Justifying Japan's Securitized ODA

Japan's Justification of the Maritime Safety Capability
Improvement Official Development Assistance Project
for the Philippine Coast Guard

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Abstract

While the global foreign aid trend has shifted closer to security, the Development Assistance Committee prohibits donor countries from giving aid for military purposes or the donor countries' security interests. Many scholars observed that several projects of Japan's Official Development Assistance are, to a large extent, military aid or driven by national interests. In this paper, I answer the research question: How does Japan justify the maritime safety capability improvement ODA project for the Philippine Coast Guard? Guided by the concept of foreign aid as a foreign policy tool and the Copenhagen School's securitization theory, I conducted a critical discourse analysis of 25 official documents from the Japanese government. I found that Japan utilizes a securitizing move as a means to justify its ODA project. Through the securitizing move, Japan motivated that the referent objects, including the Asia-/Indo-Pacific region and Japan, are facing existential threats, comprised of maritime risks and the disrespect to the rule of law in the region.

Keywords: securitization of aid; Official Development Assistance; Japan's ODA; bilateral aid; critical discourse analysis

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List of Abbreviations

ASEAN	Association of South East Asian Nations
CDA	Critical Discourse Analysis
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
DOC	The 2002 ASEAN-China Declaration on the Conduct of the Parties in the South China Sea
FOIP	Free and Open Indo-Pacific
IMF	International Monetary Fund
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency
LDC	Least Developed Countries
METI	Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry
MOFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
ODA	Official Development Assistance
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
PCG	Philippine Coast Guard
SDF	Self-Defense Force
STEP	Special Terms for Economic Partnership

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1. Introduction

With rapid changes across the world, the 21st century has experienced a shift in development focus and practice (Kilby 2012; Keukeleire & Raube, 2013). While postcolonial and neocolonial thinking gained dominance towards the end of the 20th century, development practice, including development assistance or foreign aid in the 21st century, has stepped closer to security thinking (Kilby, 2012). The United States, for instance, increased its security assistance budget for the Department of Defense from 5.5% in 2002 to 21% in 2006, most of which was allocated to Iraq and Afghanistan (Kilby, 2012). Apart from states' governments, intergovernmental organizations have also been pulling security issues closer to their development assistance projects. The European Union, for example, started to include the headline *Security and Development Nexus* in the Report on the Implementation of the European Security Strategy from 2008 (Keukeleire & Raube, 2013), indicating a tighter interconnection between security and development realms.

Some of the development assistance projects mentioned above were carried out under the name *Official Development Assistance* (ODA). The ODA is a framework established by the Development Assistance Committee (DAC), part of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). Through ODA projects, developed countries, as donors, would help promote economic development and welfare of developing countries, as recipients, without targeting their own interests (OECD, 2020). In other words, the ODA initiative assures that donor countries would not take advantage of recipient countries or lure them into a so-called debt-trap seen across Africa and Latin America in the late 20th century. According to the DAC, aid provision can occur in many forms, including training

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on construction engineering, providing medical assistance, or building integrity trust funds (OECD, 2020).

However, not all foreign aid project is considered as ODA. Military aid and aid that promotes donor countries' security interests, such as financing military equipment or services, are not eligible as ODA (OECD, 2016; 2020). The only approvable case of the transfer of military personnel and equipment is those for humanitarian assistance purposes (OECD, 2020). In other words, although the foreign aid trend in the 21st century has been placing a greater emphasis on the security dimension, ODA can only be used for recipient countries' development purposes, but neither for military nor national security purposes of the donor countries.

1.1 Background and Research Problems

When ODA and security are brought closer, the dilemma appears with the concept of *security*. Security is a field that has traditionally been military-oriented (Hughes and Meng, 2011). However, the DAC prohibits military aid. Thus, there are possibilities that some ODA with heavy security focus might step on the borderline of the DAC's guidelines- either deliberately or unintentionally. In this thesis, I explore such ODA projects as they have gained popularity, especially among the donors' community, since the beginning of the 21st century. With many studies already investigating Western[1] donors, such as the United States and Western European countries, this study addresses an empirical gap by shedding some light on the Asia-Pacific, the region undergoing rapid development and growth. Among donors in this region, Japan is one of the influential actors, as Jain (2016, p.107) refers to as an "Asian model for foreign aid," with its net overseas development assistance ranks among the top ten in the world (Myers, 2016).

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[1] By Western donors, I refer to Western countries in a geographical sense. This is because, many times, Japan regards itself as a 'Western' country, as it is developed and has long been a member of the OECD.

Japan's ODA can be divided primarily into two types: bilateral and multilateral aid (MOFA, 2020). Bilateral aid refers to aid that is directly allocated to developing countries and regions, while multilateral aid contributes to international organizations, such as the World Bank or the International Monetary Fund (IMF) (MOFA, 2020). In this study, I investigate bilateral aid because my focus is on Japan as the primary aid donor. Furthermore, bilateral aid has an aspect of being a geographical policy tool (Apodaca, 2018), which is related to the security-leaning approach of foreign aid in the 21st century. Bilateral aid can be further divided into grants and government loans (MOFA, 2020). Grants refer to any transfer in cash, goods, or services for which no repayment is required (Shimomura, 2017). Technical cooperation, such as training programs for technicians or engineers, also falls into this category (MOFA, 2020). On the other hand, loans are any transfers that require repayment (Shimomura, 2017). According to the DAC, they should be soft loans, meaning that the interest rate should be lower than if recipient countries had otherwise borrowed from commercial banks (OECD, 2020).

Every five to six years since 1962, the Committee has published the *OECD Development Assistance Peer Review* [2] to monitor, assess, and give recommendations to donor countries' ODA activities. Despite being one of the most dedicated donors, Japan's ODA approach has been criticized by the Peer Review that it often provides ODA for national interests instead of addressing the improvement of developing countries (OECD, 2011; 2014). In the Peer Review launched in 2010, for instance, the DAC expressed concerns over Japan's Special Loans for Economic Partnership (STEP) programs, which were created to provide loans tied to the purchase of Japanese goods and services (Feasel, 2015). In other words, through various ODA projects, Japan lent money to developing countries to buy products manufactured in Japan, which is one way to enhance Japan's economy. Although such projects were not given to any of the Least Developed Countries (LDCs), the economic ties still posed some concerns to the DAC because one of the

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[2] Sometimes referred to as the *DAC Peer Reviews of Development Cooperation*. There are five Peer Review of Japan published on the OECD's webpage: 1995, 1999, 2003, 2010, and 2014

purposes of STEP-based ODA projects carries the element of Japan's national interests. Hence, the DAC recommended that Japan seek to untie its ODA loans "further" (OECD, 2011).

Such an action when donors use ODA projects to achieve their interests is not rare. Many scholars straightforwardly treat foreign aid as a political tool, a means through which donor countries acquire their interests from recipient countries. Morgenthau regarded foreign aid policy as a "weapon in the political armory of the nation" (Morgenthau, 1962, p.309) and argued that it had no difference from the diplomatic or military policy. Abbott (1973) also highlighted that donor countries often use foreign aid projects to attain particular objectives regardless of how politically independent the recipients are. In Japan's case, after being criticized in the Peer Review, Japan showed attempts to move closer to the DAC's guidelines by developing greater awareness on policies for humanitarian projects (OECD, 2014; Jain, 2016). Nevertheless, Feasal (2015, p.97) saw the action as a strategy to "garner favor in international policy circles" rather than a sincere gesture to follow the DAC's recommendations.

As seen, Japan has been standing at a questionable position regarding the DAC's prohibited types of aid. Besides, Japan's ODA program seems to be more engaged in military-related activities, which is a reflection of domestic politics. In the past decade, with the rise of conservatism at home, Japan has been increasingly active in remilitarization and maritime security. One of the manifestations is the lift of the ban on military intervention in 2014. Since the end of World War II, Japan had been prohibited from "the use of force as means of settling international disputes" (Japanese Cabinet, n.d.). However, in 2014, the Abe administration announced a revision of the postwar defense policy and, for the first time since the end of the war, allowed the Japanese Self-Defense Force (SDF) to exercise collective self-defense overseas (McCurry, 2014; Spitzer, 2014).

Japan's military and security cooperation activities with other states have been increasing, and this is reflected in ODA projects (Yamamoto, 2017). Japan's primary strategic area is the Asia-/Indo-Pacific region, especially ASEAN, because of the shared watering borders. ASEAN is a quasi-suprastate (Buzan et al., 1998), comprising ten Southeast Asian countries, including Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam. Having long been Japan's area of most important foreign economic and political interests (Degnbol-Martinussen & Engberg-Pedersen, 2003) and security concerns (MOFA, 2019), ASEAN countries have been among the top recipients of Japan's ODA, sharing 26.9% of Japan's overall loan disbursement in 2017 (MOFA, 2020).

The maritime safety capability improvement project for the Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) is one example of military-related ODA projects (Grønninga, 2018). Through this initiative, signed in 2013, Japan provided the Philippines with an 18.7 billion yen-worth loan to purchase Japanese manufactured vessels for the PCG (JICA 2013; Yamamoto, 2017). The provided vessels are defined as *military vessels*, according to the Japanese Ministry of Economy, Trade, and Industry (METI)'s Export Control Trade Ordinance (Yamamoto, 2017). Consequently, the project is, many times, referred to as *military aid* or *aid-based military cooperation* (Grønninga, 2018). Therefore, not only is it a STEP-based project, through which the Philippines has to promise to utilize Japanese shipbuilding technologies (JICA, 2013), but also the focus of this project seems to fall close to the DAC's prohibited types of aid, specifically military aid.

