreasing percentage of the military budget goes to confirm our expectation as there was an overrepresentation of non-securitized discourse in the Philippines. With the arrival of Duterte to power in the end of 2016, it led to an even more drastic decrease in the overall spending of the military with an increasing effort to non-securitize China compared to its previous counterpart President Aquino.

During Aquino's term at the presidency, there is a clearly communicated will from the government to gradually modernize Philippine's army. The Armed Force Modernization Act issued in 1995 has resurfaced and has been criticized as the Filipino army has yet to be up to date in terms of equipment and training compared to other Southeast Asian Neighbours (BBC Monitoring Asia Pacific, 2011a). The Republic Act (RA) 10349 otherwise called the Revised Armed Forces Modernization Act is a bill that passed during Aquino's term which is 15-year program from 2012 to 2027 consisting of a

budget of US\$ 40 Billion to acquire aircrafts, ships, drones, intelligence and surveillance systems and more (Government of the Philippines, 2011). Similar to Vietnam, the modernization program of the Philippine's army concerns primarily the navy and the air force with the acquiring of new fighter jets and modern frigates to be able to defend their sovereignty on waters. The first important purchase of equipment in the timeframe analysed was during Aquino's Presidency and concerned a dozen new South-Korean light fighter jets at a cost of US\$ 395 million to improve the country's air defence capabilities (BBC Monitoring Asia Pacific, 2015a). Previously, Aquino has already acquired two decommissioned US frigates to increase its capabilities on the sea (Ibid). Along with China and Vietnam, the Philippines have also gone forward and built bases in contested islands in the Spratly Archipelago of the South China Sea in 2012 after the incident of Scarborough Shoal (BBC Monitoring Asia Pacific, 2012c).

Compared to China's Military might, the Philippines minimalistic defence capabilities were not enough to act as a deterrence from aggression and provocative behaviour from the former. That is why Manila's Government had no other choice than to increase its cooperation and relation with its strong military allies. The Philippines strongest and most powerful ally is the United States. These two nations, unlike with the informal alliances of Vietnam, have a formal binding Mutual Defence Treaty (MDT) dating back to 1951 (Green & Poling, 2020). This makes the Philippines one of the oldest allies in Asia with Japan. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo reaffirmed the seriousness of the treaty by referring to article IV and V of the MDT which covers the attack on Philippine forces anywhere in the South China Sea (Ibid). This treaty is the foundation of the military alliance with the US which then consisted in several other agreements such as the Visiting Forces Agreement (VFA) which allows US troops to be stationed in Filipino military bases and followed by the Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement (EDCA) (Ibid). Under President Aquino, the relationship with the US was at its best as both sides engaged in several high-ranking bilateral meetings to discuss the situation in the South China Sea. The US, often reaffirmed to the Philippines and to the world the strength and commitment of this MDT as a deterrence to China as this statement from the former secretary of state Hillary Clinton illustrates *"let me say the United States will always be in the corner of the Philippines. We will always stand and fight with you to achieve the future we seek."* (BBC Monitoring Asia Pacific, 2012b). There is also an annual military exercise named the Balikatan with Filipino and US forces along the coast of the Philippines in order to train both troops in the event of a war and to deter China by showing US's commitment.

There has been a shift in the sentiment towards this alliance with the arrival of the new president Rodrigo Duterte to power in 2016. Duterte has a considerably closer relation to China than its predecessor. He shifted its policies toward the US presence in the South China Sea by fear of angering China. During Duterte's first visit to China, he announced *"In this venue, your honours, I announce my separation from the United States"* (Heydarian, 2020). Although widely contested by the public and

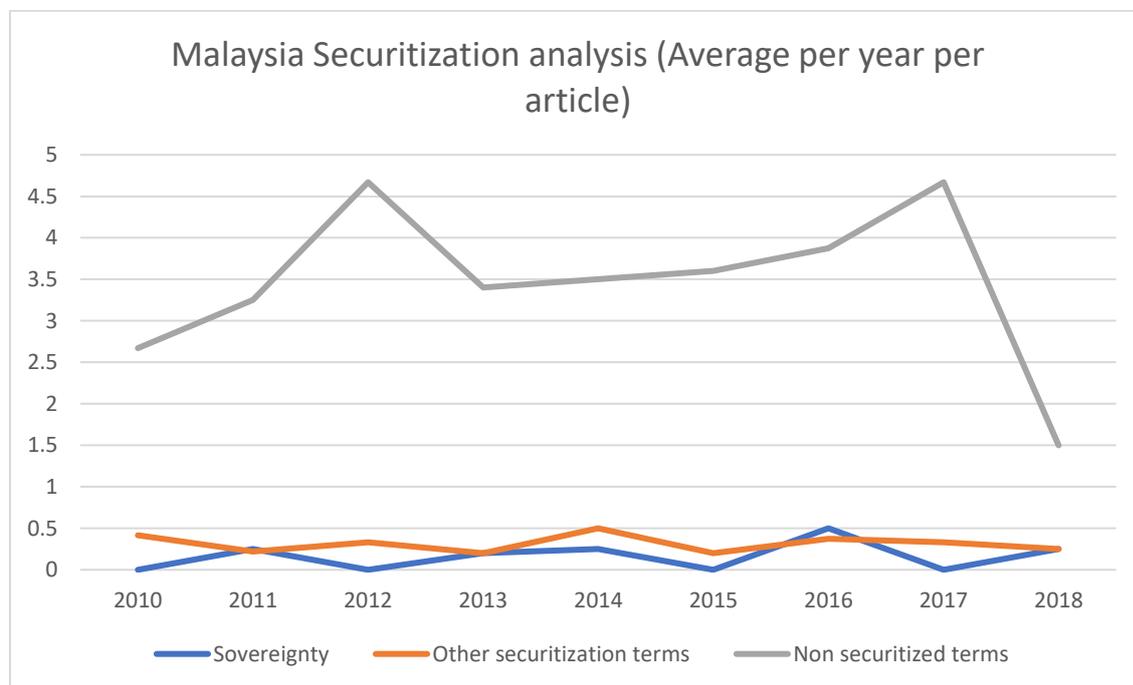
other high ranking defence officials, Duterte wishes to terminate the Visiting Forces Agreement to not allow US troops in Filipino army bases anymore (Green & Poling, 2020).