Another contradiction surfaces when, on the diplomatic front, Japan always portrays itself as the promoter and follower of the rule of law. At the opening of the 13th IISS Asian Security Summit in 2014, for instance, Prime Minister Abe of Japan remarked, "Japan for the rule of law. Asia for the rule of law. And the rule of all for all of us" (Japanese Diet, 2014). This speech intrigued me to see how Japan justifies its questionable ODA projects and maintains the self-image as the upholder of the rule of law to the international community, especially the DAC. Therefore, I place

the focus of this paper on the maritime safety capability improvement ODA project for the PCG. This specific project is often raised as a prominent case of Japan's military-related foreign aid. Furthermore, the Philippines is among the top four ASEAN recipients, following Vietnam, Indonesia, and Thailand, respectively (MOFA, 2020). As a recipient of a large share in Japan's ODA budget, its significant position as a regional player, and its active participation in Japan's maritime security activities, the Philippines is an outstanding case worth investigating.

There are primarily two aspects of the maritime safety capability improvement project for the PCG: the national economic interests and the military-related perspective. Since existing literature focuses more on the former aspect, I investigate Japan's bilateral aid that could be considered military assistance. Scholars from security and development disciplines, such as Yamamoto (2017) and Trinidad (2018), regard this project as one of Japan's *securitized ODA* projects. According to Buzan et al. (1998), securitization is a process through which actors demonstrate that the object in focus is under threats and, thus, they can take extraordinary measures to protect the object from those threats. This way, their action would be justified, although it might be against the rule of law (Buzan et al., 1998).

However, the process of securitizing ODA projects has not been sufficiently discussed in detail in the security or development field. In fact, most studies on the securitization of Japan's foreign aid tend to focus on the reasons or causes[3], and there seems to be a lack of discussion on how exactly Japan securitizes such a project and communicates to the world. Therefore, I aim to identify and understand the process of securitization of Japan's maritime safety capability improvement ODA project for the PCG and how Japan uses it as a way to present the project, and potentially other similar projects, to be in line with the DAC principles.

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[3] see Yamamoto (2017), Koga (2019), and Zhao (2019)

1.2 Research Question

This thesis aims to answer the following research question:

How does Japan justify the maritime safety capability improvement ODA project for the Philippine Coast Guard?

The research question is set on the assumption that the maritime safety capability improvement ODA project to the PCG has a military element and can be seen as military aid. The premise is set after a preliminary literature review on the project and Japan's current ODA trends. To answer the question, I focus on the concept of securitization as it is particularly relevant for this case study, especially in helping explain the process through which Japan securitizes the project and how it could potentially help Japan justify.

1.3 Objectives

Although foreign aid in the 21st century has stepped closer to security, there have not been many studies investigating or explaining how they are brought together and related, which are among the most fundamental elements to understand this phenomenon. With the emphasis on the DAC's principles, I want to know how donor countries ensure that their military-related projects are qualified as ODA while carrying out the projects in the ways they intended to. Most of the time, however, scholars only provide the reasons why ODA is securitized and how observers, such as the citizens or the DAC, perceived them.

Thus, I aim to explore how Japan justifies or securitizes its ODA projects, by focusing on the maritime safety capability improvement project for the PCG, as this focus is the foundation to understand other aspects of the securitization of ODA projects. I hope to draw a more explicit connection between development and political or security agendas, possibly how one is used for justifying the other, in Japan's ODA discourses. I aim to explore what kind of reasons states use as a justification for violating the DAC's principles. As mentioned, the securitization of

development has become a rising phenomenon around the world. Therefore, I hope that this thesis' design or findings could be used in a more generalized context, such as looking at how other countries justify their ODA projects by securitization. Moreover, Japan has been regarded as the model of aid in Asia, with South Korea and China following its path (Jain, 2016). Hence, it is worthwhile, not only to explore one of the most current foreign aid trends in Asia but also to get a view of the development assistance directions to which South Korea and China might head in the future.

1.4 Disposition

Following the introduction, this thesis is divided into five parts. The first section presents a literature review, providing readers with academic discussions on contemporary Japan's ODA, its security concerns, and the securitization. The review would give readers an understanding of the current scholarly debates and demonstrate the literature gap that inspired this research. The second part is a theoretical framework section, through which I introduce and explain theories used as guidance for this study. Thirdly, I discuss methodology, covering research design, data collection, and analytical strategies. At the end of the methodology section, I connect theories and methods to illustrate their synergetic roles in the analysis. The following part is the analysis, which I divide into four sub-sections following the analytical strategies. In the final part, the conclusion, I readdress the findings to answer the research question. I also provide discussions and recommendations for future studies.

2. Literature Review

Among the discussion over Japan's ODA, one of the prominent issues is Japan's national interests. For years, Japan's ODA has been criticized for seeking merely its economic interests instead of adopting the principle of providing aid as a gift like other DAC donors (Jain, 2016). Despite the criticism, Japan was still mainly focusing on major infrastructure projects, such as roads and bridges (Jain, 2016), which often require recipient countries to purchase Japanese technologies through the STEP-based system, yielding benefits for domestic firms. Recently, these concerns over economic interests have been replaced by those over security interests.

The phenomenon where Japan imposes a more robust security approach to its ODA is referred to, by Yamamoto (2017) and Trinidad (2018), as *securitization of development assistance.* In this literature review, I shed some light on the studies of the securitization of Japan's ODA by reviewing academic literature on Japan's military-related ODA projects and the drivers behind this phenomenon. Through this review, I demonstrate a lack of study on the *process* of securitization of ODA projects and how Japan communicates or justifies such actions to the public or the international community. I divide this chapter into four topical parts, starting from the introductory concept of Japan's ODA's securitization. Following, I review literature that discusses the drivers behind Japan's securitizing moves. Then, I introduce Japan's security concerns. In the final part, I draw some expectations of my potential thesis's results based on the reviewed literature.

2.1 Securitization of Development Assistance

Japan-initiated ODA projects began in 1954 after the Second World War. Yoshimatsu (2017) said that, throughout its history, the ODA had taken many transformative turns, and the two crucial of which occurred in the 1980s and the 2010s. In the 1980s, Japan's ODA strategy focused on the economic interests of the country. While the ODA served multiple purposes and addressed various issues in

developing countries, fulfilling Japan's economic interests were the most outstanding characteristic of the ODA (Yoshimatsu, 2017). Jain (2016) also mentioned that this feature of Japan's ODA during that period posed concerns to the DAC since it seemed to neglect development issues, such as poverty reduction and empowerment of communities in the recipient countries, which should have been the main focus of donor countries when giving aid. Instead, it only focused on approaches that provided economic benefits for Japan (Jain, 2016).

Yoshimatsu (2017) continued that, in the 2010s, however, Japan's ODA's emphasis shifted from national economic interests to the political economy and national security due to changing external environments. In a similar light, Koga (2019) demonstrates how Japan has been focusing on the security element in ODA cooperation with other countries, especially ASEAN members, by giving several empirical examples. One of the instances is the increase in a tailored bilateral collaboration with each ASEAN country to gain political support (Koga, 2019). Among those bilateral relations, the "Japan-Philippine dialogue" stood as the most illustrative case (Koga, 2019). From September 2016 to February 2019, 14 rounds of Japan-Philippine dialogue were held at both summit and foreign ministerial level (Koga, 2019), through which leaders of the two countries met and discussed cooperative issues, including the ODA and security. This initiative of Japan shows that it sees the bilateral cooperation with the Philippines as significant. Apart from the Philippines, Vietnam is another outstanding player, to which Japan provided six coastguard vessels (Koga, 2019). Koga (2019) mentioned that Japan and Vietnam also declared their shared interests in ensuring stable sea lanes of communication and the rule of law.

On the other hand, Yamamoto (2017) has a different opinion when it comes to the period that Japan started to take a more security-led approach to the ODA. He argued that the approach has been gradual since the 1990s, driven by domestic politics at home. Domestically, the Japanese government went through significant structural reforms throughout the end of the 20th and the beginning of the 21st

century. Before that time, ODA was mainly discussed among Japanese bureaucrats, whose target was to enhance the country's economic growth since they had control over major Japanese firms (Yamamoto, 2017). However, the reforms had changed domestic politics significantly. One of the fundamental changes was the expansion of the prime minister's authority and the increasing influences of politicians on the decision-making regarding the ODA policies (Yamamoto, 2017). Therefore, after the reforms, politicians have been given more chances to express their opinions on ODA strategies, meaning that its objectives and tasks have been shared more widely among different councils within the Cabinet Office, and the country's security happened to be one of the new objectives of the ODA (Yamamoto, 2017).

Yamamoto's (2017) argument converged with those of Yoshimatsu (2017) and Koga (2019) that, in the 2010s, Japan's security approach towards ODA was boosted even more by the changing security environment in the region. During this time, the maritime domain stands out as one of Japan's significant emphases. Yamamoto (2017) gives an example of Japan's ODA project on maritime safety capability improvement to the Philippines in 2013 and 2016, through which Japan provided the Philippines with patrol boats and vessels.

2.2 The Reasons for Securitization

While the securitization of Japan's ODA had both internal and external drivers (Yamamoto, 2017), the primary focus of this thesis is at the beginning of the 2010s, on which both Yoshimatsu and Yamamoto agreed that it was driven primarily by external factors. Yamamoto (2017) points out that regional politics in East and Southeast Asia plays a crucial role in shaping Japan's foreign policies, including the ODA. This argument is supported by other scholars, including Yoshimatsu (2017), Trinidad (2018), Koga (2019), and Zhao (2019), who attribute the changes in ODA strategies to the external factors of the region's changing security environment. Since the 2010s, Japan has been facing situations of uncertainty, and the most seemingly threatening one is China's growing influence in the region across multiple dimensions, including economic, diplomatic, and militaristic

(Yoshimatsu, 2017; Trinidad, 2018; Koga, 2019; Zhao, 2019). Koga (2019) further discussed that the rise of China's influence had created an uncertain atmosphere in the regional balance of power that had been maintained since the end of WWII, and it shook Japan's concept of security.

Since Yamamoto (2017) pointed out that maritime security is one of the most prominent topics raised in Japan's ODA policies in the 2010s' securitization, I look closer into the maritime domain. Within this area, Yamamoto (2017) and Trinidad (2018) also regarded China as a significant player as it has proved many times that it possesses both the wills and capabilities to act belligerently, especially in the South China Sea area that China claimed as a part of the greater China strategy. This argument corresponds with Koga's and Zhao's shared observations on how the rise of China poses a great concern to Japan's security concept. Furthermore, Yamamoto (2017) showed that China would also use military force, if necessary, which would pose threats to the rule of law. In his article, Koga (2019) raised an example when China did not follow international agreements, such as the Arbitral Tribunal's award, ruling that China's claim on its rights to resources in the South China Sea was incompatible (Ridderhof, 2016). These cases signal that the rule of law might not be an effective tool for Japan to interact with China. Thus, scholars, observing Japan's securitization of ODA, believe that Japan has been exercising ODA in a more politicized and securitized way since the beginning of the 2010s as one of the ways to address the changing security climate in the region, and China's growing assertiveness is one of the prominent issues.

2.3 The *Free and Open Indo-Pacific* Strategy

Due to the changing power balance in the region, Japanese policymakers reacted by trying to be the main actor in shaping a regional order instead of being directed by China (Hosoya, 2019). However, Japan itself is under many limitations and restrictions. Koga (2019), for example, points out that those actions cannot come out as too explicit because Beijing might take it as a pretext to act even more assertively. Also, Yamamoto (2017) stated that Japan's actions could not show

direct military contributions because of the many legal restrictions, including the country's Pacifist Constitution. With those limitations, Koga (2019) argues that Japan has been employing *tactical hedging*, or "a declaratory policy doctrine that aims to utilize temporal strategic ambiguity to understand and determine whether any long-term strategy shift is necessary or possible" (p.289). In other words, Japan remains in an ambiguous position and tries to create favorable geopolitical environments in Asia through unassertive means like trade policy and foreign aid (Yoshimatsu, 2017). As argued by Koga (2019), one of its solutions is to seek to enhance cooperation with other so-called *liked-minded* countries, such as the United States and ASEAN countries. Since 2016, such cooperation has been carried out through an official framework called the *Free and Open Indo-Pacific* Strategy (FOIP).

FOIP is a strategy through which Japan partners with other like-minded states along the Indian Ocean and the Pacific Ocean by assisting nation-building, infrastructure development, and human development (Koga, 2019). Although not explicitly declared by the Japanese government, FOIP is a part of the ODA because it appears many times in Japan's White Paper on Development Cooperation, one of Japan's core ODA documents. FOIP has its scope in the Indo-Pacific region because the Japanese government seeks to enhance the *connectivity* between countries in Asia and Africa along these two Oceans (Koga, 2019). *Connectivity* refers to "the expansion of trade and investment ties helped by improved infrastructure" (Berkofsky, 2019, p.1), and one of its key areas is maritime security, such as maritime law enforcement, sea lane security, and the rule of law (Koga, 2019). In the discussion of maritime security and the ODA, Yoshimatsu (2017) points out that Japan seeks to promote maritime security affairs and support maritime infrastructure while simultaneously enhancing political and strategic partnerships.

As demonstrated, the South China Sea dispute stood out as one of Japan's biggest maritime security concerns when it comes to China (Yamamoto, 2017), and there is a likelihood that the Chinese maritime assertiveness would rise in the future

(Koga, 2019). As such, scholars do not see Japan's ODA projects on maritime security as initiatives driven for development. Japan's provision of patrol boats to countries in the Indo-Pacific, such as the Philippines, is instead seen as a new balancing strategy against China despite being delivered under the name of ODA (Yamamoto, 2017; Trinidad, 2018). As the Philippines is the main player against Beijing in the South China Sea issue, it is reasonable that Japan has been active in strengthening the bilateral cooperation, primarily through the maritime safety capability improvement ODA project for the PCG (Koga, 2019).

2.4 Discussion

Most academic works on Japan's securitized ODA projects focus on the regional politics and security perspective, especially the rise of China. When referring to the maritime safety capability improvement ODA project for the PCG, scholars tend to conclude it as one of Japan's strategies to promote military cooperation with the Philippines or sometimes even consider it as a military aid project. However, many do not account for the DAC's principles by which Japan needs to abide when providing ODA. Japan would have been criticized if it told the DAC and the international community that the project was created to contain China's influences or to promote its security in the South China Sea. Therefore, it is significant to look into how Japan securitizes those projects and frames the narratives to be conveyed to the international community. I hope to bring the development and security side of Japan's securitized ODA projects closer by trying to understand how Japan makes those projects appear *acceptable* or *justifiable.* Therefore, I aim to fill this literature gap by investigating how Japan securitizes its, according to Yamamoto, *securitized ODA projects* in the official ODA-related documents.

Based on the literature review, I expect that the Indo-Pacific region would play an essential role in the ODA documents related to the maritime safety capability improvement project for the PCG. Since the project focuses on maritime safety, I also expect to see Japan emphasizing this area as the central issue of the project. Furthermore, due to Japan's grave concern over China's influence in the South

China Sea and the Indo-Pacific region, I expect that Japan would try to mention Beijing's actions in its documents. However, since Japan is adopting the tactical hedging strategy and is restrained from acting aggressively, Japan might not be so explicit in calling out China in the documents.

3. Theoretical Framework

In this chapter, I introduce theories and concepts used as a framework for this research, including foreign aid as a foreign policy tool and the Copenhagen school's securitization theory. The first concept will help set the structure of the ODA in general and argue how it can be used as a tool for foreign policies. The securitization theory explains how actors make non-traditional security issues, such as foreign aid, a security issue.

3.1 Foreign Aid as a Foreign Policy Tool

As development assistance or foreign aid is central to the study, it is essential to clarify the lenses through which this paper uses to look at aid. I employ the concept of foreign aid as a foreign policy tool as the first theoretical framework. Foreign policy is one of the means that states utilize to achieve national interests, in the economic and security aspects (Morgenthau, 1962). Despite the attempt to focus more on development purposes, such as poverty eradication, foreign aid has long been used as a foreign policy tool for aid-giving countries to achieve goals with or from recipient countries. The concept aligns with the focus of this study on aid securitization. It helps establish an understanding that foreign aid can be used as a tool to benefit the donor countries' national interests, such as security.

In one of the classic studies, Morgenthau (1962) discussed foreign aid, in its early years (the 1950s-1960s), in relation to foreign policies. For Morgenthau, foreign aid is a type of a foreign policy tool, through which a giver aims to achieve its goals. With the emphasis on the US, he mentioned that it should not be asked whether the US should have policies for foreign aid, but rather what kind of policies the country should take. He meant that foreign aid is, undoubtedly, considered and should be treated as a foreign policy tool. During the early years of foreign aid, the US' aid policies were weak- with too many objectives and activities, responding to all sorts of demands. Consequently, Morgenthau suggested that aid programs should be

identified with a more specific category, so that donor and recipient countries would have a better standard of judgment over foreign aid projects.

Consequently, Morgenthau (1962) introduced six categories of foreign aid, including 1) humanitarian aid, 2) subsistence aid, 3) military aid, 4) prestige aid, 5) bribery aid, and 6) aid for economic development. Among these, humanitarian aid is the only type considered nonpolitical, yet "it could perform a political function when operated in a political context" (Morgenthau, 1962, p.301). Seemingly, most foreign aid programs, to a certain extent, are operated with underlying political agendas, according to Morgenthau. Applying this concept to the thesis, Japan's ODA projects, excluding those defined as humanitarian aids, are operated with some political aims, and those aims are likely tailored to benefit Japan.

Morgenthau's concept of military aid seems to be a suitable approach to look at Japan's securitized ODA project to the Philippines. Foreign aid for military purposes is not a new concept as it has been a traditional way for countries to form and maintain alliances (Morgenthau, 1962). Traditionally, one country would provide money, matériel, and training, and the other would supply manpower. Later on, during the 1960s, Morgenthau explained that military aid was no longer contained merely to alliances, but it was also extended to uncommitted countries to convince them to ally. Moreover, military aid could also be delivered under the guise of other types of aid. Morgenthau (1962) shows that aid for military purposes could be given in the nature of prestige aid by showing modernity and power of the donor country, instead of merely seeking military alliances.