Japan is another informal ally of the Philippines due to its interest in keeping the SCS a conflict free zone as vital supplies for the Japanese economy passes through these waters. Both countries also share a close relationship with the US. The importance of Japan comes from its support both militarily and economically and is illustrated by Duterte himself through the various bilateral summit between the two nations with such statements “*Japan is a friend closer than a brother. That means Japan is a friend unlike any other.*” (Heydarian, 2016). In 2015, both nations have signed the ‘Japan-Philippines Joint Declaration, A Strengthened Strategic Partnership for Advancing Shared Principles and Goals of Peace, Security, and Growth in the Region and Beyond’. This improved the relations between the two countries even further and made Japan the largest aid donor to the Philippines. Tokyo has provided Manila with several military equipment over the last decade from aircrafts such as the Beechcraft TC-90 to decommissioned frigates and modern patrol boats in order to increase its capabilities in patrolling Philippine’s own territorial waters (Galang, 2019).

5.3- Malaysia

Malaysia is the last country of the case study and is the nation that has securitized the SCS dispute the least amongst all other countries involved. Like the Philippines, Malaysia does not Claim the entire South China Sea but only a few features in the Spratlie’s Archipelago. The speech analysis from the BBC international monitoring and two other news outlets ‘New Strait Times’ and ‘Malaysia General News’ amounted to a total of 46 articles analysed during the period of 2010 to 2018. The Analysis pictures Malaysia as a moderate country that plays the diplomatic and negotiation game by carefully balancing its closeness with the two superpowers.

Figure 5.9-Average of securitized and non-securitized terms per article per year



The figure 5.9 on the speech analysis is quite striking compared to the previous two countries as at no point in time securitized terms are more present than non-securitized terms for Malaysia. Over the 8 years, the securitization analysis shows us that Malaysian media article and speeches from the government on the SCS has on average the word sovereignty only about 0.161 times per article. This is much lower than the Philippine’s 0.714 and Vietnam’s 2.41 per article. The average of non-securitized terms between 2010 and 2018 amounts to 3.44 per article which is considerably higher than for both the Philippines and Vietnam. Unlike the two other case studies, there is no major variations in the securitized terms over the years and is rather relatively stable. There are however some variations in the number of non-securitized terms for Malaysia. Furthermore, like in the two other cases but to a smaller extent, we can see a slight negative correlation between the non-securitized terms and the use of the

word sovereignty. In 2012 as the average of non-securitized terms reached its highest point the average use of the word sovereignty reached 0 and this is replicated in 2017.

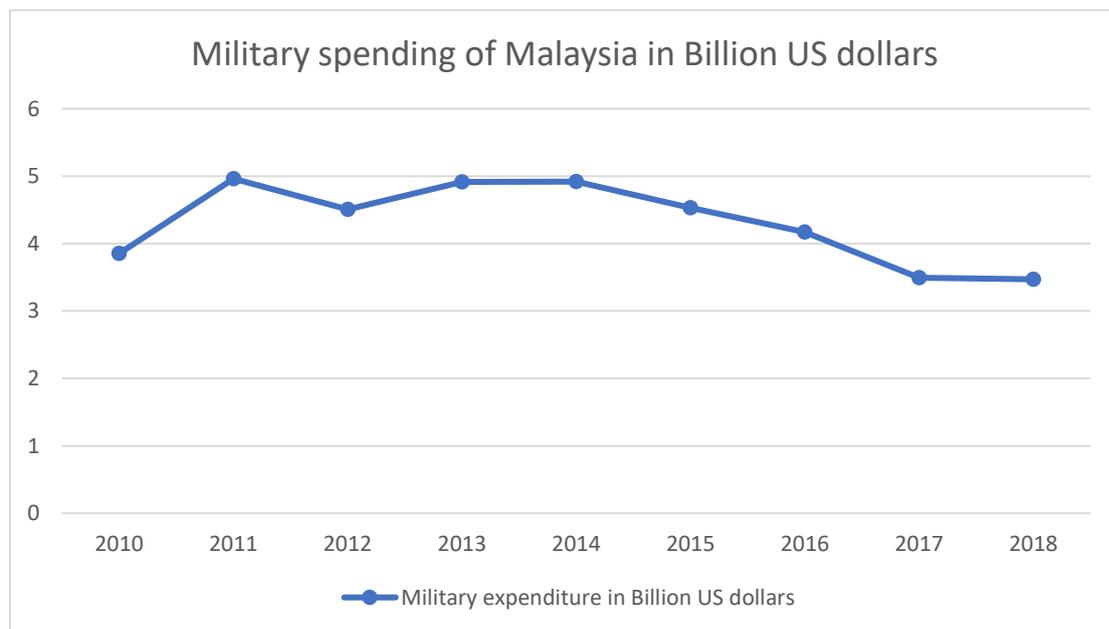
China is a major economic partner of Malaysia with 17% of its export going to China and 20% of its import coming from it (Chang, 2020). The former Prime Minister Najib himself expressed the importance of the economic ties with China *“The fact is that China's economy is the largest in the world. This reality cannot be denied and refuted by any country. Thus, if we need export markets for our commodities, oil palm and so on, if we need investments from any country, if we need tourists and so on, the biggest source must surely be from China. Thus, it's not a matter of being over-dependent, but the reality is that China is the largest economy in the world”* (Malaysia General News, 2016). The ties between the two nations are not solely confined to economic interdependence but they also share a considerable amount of cultural affinities and historical ties (Hellendorf, 2016). Malaysia seems to undertake the role of middle power in the region (Ibid). Middle powers tend to favour a sort of “middle power diplomacy” which is characterized by favouring multilateralism, making compromises and creating an image of “good international citizen” (Ibid). The former Malaysian prime minister Najib himself embraced its position as a middle power in the region by *“playing a greater part in Asia, and helping Asia play a greater part in the world”*. (Hellendorf, 2016, p.306). This argument partially explains the abundance of non-securitized terms from Malaysia concerning the SCS dispute. Malaysia’s strategy concerning the Chinese behaviour in the SCS is that of quiet diplomacy directly between the two nations (New Strait Times, 2013). For these reasons, several incidents between the two countries are not translated into a high profile official governmental speech from Malaysia. When high government officials are asked about these Chinese provocations in the SCS, answers are often softened and positive towards this economic partner as shows the following statement from the defence Minister Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamdi *“We are confident that China is not aggressive in this matter, but they only want their presence to be known”* (Malaysia General News, 2011). The Prime Minister Najib is also participating in this peaceful rhetoric with statement such as *“Our priority is to not create tension, but to emphasise the importance of maintaining peace and harmony”* (Malaysia General News, 2015). In 2014, Malaysia is at the head of the rotating chairmanship of the ASEAN and takes on the role of middle power further. Malaysia wants to bring all the actors to the negotiating table in order to sign a binding code of conduct that is supposed to limit provocative actions and escalation of tensions to uncontrollable levels. At the 8th ASEAN Defence Ministers meeting, the Malaysian defence minister reaffirmed the importance of the declaration of conduct *“As a party to the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea, Malaysia views that parties to the DOC should continue to work towards confidence building, enhancing cooperation and avoiding incidents that could escalate tensions and conflicts”* (Malaysian Government News, 2014). There is a constant effort to unite ASEAN members as a bloc and find a peaceful solution with China to the SCS dispute as shows the following quote from prime minister Najib *“We believe that adherence to the rule of law, positive engagement and sincere*