Although Morgenthau explored foreign aid as a tool for foreign policies in the early days of ODA, the works of more recent scholars, such as Apodaca (2017), show that the idea is not yet outdated. Even in the 21st century, in addition to promoting the economic development of developing countries, donor countries still use foreign aid to achieve their interests (Apodaca, 2017). Similar to Morgenthau, Apodaca (2017) discussed various purposes and types of foreign aid. Among those, security

is one of the main focuses on states' foreign policy agendas (Apodaca, 2017). From this perspective, foreign aid is not merely created to assist the improvement of recipient countries despite being marketed as development assistance. Instead, the decision-making before carrying out any ODA projects has been vastly influenced by donor countries' interests.

In detail, Apodaca (2017) shows that donor countries do not provide aid to just any developing countries; rather, they allocate money to the countries based on their priorities or concerns. Thus, donor countries would give aid as incentives or payments for approved behaviors to access and influence domestic and foreign affairs of recipient states. To look specifically into the security dimension, Apodaca (2017) argues that foreign aid for security purposes can be given in the form of economic or military support to prevent recipient countries from allying with the enemy's side. Therefore, the strategy of foreign aid for security purposes has and will continue to have a significant influence on how states allocate their ODA budget and focus (Apodaca, 2017).

Applying this concept to the case study, I treat Japan's ODA as a foreign policy tool that Japan utilizes to achieve its national interests. Assumingly, Japan aims to obtain national interests through the maritime safety capability improvement ODA project for the PCG, which is closely related to security and military affairs.

3.2 The Copenhagen School's Securitization Theory

Now that the foundation perceiving foreign aid as a foreign policy tool is established, it is significant to explore the theory of securitization. By understanding how countries make non-traditional security concerns, such as development, a security issue, readers will be able to see better how Japan engages ODA into the security dimension.

The securitization theory I use in this paper originated from the Copenhagen School, which was introduced in the 1990s by Barry Buzan, Ole Wæver, and Jaap de Wilde.

Traditionally, security issues have always been associated with military affairs and the use of force (Buzan et al., 1998). In such a conventional context, security is about the survival of states. When states face, what they are convinced and presented to them as threats, they tend to ignore the norms and adopt extraordinary mechanisms to deal with those threats. The use of extraordinary measures, such as military intervention or the use of force, then, becomes justifiable in handling those threats. In other words, by using 'security' as a reason, states declare an emergency condition claiming the "the right to use whatever means necessary to block the threatening development" (Buzan et al., 1998, p.21).

While the process of securitization remains similar, security issues started to expand to encompass other schemes towards the end of the 20th century. The use of the term *security* was no longer contained only to military affairs or defense. Instead, the scope of security agendas had become much more extensive, covering non-traditional security issues, including institutions, environment, and even identities (Buzan et al., 1998). Within this broader agenda, the *securitizing actors*, or those who securitize issues, are no longer limited to states or governmental representatives. Anybody or entity can undertake securitization. These securitizing actors perform *securitizing moves*, which happen when the actors frame a specific issue as an *existential threat* in relation to the particular character of the *referent object* in focus (Buzan et al., 1998; Sjöstedt, 2017).

To further elaborate, Buzan et al. (1998) explained that the existential threat is not necessarily a real existing threat; rather, things can become a threat when the securitizing actors view and present them as such. Following that, a referent object is anything that is seen to be existentially threatened and has a legitimate claim to survival (Buzan et al., 1998), such as a state, sovereignty, or the environment. The urgency and seriousness of the threats and the importance of the referent objects would help *justify* actions undertaken "outside the normal bounds of political procedures," such as to break the political norms or rule of the games (Buzan et al., 1998, p.23-24). Thus, framing that the referent object is facing existential threats

would enable the securitizing actors to handle those threats with emergency or extraordinary measures (Buzan et al., 1998; Sjöstedt, 2017).

However, securitizing moves do not automatically make the securitization successful, as Buzan et al. (1998) noted that securitization is not fulfilled solely by claiming for existential threats nor by breaking the rule. Instead, a successful securitization happens when the *audience* accepts it as such. The audience, in this case, is any individuals or groups of individuals, such as other states, the media, public opinion, and individual agenda-setters, that the securitizing actors convince to accept exceptional procedures through the securitizing moves (Buzan et al., 1998; Zimmermann, 2017). With a sign of acceptance, such as formal or legal recognition of the securitizing moves, the move will become a successful securitization (Buzan et al., 1998). In other words, the decision on whether the securitization is successful depends on the judgment of audiences, instead of the securitizing actors.

3.2.1 Securitization and Foreign Policy

The argument of the Copenhagen School's securitization theory is often applied to domestic fronts, e.g., how governmental officials motivate their rationale when using forces against rebels. However, several scholars have utilized this concept to explain situations in international affairs, especially foreign policies. For instance, Zimmermann (2017) tried to apply the principles of the securitization theory to foreign policy on overseas military intervention.

Zimmermann's (2017) argument aligns with the Copenhagen School's securitization theory on how successful securitization is determined by whether the audiences accept the securitizing moves. Besides, he emphasized the need to investigate the *construction of security* in the securitizing moves more deeply. To elaborate, he sees the construction of security as "the (historical) process whereby threats are defined, and measures to combat it are proposed and implemented" (Zimmermann, 2017, p. 228). In other words, it is not only the static action of

framing the existential threat or claiming that security is needed but also the process through which that threat became a threat in the first place, as well as the process of developing the countermeasures. The key to a successful securitization, especially when exporting it beyond national territory is the "constituted social, bureaucratic, and linguistic circumstances that are (re)created and transformed" through the active interaction between the securitizing actors and the audiences (Côté (2016) as cited in Zimmermann, 2017, p.229). Securitizing moves are likely to be successful if backed up by convincing historical narratives and established practices.

Zimmermann (2017) conducted three case studies on the overseas military intervention of the US, Germany, and Japan. In the early postwar period, Japan was undergoing economic development and recovery from the war. The country operated under the narrative that foreign military intervention was a threat and counter-productive to the success of the country. However, in recent years, especially under the Abe administration, the Japanese government has been trying to revise Article 9 of the Constitution, which prevents Japan from maintaining air, land, and sea forces (Japanese Cabinet, n.d.). The attempt to revise the constitution has been opposed by many pacific opposition parties as well as the public. The efforts to do so are not reflected merely in the attempt to pass the revision in the Diet, the Japanese parliament. Instead, the Abe administration also tries to reshape the public views on military intervention and security by showing that Japan is "surrounded by an increasingly severe security environment" (NSS, as cited in Zimmermann, 2017, p.238), and foreign military intervention would be a positive contribution to the security of both international community and Japan. With such a narrative, the Japanese government tries to justify its stance on foreign military intervention.

Combining the original Copenhagen School's securitization theory and the expansion from Zimmermann's study, this theory helps to understand Japan's securitization of ODA better. Straightforwardly, the Japanese government is the

securitizing actor, and the DAC's member states, as well as the wider international community, are the audiences. Japan might use the securitizing move as a way to justify the maritime safety capability building ODA project for the PCG since the project stands at the borderline of the DAC's guidelines. With securitizing moves as a reason, securitizing actors would take extraordinary measures to protect the referent objects from existential threats. Thus, I will look into the elements of securitizing moves, including the referent objects and existential threats, in the analysis. Zimmermann's piece provides additional guidance to focus on the process whereby threats are defined as well as the active interaction between the securitizing actors and the audiences.

3.2.2 Securitization and Speech Acts

Since securitizing moves involve interaction and communication between the actors and audiences, a speech act is a significant aspect of the securitization process. Buzan et al. (1998) define a speech act as a concept in language theory used to describe the process of securitization- how the reasons behind the securitizing moves are given and explained. The use of language, through this view, is not treated only as a communication tool, but also perceived as having "social effects of power on audiences" (Yongtao, 2010, p.89). As such, the framing of existential threats could be considered as a speech act, through which securitizing actors claim and frame something as a threat by persuading that extraordinary measures, such as breaking the rules, were necessary.

In the foreign policy front, states utilize language to achieve their policy goals and strategies (Yongtao, 2010), including convincing the audiences to accept its securitizing moves. In the security discourse, security problems do not just exist as such from the beginning; rather, those topics are socially and politically constructed and dramatized as security issues (Yongtao, 2010). Yongtao (2010) elaborated that language in foreign policy is one way that states use to construct the *reality* of security that might benefit their national or security interests. When articulating foreign and security policy agendas, policymakers would try to establish social and

political identities between themselves and the audiences, in addition to the attempt to make their audiences understand the issues (Yongtao, 2010). Those discourses and identities, in turn, affect the interaction between securitizing actors and the audiences in international affairs (Yongtao, 2010).

To summarize and draw all concepts together, Japan carries out ODA projects as a means of promoting its national interests (Morgenthau, 1962), of which security is often among the top priorities (Apodaca, 2017). The process of making non-traditional security subjects become security issues that occurred throughout the past few decades (Buzan et al., 1998) can also be applied to ODA. As a process of securitization, Japan must have framed that certain characteristics of a referent object were facing existential threats as a way to justify its extraordinary measures (Buzan et al., 1998; Zimmermann, 2017), e.g., not following the DAC's definitions and guidelines on the types of eligible ODA. Looking closer at how securitizing actors justify their securitizing moves, the actors' reasons are not sufficient (Yongtao, 2010; Zimmermann, 2017). Instead, an in-depth exploration into how the actors use language to (re)create and transform a security discourse of a certain topic (Yongtao, 2010) and the interaction between the actors and the audiences are significant.