dialogue are fundamental if we are to build a truly prosperous and peaceful Southeast Asia, where no one is left behind” (BBC Monitoring Asia Pacific, 2014b).

This very low use of securitized words and an abundance of non-securitized word is translated into the opinion of the Malaysian domestic population. The result of the PEW research centre survey from figure 5.2 and 5.3 shows to some extent how China is perceived to Malaysians. In a drastic contrast to the Philippines and Vietnam, 74% of Malaysian have a favourable view of China compared to 38% and 16% respectively. The different ties from economic to cultural and historical ties combined with the peaceful rhetoric of the head of state must have created the foundation for China to not be perceived as a direct threat for the security of Malaysia. Interestingly, figure 5.3 shows that 66% of Malaysians are somewhat concerned with the territorial disputes in the South China Sea. Although the other two countries are much more concerned with 93% and 84% it is still a considerable number considering the low securitization of the issue. This concern most probably stems from the fear of the situation in the SCS going out of control between the two superpowers unlike the two other country that fears solely the Chinese aggression.

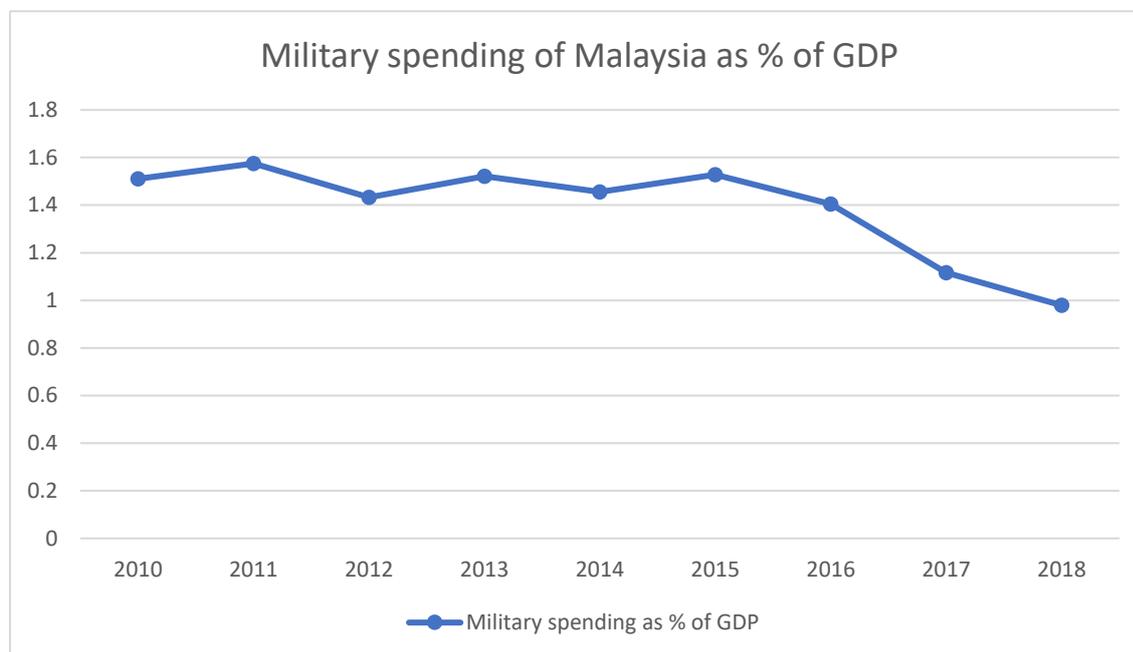
We will now look into the changes in the dependent variables to try and determine the effect of non-securitization on the military and defence policies of Malaysia. As with the previous case studies, we will first look into the relation with the military budget before looking into the modernization of the military and its new alliances. As Malaysia has securitized the dispute the least amongst the two other countries, we expect a lower military budget relative to Vietnam and the Philippines.