With the guidance of these concepts, I investigate Japan's securitizing moves, in the maritime safety capability improvement ODA project for the PCG. Since the securitizing actor and audiences are solidly identified, I focus on the other two fundamental elements of the securitization theory: referent objects and existential threats. I look into the discourses reflected on the use of language in Japan's official documents related to the ODA project in focus.

4. Methodology

4.1 Philosophical Statement

Before designing the study or diving into data, it is necessary, especially for qualitative research, to have a philosophical discussion clarifying the worldview that guides the research (Leavy, 2017). The fundamental bases of the philosophical part of the research consist of ontology and epistemology. For this research, the ontology, defined as the object of investigation (Porta & Keating, 2012), is Japan's securitizing moves (referent objects and existential threats) and speech acts in official documents and speeches. Epistemology refers to how we know things (Porta & Keating, 2012). This thesis is positioned in the epistemology of interpretivism. Embedded in social constructionism, an academic stance that perceives the physical world as the product of the researcher's order, the interpretivist approach focuses on the subjective meanings constructed and reconstructed through the engagement of people (Porta & Keating, 2012; Leavy, 2017). In the field of international relations, more specifically, this philosophical approach seeks to understand social meanings within international politics that are beyond the field of empirical observation (Lamont, 2015).

Interpretivism matches the approach of this study as it focuses on social meanings, such as speech acts in the securitizing moves, which are empirically unobservable in international affairs. This thesis explores discourses in Japan's maritime safety capability improvement ODA project for the PCG. Those discourses cannot be observed merely empirically and, thus, are treated as subjective knowledge embedded in the use of language and gestures. I investigate the speech acts, which are the result and the cause of the interactions between Japan and other actors in the international theater through language. I also account for the contexts and social meanings surrounding the discourses in the speech acts that Japan conveys in this particular ODA project to the Philippines.

4.2 Design of Study

The interpretivist approach does not aim at testing a hypothesis in research; instead, it seeks to understand social meanings (Lamont, 2015). Thus, I did not set any hypotheses for the study but instead derived some *expectations* from the reviewed literature. This thesis is qualitative in nature as it seeks to dive into the "depth of meaning and people's subjective experiences and their meaning-making processes" (Leavy, 2017, p.124). In answering the research question: *How does Japan justify the maritime safety capability improvement ODA project for the PCG*? it is most suitable to set this study as *exploratory research.* Leavy (2017, p.5) explains that exploratory research is usually used for a "relatively under-researched topic" to fill the literature or knowledge gap. Considering that there is a lack of studies that focus on how Japan securitizes its ODA projects, as demonstrated in the research problem and literature review section, exploration is the suitable aim for this paper.

When it comes to the link between theoretical framework and data, interpretivists do not focus on deriving knowledge from theory and existing knowledge to test a hypothesis or discover causal relationships (Porta & Keating, 2012). On the other hand, they focus on understanding human natures and their interactions (Porta & Keating, 2012). Interpretivists approach the study more inductively, meaning that the researcher is prepared to modify design and approaches while the exploration is in progress (Porta & Keating, 2012). Therefore, all the theories and concepts introduced as the framework of this thesis will not be used to test for hypotheses on the case study; however, they will be guidelines in narrowing down specific terms or concepts when investigating the discourses. The securitization theory, in particular, has set some directions for me to search for key elements of securitization in the data, including the concepts of referent objects and existential threats.

4.3 Data Collection

I use document-based research to collect data from primary sources. The securitization theory highlighted that, with states as the securitizing actors, the discourses in securitizing moves are likely to be expressed in their official statements. Therefore, I use documents published by the main actors directly involving in Japan's ODA, including the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA), the Japanese Cabinet, and Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA). MOFA acts as a reporter or the main communicator of Japan's ODA as it usually receives the most attention from the international community. The Japanese Cabinet represents the Prime Minister of Japan and his Cabinet. Hence, the institution is responsible for launching and archiving speeches and statements related to ODA, delivered by the Prime Minister and other members of the Japanese Diet. Finally, JICA is an organization responsible for implementing ODA projects overseas (MOFA, 2020). These three institutions deal directly with Japan's ODA and present the Japanese government's positions and approaches of the ODA to the international audiences. Therefore, the elements of securitizing moves, including referent objects and threats, are expected to be found in documents and speeches launched by these organizations.

As mentioned, these institutions periodically publish reports and other types of documents related to ODA. As the literature review suggested that the current trend of Japan's securitization of the ODA started in the 2010s, I initially set the timeframe of the documents to be in the 2010s (2010-2019). However, since the ODA project in focus of this thesis- the Maritime Safety Capability Improvement for the PCG, started in 2013, I narrowed the timeframe to be from 2013-2019. From the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, I used the annual *White Paper on Development Cooperation* (2013-2018), one of Japan's ODA flagship documents, as it summarizes the projects and prospects of the program each year. Besides, I used documents that focus specifically on the ODA to the Philippines and the strategic partnership, including the Development Cooperation Policy for the Philippines,

Rolling Plan for the Philippines, and Action Plan for Strengthening of the Strategic Partnership.

From the Cabinet, I used the Prime Minister's Shinzo Abe's speeches and official statements related to ODA projects to the Philippines as well as other security issues. From JICA, I gathered documents on Maritime Safety Capability Improvement for the PCG Phrase I and II, including project summaries, an Ex-Ante report, and press releases. From all the reports, I focused specifically on the sections or chapters relevant to Japan's securitized projects and, hence, did not use the whole reports.

I also looked through all the press releases, speeches, and official statements throughout the past decade, archived on the web page of MOFA, the Cabinet, and JICA. The selection process is divided into two steps. First, I set some keywords related to Japan's securitized ODA projects to the Philippines as a criterion. These keywords are derived from important concepts found in the literature review and the theoretical framework section. I primarily choose documents published from 2013 to 2019 that, at least, mentioned two of the following terms: *development cooperation; Asia-Pacific; Indo-Pacific; maritime; Official Development Assistance*; *the Philippines; Philippine Coast Guard; safety; security;* the *South China Sea; threats;* and *vessels.* After primarily filtering the documents, I read through all of them and only selected those relevant to the theories and methods of this study. The complete list of documents, 25 in total, is in the following table.

Table 4.1: List of Documents for Analysis

Institution	Type	Year	Document title
MOFA	Annual report	2013	Japan's Official Development Assistance White Paper
	Annual report	2014	Japan's Official Development Assistance White Paper
	Annual report	2015	White Paper on Development Cooperation
	Annual report	2016	White Paper on Development Cooperation
	Annual report	2017	White Paper on Development Cooperation
	Annual report	2018	White Paper on Development Cooperation
	Policy paper	2015	Action Plan for Strengthening of the Strategic Partnership
	Policy paper	2018	Country Development Cooperation Policy for the Republic of the Philippines
	Policy paper	2018	Rolling Plan for the Republic of the Philippines
	Press release	2014	Japan-Philippines Summit Meeting
	Press release	2014	Japan-Philippines Foreign Ministers Meeting
	Press release	2015	Japan-Philippines Summit Meeting (June)
	Press release	2015	Japan-Philippines Summit Meeting (November)
	Press release	2015	Japan-Philippines Joint Declaration A Strengthened Strategic Partnership for Advancing the Shared Principles and Goals of Peace, Security, and Growth in the Region and Beyond
	Press release	2016	Japan-Philippines Summit Meeting
	Press release	2016	Japan-Philippines Foreign Ministers' Meeting
	Press release	2017	Japan-Philippines Summit Meeting (January)
	Press release	2017	Japan-Philippines Summit Meeting (October)

JICA	Project report	2013	Ex-Ante Evaluation (for Japanese ODA Loan)
	Press release	2013	Signing of Japanese ODA Loan Agreement with the Republic of the Philippines
	Press release	2016	Signing of Japanese ODA Loan Agreement with the Republic of the Philippines
	Press release	2016	JICA beefs up support to PH maritime safety; dispatches Japanese experts to train Philippine Coast Guard
	Press release	2019	JICA to bolster PH maritime safety with new technical cooperation with PCG
Cabinet	Speech	2014	The 13th IISS Asian Security Summit -The Shangri-La Dialogue-Keynote Address by Shinzo ABE, Prime Minister, Japan
	Speech	2017	Press Conference by Prime Minister Shinzo Abe Following His Visit to the Philippines, Australia, Indonesia and Viet Nam

4.4 Analytical strategy

After gathering the data, I proceeded to the analysis using case study and critical discourse analysis.

4.4.1 Case study

The case study method is applied in this study to look closer at how Japan justifies securitized, military-related ODA projects. The case I am focusing on is the Maritime Safety Capability Improvement of the Philippine Coast Guard Phrases I and II. This case represents Japan's securitized, military-related ODA projects that it also carries out with other countries in the region, including Vietnam (Grønninga, 2018; JICA, 2020). I chose the Philippines because, after a preliminary literature review, the Philippines stood out among other countries due to a considerable share in Japan's annual ODA budget and its role as an active actor in Japan's activities on security and military cooperation, especially in maritime security. Thus, among

all the recipient countries of Japan's securitized, military-related ODA budget, there is more data on the Philippines.

I set the objective of this research to understand the process, through which Japan securitizes its ODA, and hope to apply the findings to other cases of Japan's securitized ODA projects. I apply a theory-building approach to this case study. According to De Vaus (2012), this approach focuses on generalizing a concept from data analysis on a specific case. The case study method will allow me to look at the securitized, military-related ODA projects in general and provide an overview of the project in the focus of the study. As such, it helps establish an understanding sufficient for the following analytical strategy- critical discourse analysis.