Figure 5.10 Military Expenditure of Malaysia in Billion US\$ (World Bank)



Source: SIPRI (2021)

Figure 5.11 Malaysia's percentage of Military expenditure



Source: SIPRI (2021)

The two figures concerning the military budget and the military spending are quite interesting for Malaysia. Firstly, the average military budget for Malaysia between 2010 and 2018 amounts to US\$ 4.28 Billion which is higher than for both the Philippines and Vietnam. However, the military budget decreased by 10% between 2010 and 2018. This relatively high military budget although decreasing over time is counterintuitive to the expectations of this study. There are several reasons behind this high military budget which includes the fact that it has the highest GDP per capita amongst the 3 countries and the fact that it needs to protect its assets in the sea from insurgencies. We will look into the plausible cause of this proportionately high military budget in the discussions. Furthermore, Malaysia has an average military spending of about 1.39% which is again higher than the Philippines but considerably lower than Vietnam's 2.3%. The military spending as a percentage of the GDP experienced a considerable decrease of 36% between 2010 and 2018. This is conforming to our expectations as indeed, the biggest drop in military spending from our 3 case studies is Malaysia. The military spending was quite stable between 1.4% and 1.59% of the GDP between 2010 and 2015 before dropping to 0.979% in 2018.

The analysis of policy documents, research articles and the first ever published Malaysian Defence Ministry White Paper provides us with a clearer picture behind the modernization of its fleet and its connection to the SCS dispute. While having the largest military budget out of the other two analysed countries, it does not prioritize the navy and the air force as much as is the case with the Philippines and Vietnam. Instead of increasing its budget for the navy, the Malaysian parliament

decided to cut the navy's budget from 2016 (Chang, 2020). The oil crisis of 2014 and 2015 is said to be the major cause behind this decrease in the military budget over all areas of the military as revenues to the government decreased (Ibid). The decrease in revenue came from a drop in oil prices which in turn resulted in the partly state-owned company Petronas making lower profits. Major military modernization programs were thus cancelled, put on hold or delayed considerably (Chang, 2020). Malaysia aimed to modernize its aging navy fleet through its 15 to 5 transformation programs in 2015 (Ibid). This program aimed to cut the types of different navy ships from 15 to 5 in order to reduce the operations and maintenance cost to be able to afford further ships in a timeline of 15 years until 2030. In other word the Malaysian Navy's modernization program also consisted in a cost saving program for the long term. The Malaysian Defence White Paper listed all the different type of threats that the nation is facing or might face in the future. Interestingly, the issue of sovereignty in the SCS dispute is mentioned very briefly and not at the top of the list (Government of Malaysia, 2019). The issue of the SCS dispute is mentioned under the category "The Complex Southeast Asian Neighbourhood" and is framed in the following way "*Malaysia is the only country that shares borders with the vast majority of Southeast Asian countries, either land or maritime. Due to the nation's geographical centrality in Southeast Asia and colonial legacies in the region, Malaysia has yet to resolve land demarcation and maritime delimitations issues with some of its neighbours.*" (Government of Malaysia, 2019, p.23). Instead of the SCS dispute, it ranks other security issue as a higher priority such as sea robbery and piracy, illegal fishing activities, and most importantly, the "uncertainty of big power relations" (Ibid). The following quote is how the Malaysian Government frames this threat "*United States of America (US) and China have entered into a new phase where bilateral relations are marked more by rivalry than accommodation... Incursions by foreign government vessels off the coast of Sabah and Sarawak are clear challenges to Malaysia's sovereign rights in the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) in the South China Sea as provided by international law. Tensions have sparked in the South China Sea with the arrival of warships from outside the region. The growing rivalry and action-reaction between the powerful nations have raised the risk of regional polarisation.*" (Government of Malaysia, 2019, p.21). Since the SCS is not the main focus of the Malaysian army, we can thus see that it does not provide its navy and air force as much attention and resources as the other two nations analysed. This is conform to our expectations as the low securitization of the issue also led to a lower focus of the military realm into the protecting the disputed islands and reefs of the Spratly islands.

Malaysia is part of a long-standing defence treaty called the Fiver Power Defence Arrangements involving the UK, Australia, New Zealand, and Singapore from 1971 (Thayer, 2007). This arrangement is not as formal as the Mutual Defence Treaty between the Philippines and the US as the countries involved is supposed to simply "consult" each other in the event of a serious threat in order to determine the action and whether the action will be collective or individual (Ibid). We are however interested in Malaysia's alliance game in the recent years between 2010 and 2018. As a middle

power, Malaysia is keeping strong relations with both of the superpowers involved directly and indirectly in this dispute. During Obama's Presidency and his foreign policy of "pivot to Asia", Malaysia enjoyed the improvement of ties between the two countries. +More on US relationship. Malaysia has also been constructing strong ties with China through different means. Firstly, the relation between these two nations is positive due to Malaysia's quiet diplomacy policy towards the SCS which is greatly appreciated by China (Malaysia General News, 2015). Furthermore, Malaysia tries to create more formal institutional ties through the creation of a high-level committee that would ensure the mutual discussions of certain issue of security and defence between the two nations (BBC Monitoring Asia Pacific, 2017b). The issues that will be overseen by the committee will involve the SCS, North Korea and terrorism threats (Ibid). The defence ministry of Malaysia commented on the importance to institutionalize the relationship between the two countries in order to have a long-lasting relationship which is not influenced by the short-term government policies (Ibid). Although Malaysia improved its relationship with both the US and China, unlike in the other two case studies, it did not create formal alliance treaties to counterbalance its power in order to put pressure on Chinese aggression. This again is following our expectations as Malaysia did not securitize the SCS dispute.

Chapter 6 - Discussion and Conclusion

In this section, we will delve into a comparative discussion of the results obtained in the analysis and link it to the theoretical frameworks in order to answer our research question. We will then refer to the implications of the study and look at its limitations to suggest improvements for further research. The research question of the study is the following *What is the effect of securitization on the claimant's defence policies?* Below are the aggregated graphs of the analysis from chapter 5 which will enable to apprehend the correlation between securitization and the defence policies better.

6.1- Comparison across the cases

Figure 6.1 Claimant Country's Average total of securitization words per article

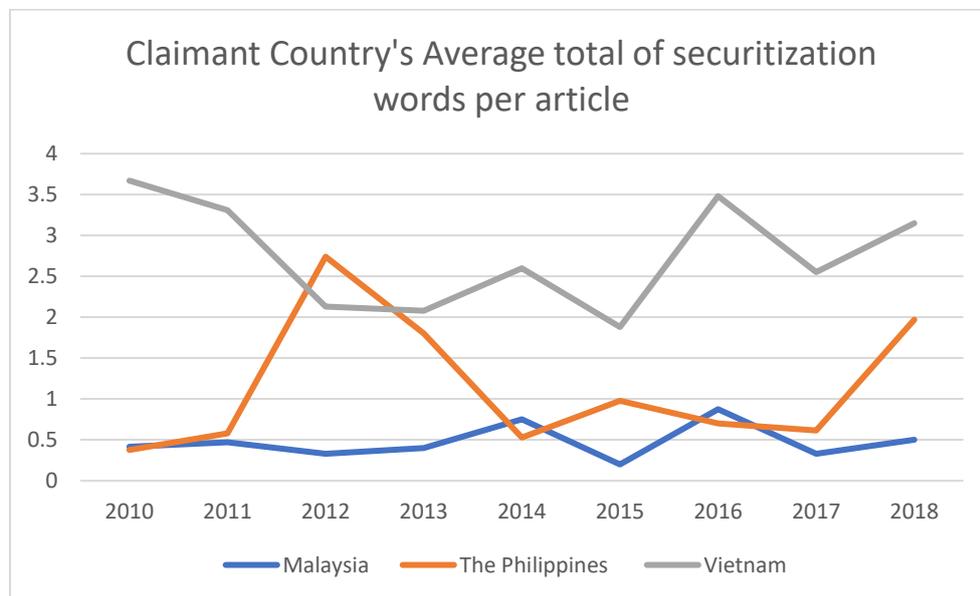


Figure 6.2 Military Spending of claimant countries as a % of GDP

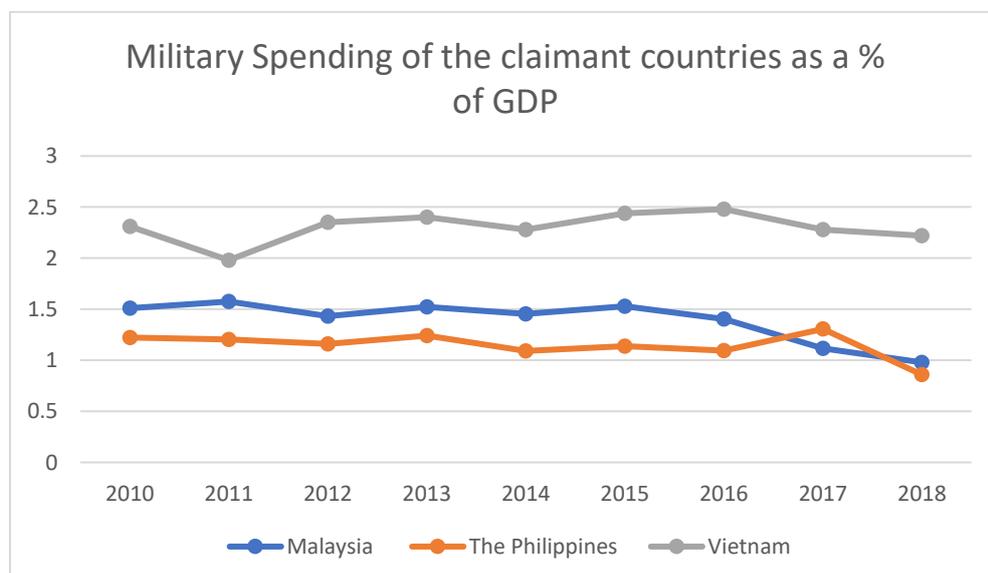
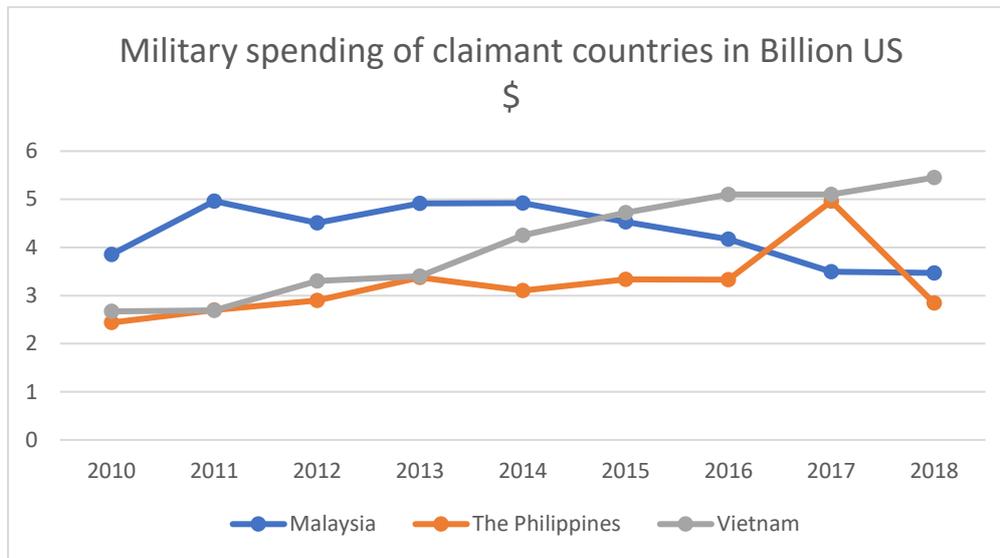