4.4.2 Critical Discourse Analysis

Once getting a deeper understanding of the case, I proceeded to conduct a discourse analysis of Japan's official documents. Fairclough (2006, p.4) describes the term *discourse* in social theory as "different ways of structuring areas of knowledge and social practice." According to Jørgensen & Philips (2002), discourse analytical approaches are rooted in the claim of structuralist and poststructuralist linguistic philosophy. Researchers who employ discourse analysis look at reality through the interpretation of linguistic forms of communication (Lamont, 2015); this notion is in line with the epistemological stance clarified above.

In discourse analysis, language is not merely a reflection of a pre-existing reality; instead, it also contributes to the construction of reality (Jørgensen & Philips, 2002). In the context of international relations, researchers employ discourse analysis to investigate how events in international politics are given meanings, (re)constructed, and evolved through the use of language (Yongtao, 2010). Yongtao (2010) further explains that actors in international relations do not just communicate using random words or phrases; they often carefully select, refine, and reshape words to tell and retell the 'reality.' As such, I seek to understand not only the content of texts but also the assumptions of how the world is constructed through the use of language

by the actors (Lamont, 2015), which is the Japanese government. This analytical strategy aligns with the concept of speech act and the securitization theory that view the use of language as an actor's powerful tool to interact with audiences.

There are multiple strands within discourse analysis. For this paper, I use Fairclough's method of critical discourse analysis (CDA). CDA has the emphasis of being *critical*, a perspective that looks at agents, which is the Japanese government, and how they are driven by their own needs and interests (Wodak, 2011). The aspect of actors' interests corresponds with the concept of foreign aid as a foreign policy tool, which motivates that donor countries are driven by their national interests to provide foreign aid to developing countries. Hence, this analytical approach is a suitable tool as I look at how Japan, driven by its own interests, uses language to securitize its military-related ODA projects. Furthermore, in CDA, recipients of the discourses are not passive towards texts that they receive (Wodak, 2011). Instead, the readers or hearers have a dynamic relationship with the discourse and the actors, which corresponds with the role of *audiences* in the securitization theory where audiences are active players in the securitization process and act as judges on whether the securitization is successful.

To zoom in more closely, Fairclough sees social structures as consisting of both discursive and non-discursive elements (Jørgensen & Philips, 2002). A primarily non-discursive element is the physical practice, such as the construction of infrastructure, while discursive elements are practices involving the production of texts, such as journalism and publications (Jørgensen & Philips, 2002). This view fits the focus of this thesis as the actual ODA projects and resources, such as vessels, can be seen as non-discursive elements, whereas the policies, official documents, and speeches are discursive elements. These two elements are essential contributors to the analysis of discourses.

In his work, Fairclough (2006) introduces a three-dimensional model as an analytical framework for CDA. The model consists of three elements, as a guide

for researchers to focus on when analyzing data, including discursive practice, texts, and social practice. Fairclough (2006) notes that the model does not have to be strictly in order, and it is not necessary to give all the elements the same amount of focus. The implementation of this model could be adjusted according to the purposes and design of research.

1. Discursive practice

According to Fairclough (2006), discursive practice is an analysis of how texts are produced, distributed, and consumed. In his book, Fairclough focuses on the linguistic aspect, such as identifying the discourses drawn upon in the texts (interdiscursivity), analyzing the sorts of transformation that the discourses undergo (intertextual chain), or figuring out the features that are manifested in the text (manifest intertextuality). In addition to the linguistic aspects, Jørgensen & Philips (2002) suggested a more generic approach to analyze discursive practice by focusing on the process through which texts undergo before they are printed or the changes they undergo from the production, distribution to the consumption across other texts.

2. Texts

Fairclough (2006) treats texts as a way to interact; thus, to analyze texts is to look at "large-scale organizational properties of interactions, upon which the orderly functioning and control of interactions depends" (p.234). The focus is on the *agents*- who control interactions by looking at the linguistic characteristics of texts (Fairclough, 2006; Jørgensen & Philips, 2002). The tools to analyze texts include, but not limited to, interactional control, metaphors, themes, wordings, and grammar. Fairclough gives some examples of approaches to focus on when analyzing texts, such as transitivity- whether the sentence is formulated in an active or passive voice. This would allow the researcher to determine whether the agents take their responsibility in the discourse by using active voices or try to reduce the agency through passive voices (Jørgensen & Philips, 2002).

3. Social practice

Social practice is a broader umbrella to which texts and discursive practices belong as critical discourse analysis focuses not only on language but also on social phenomena and non-discursive practices (Fairclough, 2006). Fairclough (2006) put that the objective of social practice analysis is to explore the characteristics and nature of social practice to which the discourse practice belongs and how the discursive practice affects the social practice and vice versa. As such, among the three elements of CDA, social practice is the least structured and gives researchers the flexibility to choose their approach. The researcher can focus on aspects, such as how particular social relations and structure contribute to the reproduction and transformation of discursive practices (Fairclough, 2006).

To summarize, I follow the CDA and use the three-dimensional model as the primary analytical tool to explore and analyze texts on the case study: Maritime Safety Capability Improvement ODA project for the PCG. The analysis is guided by the two theoretical frameworks: foreign aid as a foreign policy tool and the Copenhagen School's securitization theory. Table 4.2 below gives a comprehensive overview of how the theories and analytical strategies interact and complement each other in the analysis.

Table 4.2: The Roles of Theories and Analytical Strategies in the Analysis

Analytical strategy (case study):
The Maritime Safety Capability Improvement ODA project to the PCG

		Issue/question in focus	Issue/question in focus
Theoretical Framework	*Securitization theory*	Referent objects	Threats
Analytical strategy (critical discourse analysis)	*Discursive practices*	How are texts produced, distributed, and consumed?	
	Texts	What are the referent objects of the ODA project? How does Japan frame the referent objects in the texts, and why? To what extent and how does Japan express its agency on referent objects through texts?	What are the existential threats of the ODA project? How does Japan frame the existential threats in the texts, and why? To what extent and how does Japan express its agency on existential threats through texts?
	Social practices	How does the discourse on referent objects relate to broader social practices? **(Theoretical Framework**: *Foreign aid as a foreign policy tool)* How does the discourse on the referent objects relate to Japan's national interests?	How does the discourse on existential threats relate to broader social practices? **(Theoretical Framework**: *Foreign aid as a foreign policy tool)* How does the discourse on the existential threats relate to Japan's national interests?

4.5 Limitations

It is important to discuss the limitations of the evidence and methodology that I focus on and clarify how I address them. The first limitation is with the empirical data. I am aware that the documents for analysis were all produced by the Japanese government, meaning that the contents are fully controlled by the agent. Thus, statements reflected in the documents might be the product of a well-defined set of foreign policy, presenting only the parts that the Japanese government wants to present. Although this might seem like a limitation, I see it corresponding with the objectives of my thesis. I aim to look at how Japan, as the actor, justifies its policies. Therefore, what Japan presents in its documents would help lead to answering my research question. Furthermore, CDA, an analytical strategy, would help me explore the meanings behind those texts in-depth as well as how the texts affect the relationship between Japan and the audiences of those texts.

Another limitation I would like to clarify is the CDA as an analytical tool. Despite being appreciated in the poststructuralist field, CDA also has criticisms. One of the most frequently addressed critiques is that CDA lacks the structured techniques or guidelines for researchers to follow (Mogashoa, 2014). Fairclough himself addressed this issue in the book, but he did not see it as a disadvantage. Rather, Fairclough (2006) put that there is no explicit rule in ordering the three elements (discursive practices, texts, and social practices), and it is up to each researcher to decide based on the purposes and emphases of the study. Thus, I make sure to address this issue and explain why I organize my analysis in a particular order.

Another criticism concerns the validity and reliability caused by the methods of CDA. Toolan (1997) and Stubbs (1997), as cited in Breeze (2011), put that CDA often fails to approach texts systematically, which could lead to the researcher's subjective interpretation rather than capturing the 'actual' social phenomena (Breeze, 2011). Thus, the result could be affected by personal biases. As the researcher, I am aware of this criticism and address it by incorporating the theoretical framework. My approach towards identifying the discourses is not

entirely random; instead, I follow the securitization theory to focus on the elements of securitizing moves specifically. Furthermore, the concept of foreign aid as a foreign policy tool guides me to emphasize a specific aspect of Japan's foreign aid, which is national interests.

5. Analysis

In this section, I begin with the case study introduction on the Maritime Safety Capability Improvement Project for the PCG to give readers a fundamental understanding of this ODA project. Following, I divide the rest of the analysis into three parts, according to Fairclough's three-dimensional model of critical discourse analysis. The first dimension is the analysis of discursive practice through which I analyze the production, distribution, and consumption of texts. I start with the discursive practice to introduce readers to different types and characteristics of documents, which is essential to understand the texts and social practice. Following that, I conduct a textual analysis to look into the contents of texts. The findings from the discursive practice and textual analysis will together contribute to the understanding of the last analysis section. The last dimension is the analysis of social practice through which I look at how discourses influence social practice and vice versa. Throughout all the three sections, I incorporate the securitization theory and the concept of foreign aid as a foreign policy tool to explain how Japan justifies the ODA project in focus.

5.1 Case study introduction: Maritime Safety Capability Improvement Official Development Assistance Project for the Philippine Coast Guard
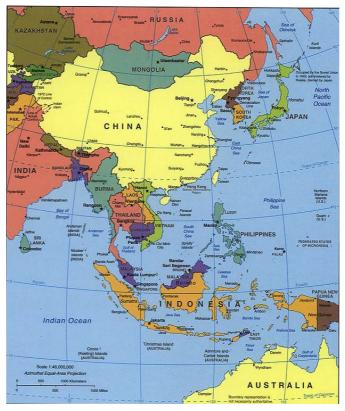
Figure 5.1: Map of the Philippines-Japan borders in the Asia-Pacific region, Public Domain of the Library of Congress (2004)

The Philippines is an archipelagic state in Southeast Asia, located approximately 3000 kilometers in the southwest of Japan (see Figure 5.1). Both countries are located in the Pacific Ocean and are connected by the East China Sea and the Philippine Sea (Figure 5.1). Nine years after its defeat in the Second World War, Japan joined the Colombo Plan in 1954 to assist developing countries through economic cooperation (MOFA, n.d.) and started transferring payments to the Philippines as the war reparation in 1956 (Pante & Reyes (1991) as cited in Topias, 2019). In the same year, the Philippines signed the *Treaty of Peace with Japan*, marking the normalization of their diplomatic relationship (MOFA, 2019). Through the reparation payments, the Japanese government transferred the $550 million worth of finance in the form of machinery, equipment, and technical assistance to the Philippines (Valdepeñas, 1970).

Following the war reparation, the official JICA operations in the Philippines began in the same year of JICA's establishment in 1974 (JICA, n.d.a; n.d.b). Since then, the Philippines has been one of the most prominent recipient countries of Japan's ODA in many sectors, including transportation, infrastructure, agriculture, education, etc. Since the beginning of the 21st century, Japan has been relatively active in carrying out ODA projects related to maritime security in the Asia-Pacific region. In 2006, for instance, the Japanese government decided to donate three patrol boats to Indonesia through ODA, primarily for counterterrorism and anti-piracy (Bergenas, 2012). Apart from Indonesia, the Philippines is also one of the frequent recipients because it is one of the significant maritime states in the Indo-Pacific, Japan's contemporary strategic regions. This study focuses on the *Maritime Safety Capability Improvement Project for the PCG*, which started in 2013.

According to JICA's Ex-Ante Report (2013a), the Maritime Safety Capability Improvement Project for the PCG aims at enhancing the capabilities of the PCG to "quickly and appropriately respond to coastal maritime incidents, such as search and rescue, maritime law enforcement, etc." (p.3). To do so, the Japanese government agreed to provide the PCG with Multi-Role Responsive Vessels (MRRVs) (40m-class) as well as consulting services regarding the vessels, including tendering support and construction supervision. The project was proposed in line with the Philippines' development policy and Japan's development assistance strategy for the sustainable economic growth of the Philippines (MOFA, 2018a). Furthermore, both Japan and the Philippines have been emphasizing the importance of the maritime safety sector under their 'Strategic Partnership' scheme announced in September 2011.

The project was divided into 2 phases: Phase I was signed at the beginning of the project in December 2013, and Phase II was signed in October 2016 (JICA, 2013b; 2016b). The amount of loan for Phase I was 18,732 million yen, and that for Phase II was 16,455 million yen (JICA, 2013b; 2016b). The money was used to procure vessels by utilizing Japanese shipbuilding technologies as requested by Japan. In

other words, the Philippines had to use the money, borrowed from Japan, to purchase vessels from Japan, who would periodically hand over the vessels throughout the project. The project would be completed once all vessels are delivered, which is January 2018 and June 2021 for Phase I and II, respectively (JICA, 2013b; 2016b). Although divided into two phases, they are often mentioned without being specified by phases. Therefore, both phases are, many times, inextricable when appeared in ODA-related documents.

After two years following the completion of each Phase, JICA would evaluate the project using quantitative and qualitative dimensions. Quantitatively, the institution would focus on the annual operation hours of all MRRVs and the number of scheduled patrols conducted per year. On the qualitative side, JICA would evaluate whether the increase of vessels under the PCG possession has fulfilled the project's objective, which is the PCG's capability to respond to maritime activities, including search and rescue and maritime law enforcement (JICA, 2013a). In the following section, I look specifically into discourses of the securitizing moves that appeared in ODA-related documents.

5.2 Analysis of Discursive Practices

The discursive practice focuses on the production, distribution, and consumption of texts (Fairclough, 2006; Jørgensen & Philips, 2002). In this study, I look at the discursive practice of all the 25 documents selected for analysis. I focus more on the functions of each document instead of their linguistic characteristics. Consequently, I take a more generic approach, as suggested by Jørgensen & Philips (2002), instead of Fairclough's linguistic aspect. I also look at institutions that handle these texts: MOFA, the Japanese Cabinet, and JICA. Broadly speaking, all of these institutions are part of the Japanese government. However, each of them deals with different types of texts using different processes. There are five types of documents in the analysis, including **annual reports, policy papers, project report, speeches, and press releases.**

5.2.1 Annual Reports

The first type is annual reports, specifically *Japan's ODA White Paper 2013-2014* and *White Paper on Development Cooperation 2015-2018*, produced by MOFA. Despite having different titles, they are essentially the same document in nature and function. The White Papers are produced as the annual report of Japan's ODA projects, covering all aspects whether it is geographical (e.g., Asia, Africa, and Latin America), thematic (e.g., education, agriculture, or governance), or operational (e.g., planning, implementation, or evaluation of projects). The White Papers do not pay attention to particular ODA projects as they comprise a lot of general information. The central focus of the White Papers is Japan's ODA activities in the past year.

The White Papers are published on MOFA's website in English and Japanese, meaning that they are intended to be distributed to the public audiences. Thus, it is clear that one way of consumption takes place online. On the information page in all the White Papers, it stated that "this White Paper can also be viewed on the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) website…". This sentence indicates that the White Papers are printed and delivered to other places as well, potentially to overseas JICA offices or the Japanese Embassies. However, it is not easy to trace to where the documents have been sent. Furthermore, as one of the core documents on Japan's ODA, the White Papers are also scrutinized in the DAC's peer review of ODA.

5.2.2 Policy Papers

The second type of document is policy papers. They include the *Action Plan for Strengthening of the Strategic Partnership 2015*, the *Country Development Cooperation Policy for the Republic of the Philippines 2018, and* the *Rolling Plan for the Republic of the Philippines 2018*. MOFA produced the Action Plan as an annex of the Joint Declaration between Japan and the Philippines in 2015 (MOFA, 2015a), a diplomatic event to strengthen the relationship between the two countries. The contents of the Declaration and the Action Plan focused more on peace and

security rather than directly addressing the ODA. The ODA topic appeared in the section where Japan discussed the ODA project for the PCG as a contribution to regional peace and security. This document is archived on MOFA's website, indicating that the distribution and consumption are through an online platform. Also, since the document is a product following a diplomatic meeting, it is distributed among and consumed by the Philippines' governmental officials.

The Country Development Policy and the Rolling Plan were also produced by MOFA. The Country Development Policy served as the guidance of Japan's ODA projects to the Philippines, especially on priority areas of development from 2017 - 2022. The Rolling Plan is an annex of the Country Development Policy, listing all Japan's ODA projects that fall under the focused period. Those projects are divided into categories based on priority areas stated in the Country Development Policy. Published on MOFA's website, these two documents are distributed and consumed online. They are also published on JICA's website (with a direct link to MOFA's page), signaling that these two institutions are cooperating in promoting Japan's foreign aid projects. Furthermore, both documents are likely to be consumed together as the Rolling Plan is an annex of the Country Development Policy.

5.2.3 Project Report

The only project report used in this thesis is the Ex-Ante Evaluation (for Japanese ODA Loan). JICA produced this report before the beginning of the implementation of the Maritime Safety Capability Improvement Project for the PCG (Phase I) in 2013. Although it was not a project proposal per se since the project had been approved, it acts like one as it includes a project description, the necessity, timeline, and targeted outcomes. Since this document only focuses on one project, it contains detailed information, especially the rationale behind the project and the evaluation plan. Although the document is available online via JICA's website, the distribution is relatively limited as the paper is not shown on JICA's main 'Philippines' page[4].

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[4] See https://www.jica.go.jp/philippine/english/index.html

Thus, readers who access this document would have to access JICA's archived directories and specifically look for a report on the maritime safety capability improvement project for the PCG.

5.2.4 Speeches

This thesis analyzes two speeches from Prime Minister Abe. The first one was given in English as the keynote address at the 13th IISS Asian Security Summit- the Shangri-La Dialogue in Singapore in 2014. The Summit is a 'track-one' defense meeting, through which ministers of participating countries debate and discuss the region's alarming security challenges (IISS, 2020). Participating countries are not only those in Southeast Asia or Asia but also countries from other regions, such as the United States, France, and Chile. The speech was given as a medium, specifically to representatives of other countries with diplomatic relationships with Japan, who gathered to discuss security climates in Asia. The document was created to note the speech and published on the Cabinet's website. This also means that not only the state's representatives in the Summit but the speech was also distributed to and consumed by the public.