Figure 6.3 Military Spending of claimant countries in Billion US\$



Looking at all three graphs above, the relation between securitization and the increase in militarization or non-securitization and the decrease in militarization is clearer. Indeed, when we consider Vietnam, it has the highest amount of securitization in the speech analysis, and it correlates with the increase in defence budget. Firstly, it has the highest % of military spending relatively to the GDP and is the only nation analysed which did not lower its budget over the time-frame considered. Furthermore, looking at the spending in terms of billions of US \$, it is the only nation with a stable constant rise in its spending. Vietnam has also undertaken considerable effort in modernizing its navy and air fleet to be able to better defend its maritime territory against the increasing assertiveness of China (Hiebert and Nguyen, 2015). It has also, made new informal alliances with major military and economic powers such as the USA, Japan and India in the aim of counterbalancing the Chinese superpower. The case of Vietnam correlates with the expectations from the theoretical frameworks. With realism's pessimistic view on human nature and the struggle for power (Kim, 2015), we expected that securitization and the use of the word sovereignty would allow the state to pursue unlimited struggle and sacrifice for its survival (Williams, 2007). This would then translate in higher resources and commitment towards defence and militarization. With the case of Vietnam, we can express the following correlation. Firstly, China is being securitized to be seen as a threat to Vietnam's survival in the eyes of its domestic population. This then leads to higher efforts from the government to increase its military capabilities and create new alliances for its survival to deter China from taking disproportionate actions. The neorealism theory also adds explanatory power in this case through a moderating variable which is Vietnam's government regime. Neorealism states that in addition to the survival of the state and the struggle for power, factors such as institutions, norms and ideologies also

affect policies (McKeown, 2014). The expectation that an autocratic regime would accentuate military spending and militarization also holds true with Vietnam's status of hegemonic authoritarian regime.

The case of the Philippines is less straightforward. The speech analysis revealed a relatively low amount of securitization except for the peaks in 2012 and 2018 due to major heightened tensions with China. It has the lowest military spending between 2010 and 2017 both in terms of the percentage of the GDP and in absolute terms in billion US\$ compared to the two other nations. In 2017, both of the measures of military spending overtook Malaysia's spending by a small margin. This case is thus not confirming to our expectations as Malaysia, who has securitized the SCS dispute and China the least, has a higher defence budget than the Philippines. However, with the smaller military budget, the Philippines is also undergoing a modernization program of its navy and air force fleet (BBC Monitoring Asia Pacific, 2015a). There is a focus on these two forces of the military to be able to have a minimum credible defence against Chinese aggression. Furthermore, in terms of defence policies, the Filipino government made substantive effort in order to create and strengthen its alliances with major superpowers. In the case of the Philippines, the peak of securitization thus did not translate into a higher military budget such as we have predicted. However, the government still made efforts to modernize its military with the small amount of resources at its disposition and strengthened its alliances through diplomatic exchanges. The moderating variable of the neorealism theory may have explanatory power in explaining why it has a lower budget. The Philippine's regime is an electoral democracy, it is the most democratic country out of the three nations in our case studies. This implies that the domestic population have an important say in the policies of the government. The regime type as a moderating variable thus helps explain the lower military budget as the low effort of securitization must have not translated in a sense of threat and urgency to the domestic population.

Malaysia has securitized the SCS dispute and China the least but has a higher defence budget than the Philippines. However, the case study is meeting our expectations since the military spending both in terms of % of GDP and in absolute terms is decreasing over time. This correlates with the low securitization which means that China is not considered as a major threat to the nation's survival. Although Malaysia is also undergoing a military modernization program, this is being done by decreasing the cost of its fleet. Malaysia has several formal and informal allies, the most important being the US. However, it is also creating a framework for common defence in the SCS with China. The case study also meets the expected influence of our moderating variable. Malaysia is a competitive authoritarian regime meaning that it is less democratic than the Philippines but more than Vietnam. The regime type combined with the necessity to protect its petroleum industry assets in the sea may account for the higher defence budget compared to the Philippines. Furthermore, Malaysia and China are not only economic partners but share considerable amount of norms and have historical ties that links these two nations closer together. This helps explain the low securitization of the SCS by Malaysia and its preference for quiet diplomacy as to keep a friendly relationship with China.

6.2- General Overview

The brief case comparisons above enable us to answer the following hypothesis and sub-hypothesis listed in the theoretical framework and research design.

H1-A positive correlation between high securitization and increased policies towards higher military capabilities for combat readiness.

H2- A democratic regime will have a lower focus on defence policies than its autocratic counterpart.

Overall, the three case studies enabled us to better understand the correlation between securitization and defence policies. The analysis demonstrated a trend where higher securitization leads to higher defence and militarization policies. The higher defence and militarization policies is further accentuated when the regime type is less democratic. On the contrary, when securitization is low and the regime is more democratic, there is a trend towards lower defence budget and lesser militarization policies. Furthermore, among the different defence policies that a claimant country could pursue, we can remark some disparities between them. Vietnam was proactive in all four areas, namely military budget, military installations in the contested islands, military alliances and military exercises. The Philippines on the other hand was less proactive in its military budget but was considerably more so concerning its military alliances, exercise and installations in the Spratly islands. Lastly, Malaysia was more or less proactive in its defence budget but considerably less so in all three other areas.

Although we cannot imply a true causation between higher securitization and increased defence policies, the study tried to factor in the other potential explanations as our control variable in order for the results to be as internally valid as possible. This is why the study accounted for the economic development of each country which is an important factor of influence towards the military spending. Furthermore, we accounted for each of the country's economic interdependence with China as this would also greatly influence the policies. As China is all three of the claimant countries first trade partner, the influence of this factor can be ruled out from the effect on the defence policies. However, the economic development of the three claimant countries had some disparities between them which does not enable us to say with confidence that it did not have any effect on our dependent variables.

6.3- Implications

This research was able to provide further understanding on the process and effect of securitization by providing empirical examples through three case studies in the South China Sea dispute. In this strategically important region for global economic stability, having a better understanding on the consequences of securitization will enable policy makers to take the factor into account in order to find peaceful and durable solution to the ongoing territorial dispute. It also provides the civil society of the claimant countries with a better understanding on the reasoning behind their country's defence policies.

This thesis further adds to the very low amount of securitization literature on the SCS dispute. Garcia and Breslin (2016) referred to the mutual securitization between the claimant countries and the effect of desecuritization on policy directions. Zhang and Bateman on the other hand, looked into the securitization of fishery and the presence of the fishing militia in the SCS. Lastly, Timo Kivimaki (2016) argued for the rise in other frameworks to analyse the SCS dispute such as legalism and developmentalism. This thesis added a new dimension to the discussion by showing the relationship between securitization and non-securitization on the defence policies of the SCS claimant countries. It also showed aspects that further accentuate or attenuate the effect on the defence policies. Amongst the securitization literature in general, there is relatively little academic work on the consequences of successful securitization as it is very case specific. For this reason, this research contributed to the scientific discourse by providing an empirical example of the effect of securitization on defence policies by applying a theoretical framework to a new empirical domain.

6.4- Limitations and suggestions for future research

The study has several limitations that must be taken into account. After listing the limitations of the thesis, suggestions for future research and improvements will be mentioned. First of all, even though the study managed to demonstrate correlation between the variables of interest, causation could not have been demonstrated. To counter this limitations, future studies should complete the case studies with a form of process tracing. This would enable the study to be able to demonstrate with confidence the causal relations between securitization and the defence policies. Furthermore, future studies should preferably have their sample with a higher timeframe to be able to conduct valid and reliable statistical correlations with the results of the speech analysis and the military budget. Furthermore, in this thesis, the choice and selection of the securitization vocabulary has influenced the study to a great extent. Securitization scholars should create a common framework of speech analysis vocabulary where future studies could refer to in order to create a common understanding of what vocabulary to include in the analysis. Furthermore, the inability to comprehend the local language forced the speech analysis sample

to be comprised of a few sources. This in turn led to a limited number of media documents that could be studied for the speech analysis and thus creates issues of generalisability beyond the three case studies. Finally, this study only took into account aspects of militarization and defence policies, future research could conduct an analysis on other areas of policy making to get a more general overview on the effects of securitization globally.

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Appendix A: Economic Data of Claimant countries

A.1 Economic Data Vietnam

| Vietnam | GDP per Capita Growth | GDP per Capita Current US\$ | GDP Growth | GDP Current US\$ | GDP PPP Constant 2017 International Dollars | Military Expenditure % of GDP | Military Expenditure in Billion US \$ |
|---------|-----------------------|-----------------------------|------------|------------------|---------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 2010 | 5.364% | 1317.891 | 6.423 | 115.932 | 447.704 | 2.31% | 2.67 |
| 2011 | 5.16% | 1525.116 | 6.24 | 135.539 | 475.642 | 1.98% | 2.69 |
| 2012 | 4.156% | 1735.141 | 5.247 | 155.82 | 500.6 | 2.35% | 3.3 |
| 2013 | 4.317% | 1886.672 | 5.422 | 171.222 | 527.742 | 2.40% | 3.4 |
| 2014 | 4.873% | 2030.262 | 5.984 | 186.205 | 559.321 | 2.28% | 4.25 |
| 2015 | 5.571% | 2085.101 | 6.679 | 193.241 | 596.679 | 2.44% | 4.72 |
| 2016 | 5.12% | 2192.215 | 6.211 | 205.276 | 633.738 | 2.48% | 5.1 |
| 2017 | 5.731% | 2365.622 | 6.812 | 223.78 | 676.91 | 2.28% | 5.1 |
| 2018 | 6.018% | 2715.276 | 7.076 | 245.214 | 724.806 | 2.22% | 5.45 |

A.2 Economic Data of The Philippines

| The Philippines | GDP per Capita Growth | GDP per Capita Current US | GDP Growth | GDP Current US | GDP PPP Constant 2017 International Dollars | Military Expenditure % of GDP | Military Expenditure in Billion US dollars |
|-----------------|-----------------------|---------------------------|------------|----------------|---------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|
| 2010 | 5.561% | 2217.47 | 7.334% | 208.369 | 556.13 | 1.222% | 2.438 |
| 2011 | 2.116% | 2450.7 | 3.858% | 234.217 | 577.587 | 1.205% | 2.701 |
| 2012 | 5.091% | 2694.30 | 6.897% | 261.921 | 617.423 | 1.159% | 2.899 |
| 2013 | 4.959% | 2871.43 | 6.751% | 283.903 | 659.103 | 1.242% | 3.377 |
| 2014 | 4.611% | 2959.64 | 6.348% | 297.484 | 700.942 | 1.09% | 3.103 |

| | | | | | | | |
|-------------|--------|---------|--------|---------|---------|--------|-------|
| 2015 | 4.682% | 3001.04 | 6.348% | 306.446 | 754.44 | 1.139% | 3.336 |
| 2016 | 5.547% | 3073.65 | 7.149% | 318.627 | 798.735 | 1.093% | 3.332 |
| 2017 | 5.396% | 3123.23 | 6.931% | 328.481 | 854.095 | 1.306% | 4.96 |
| 2018 | 4.867% | 3252.09 | 6.341% | 346.842 | 908.258 | 0.859% | 2.843 |

A.3 Economic Data of Malaysia

| Malaysia | GDP per Capita Growth | GDP per Capita Current US | GDP Growth | GDP Current US | GDP PPP Constant 2017 International Dollars | Millitary Expenditure % of GDP | Millitary Expenditure in Billion US dollars |
|-----------------|------------------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|
| 2010 | 5.624% | 9040.566 | 7.425% | 255.017 | 578.512 | 1.511% | 3.854 |
| 2011 | 3.666% | 9372.008 | 5.294% | 297.952 | 621.862 | 1.575% | 4.692 |
| 2012 | 3.96% | 9743.105 | 5.473% | 314.443 | 668.156 | 1.433% | 4.507 |
| 2013 | 3.27% | 10061.71 | 4.694% | 323.277 | 691.871 | 1.521% | 4.916 |
| 2014 | 4.595% | 10524.07 | 6.007% | 338.062 | 734.948 | 1.455% | 4.919 |
| 2015 | 3.688% | 10912.15 | 5.092% | 301.355 | 750.777 | 1.528% | 4.532 |
| 2016 | 3.041% | 11244 | 4.45% | 301.255 | 783.874 | 1.405% | 4.169 |
| 2017 | 4.383% | 11736.84 | 5.813% | 319.112 | 829.297 | 1.116% | 3.495 |
| 2018 | 3.362% | 12131.49 | 4.77% | 358.715 | 890.019 | 0.979% | 3.47 |

Appendix B: Summary of the speech analysis

B.1 Vietnam speech analysis average number of words per year

| <i>Vietnam</i> | <i>Sovereignty</i> | <i>Territorial Integrity</i> | <i>National Security</i> | <i>Urgency</i> | <i>Threat</i> | <i>Provocation</i> | <i>Strategic Interest</i> | <i>Protect</i> | <i>Confront</i> | <i>Violation</i> | <i>Non-Securitized</i> |
|-----------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 2010 | 3 | 0.83 | 0.33 | 0.67 | 0 | 0.17 | 0.5 | 0.5 | 0.33 | 2 | 1.67 |
| 2011 | 2.75 | 0.5 | 0.38 | 0.37 | 0.37 | 0.25 | 0.375 | 0.25 | 0 | 2 | 1 |
| 2012 | 1.6 | 0.5 | 0 | 0.4 | 0 | 0 | 0.2 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 2.2 |
| 2013 | 1.33 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0.5 | 2.33 |
| 2014 | 1.75 | 0.50 | 0 | 0.25 | 0 | 0.75 | 0 | 1.25 | 0 | 1.5 | 0.5 |
| 2015 | 1.33 | 0 | 0 | 0.67 | 0 | 0 | 0.33 | 0 | 0 | 0.67 | 3.33 |
| 2016 | 3 | 0.14 | 0.14 | 0.57 | 0 | 0 | 0.57 | 0.14 | 0 | 1.33 | 1.57 |
| 2017 | 2 | 0 | 0.33 | 0.33 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1.33 |
| 2018 | 2.57 | 0.29 | 0 | 0.71 | 0.29 | 0.71 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0.86 | 0.29 |

B.2 The Philippines speech analysis average number of words per year

| <i>The Philippines</i> | <i>Sovereignty</i> | <i>Territorial Integrity</i> | <i>National Security</i> | <i>Urgency</i> | <i>Threat</i> | <i>Provocation</i> | <i>Strategic Interest</i> | <i>Protect</i> | <i>Confront</i> | <i>Violation</i> | <i>Non-Securitized</i> |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 2010 | 0.17 | 0.83 | 0.33 | 0.67 | 0 | 0.17 | 0.5 | 0.5 | 0.33 | 2 | 1.67 |
| 2011 | 0.11 | 0.5 | 0.38 | 0.37 | 0.375 | 0.25 | 0.375 | 0.25 | 0 | 2 | 1 |
| 2012 | 2.10 | 0.50 | 0 | 0.4 | 0 | 0 | 0.2 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 2.2 |
| 2013 | 1.4 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0.5 | 2.33 |
| 2014 | 0.2 | 0.5 | 0 | 0.25 | 0 | 0.75 | 0 | 1.25 | 0 | 1.5 | 0.5 |
| 2015 | 0.43 | 0 | 0 | 0.67 | 0 | 0 | 0.33 | 0 | 0 | 0.67 | 3.33 |
| 2016 | 0.25 | 0.14 | 0.14 | 0.57 | 0 | 0 | 0.57 | 0.14 | 0 | 1.33 | 1.57 |
| 2017 | 0.28 | 0 | 0.33 | 0.33 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1.33 |
| 2018 | 1.5 | 0.29 | 0 | 0.71 | 0.29 | 0.71 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0.86 | 0.29 |

B.2 The Philippines speech analysis average number of words per year

| <i>Malaysia</i> | <i>Sovereignty</i> | <i>Territorial Integrity</i> | <i>National Security</i> | <i>Urgency</i> | <i>Threat</i> | <i>Provocation</i> | <i>Strategic Interest</i> | <i>Protect</i> | <i>Confront</i> | <i>Violation</i> | <i>Non-Securitized</i> |
|------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 2010 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0.33 | 0.33 | 0.33 | 0 | 0.67 | 0 | 0 | 2.67 |
| 2011 | 0.25 | 0.375 | 0 | 0 | 0.125 | 0.25 | 0 | 0.125 | 0 | 0 | 3.25 |
| 2012 | 0 | 0.33 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4.67 |
| 2013 | 0.2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0.2 | 0 | 0.2 | 0 | 0 | 3.4 |
| 2014 | 0.25 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0.5 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3.5 |
| 2015 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0.2 | 0.2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3.6 |
| 2016 | 0.5 | 0.125 | 0.875 | 0 | 0 | 0.25 | 0.25 | 0.25 | 0 | 0 | 3.875 |
| 2017 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0.33 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4.67 |
| 2018 | 0.25 | 0 | 0.25 | 0 | 0.25 | 0.25 | 0.25 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1.5 |

Appendix C: Speech Analysis Source List

Vietnam

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