The other speech is from the press conference following the Prime Minister's visit to the Philippines, Australia, Indonesia, and Vietnam (Japanese Cabinet, 2017). At the press conference, Abe delivered an opening statement followed by answers to journalists' questions. Both parts were originally in Japanese and later translated into English. Similar to the keynote speech at the IISS Asian Security Summit, this document was published as a part of a diplomatic event that Japan attended, and the English version is available on the Cabinet's website, which means it is distributed through an online platform. However, they differ in the way that this press conference was initially delivered to Japanese media.

5.2.5 Press Releases

Press releases account for the majority of the documents I use for analysis, with MOFA and JICA as the two primary sources. From MOFA, there are *Japan-Philippines Summit Meeting 2014*, *Japan-Philippines Foreign Ministers Meeting 2014*, *Japan-Philippines Summit Meeting 2015 (June)*, *Japan-Philippines Summit Meeting 2015 (November)*, *Japan-Philippines Joint Declaration*, *Japan-Philippines Summit Meeting 2016*, *Japan-Philippines Foreign Ministers' Meeting 2016*, *Japan-Philippines Summit Meeting 2017 (January)*, and *Japan-Philippines Summit Meeting 2017 (October)*. All of these documents were produced as a summary following diplomatic events, which, according to Koga (2019), have been increasing in frequency since the beginning of the 2010s. In those events, governmental officials from Japan and the Philippines discuss bilateral relationship and cooperation of different aspects, such as economics, politics, and security. Compared to other types of documents, texts from press releases are specific and concise, although none of them gives much attention to the specific ODA project. Most of the time, the maritime safety capability improvement project is mentioned as a part of bilateral cooperation for peace and security. All of MOFA's press releases were published on MOFA's websites, meaning that the summarized versions of those diplomatic events are distributed to the public or anyone with access to the internet. However, they are less likely than annual reports, policy papers, and project reports to be printed or sent to other institutions.

Press releases from JICA include *Signing of Japanese ODA Loan Agreement with the Republic of the Philippines 2013*, *Signing of Japanese ODA Loan Agreement with the Republic of the Philippines 2016*, *JICA beefs up support to PH maritime safety; dispatches Japanese expert to train Philippine Coast Guard 2016*, and *JICA to bolster PH maritime safety with new technical cooperation with PCG 2019*. JICA's press releases are also specific and concise. Furthermore, these documents are distributed on JICA's website, making the distribution and consumption most likely to occur online. However, they are different from MOFA's press releases

because they focus specifically only on the maritime safety capability improvement project for the PCG.

The inclusion of ODA projects into diplomatic or bilateral relation discussions and MOFA playing a crucial role in producing ODA documents show that Japan uses foreign aid as a foreign policy tool. This is apparent when diplomatic documents, such as policy papers and press releases following bilateral Summit meetings, featured Japan's ODA projects. The maritime safety capability improvement project for the PCG, in particular, allows Japan to stretch the development cooperation to the security realm. However, most documents do not discuss the project in detail, and the only document that does so (the Ex-Ante report) has relatively limited access. It could signal that Japan might intentionally want to avoid presenting the detailed information of the project to the public. In the following section, I look into how Japan uses language to communicate with the audiences of its securitized, military-related ODA project through documents.

5.3 Textual Analysis

As discussed in the methodology section, the textual analysis focuses on the agent who controls interactions and discourses through the use and characteristics of the language (Fairclough, 2006). In this section, I investigate how Japan uses language to justify the maritime safety capability improvement project for the PCG. The project is considered as a securitized, military-related ODA, which stands at the borderline of the DAC's principles. With the guidance of the Copenhagen school's securitization theory, I focus on the *securitizing moves*, the process through which a securitizing actor frames an issue as an existential threat to the referent object in focus (Buzan et al., 1998). Buzan et al. (1998) argued that this process would allow the securitizing actor to take extraordinary mechanisms to deal with the defined threats. In this case, Japan acts as the securitizing actor, which also aligns with the concept of the agent of CDA, as both positions accumulate the power to control discourses in texts or speech acts. As such, I specifically look into identifying and analyzing referent objects and threats in the documents.

5.3.1 Referent Objects

According to Buzan et al. (1998), referent objects refer to things, of which existence is perceived to be threatened and have a legitimate claim to survival. In all of the documents analyzed, Japan did not use the term 'referent object' straightforwardly. Still, the notion of referent objects appeared throughout all the documents in other ways of wording, such as the objects that Japan framed as facing risks or needing protection. More precisely, I look at institutions, entities, or countries that Japan claims to be under threats or that peace and stability concerning those objects need to be protected or maintained. The referent objects include the *region* and Japan.

a) *Referent Object I: The "region"*

The first referent object I found is the "region." The *region* has been mentioned many times as an important referent object across all the documents. In the *Action Plan for Strengthening of the Strategic Partnership*, for instance, Japan addresses the "Joint Contribution to Secure ***Regional*** **Peace and Stability**" as the first point in the document, signaling the importance of securing peace and stability of the *region.* The similar notion can also be manifested across all of the documents analyzed:

> (1) "… the relationship between the two countries has entered the stage of Strengthened Strategic Partnership in which the two countries cooperate for *shared principles* and *goals* in ***the Asia-Pacific region*** and beyond…"
>
> (Japan-Philippines Joint Declaration, 2015)

> (2) "Japan and the Philippines *share common goals* of ensuring **peace and stability** in ***the Asia-Pacific region***…"
>
> (Japan-Philippines Joint Declaration, 2015)

(3) "Prime Minister Abe stated that he is grateful that the Philippine government welcome the 'Legislation for Peace and Security,' […] and hope to further contribute to the **peace and stability** of *the [Asia-Pacific] region…*"

(Japan-Philippines Summit Meeting, 2015)

(4) "…[Japan] will make unwavering the **peace and prosperity** of **this region** that stretches *from Asia to the Pacific Rim and still beyond to the Indian Ocean*, linked with Japan by the seas."

(Press Conference by Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, 2017)

(5) "Steady development of the Philippines, *who shares values with Japan*, paves the way for the **stability and peace** of *the Indo-Pacific region* and realization of a *free and open Indo-Pacific.*"

(Country Development Cooperation Policy for the Republic of the Philippines, 2018)

(6) "In order to turn these *[India and Pacific] oceans* into an ocean that brings **stability and prosperity** to the *entire region*, *countermeasures are necessary* to address various factors which prevent economic development such as piracy, terrorism, …, as well as to enhance the connectivity of *the region.*"

(White Paper on Development Cooperation, 2018)

Texts from all of the examples are descriptive and straightforward. It is clear that Japan framed the *region* as the referent object of the maritime safety ODA project for the PCG as it associates the *region* with words that contradict to threats or dangers, such as 'peace,' 'stability,' and 'prosperity.' In other words, Japan claims that the referent object needs to be protected and secured for peace and stability. Example #6 can give a clear visualization. Japan motivates that countermeasures are *necessary* to address factors that prevent the economic development of the

region. By arguing that countermeasures toward threats are needed, Japan is undergoing the securitizing move. Furthermore, to Japan, those threats would prevent economic development, which would also challenge the existence of the *region*. Therefore, the existence of a referent object does not refer to only the physical existence but also the economic well-being of the entity.

While it is clear that the *region* is one of the referent objects in Japan's ODA maritime safety project for the PCG, the term is ambiguous and inconsistent as it is not clear what countries or entities are included in the definition. From the list of examples, the *region* sometimes refers to the Asia-Pacific and sometimes to the Indo-Pacific region. After analyzing all the documents, I found that the key differentiator is the year in which the document was produced. Before 2017, the term *region* was used to refer to the 'Asia-Pacific' region, as seen in examples #1, #2, and #3 above. From 2017 onwards, although Japan still aims at securing the peace and safety of the *region*, the scope of this entity seems to no longer be only on the Asia-Pacific. Instead, Japan's definition of the *region* expanded from the Asia-Pacific to include the Indian Ocean, and it became the 'Indo-Pacific' region[5].

In both terms, Japan refers to the Philippines as Japan's partner in securing the peace and stability for the referent object. Japan often uses the term 'shared,' 'partnership,' or 'common' to emphasize the good relationship and common principles between the two countries. This is a process of establishing a sense of collectivity, which is also a part of a securitizing move. Buzan et al. (1998) mentioned that the sense of collectivity helps actors construct a shared understanding of what is to be collectively responded to as a threat. With words, such as 'contribute to' or 'ensure,' Japan framed such a partnership with the Philippines as the key to support the *region* against threats.

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[5] The *Indo-Pacific* region is an expansion of the *Asia-Pacific* by including countries in the Indian Ocean. In other words, the Indo-Pacific region is larger in a geographical sense. Other aspects, such as geopolitics and security, will be discussed in the Analysis of Social Practices section.

I found two interesting points from this textual analysis regarding the *region* as a referent object. First of all, as the securitizing actor, Japan has control over the discourses and transformed the definition from the Asia-Pacific to the Indo-Pacific region. This aligns with the expansion of Japan's foreign policy's strategic area, which will be discussed in detail in the Analysis of Social Practices section. Secondly, all of the documents analyzed are spoken through the perspective of the Japanese government, and it frames the *region* as an entity that needs to be protected and secured for peace and stability. By doing so, Japan has spoken on behalf of the *region* for what its threats are and how the entity needs to be protected.

The two points are related to the role of agents in texts, which is the focus of CDA. Fairclough (2006) explains that, through texts, agents who speak or write are exercising their control over the interactions of actors and discourse in the texts. In the case of the definition, Japan uses the documents as one of the platforms to define what the *region* as a referent object is. When there was a change in the strategic area, from the Asia-Pacific to the Indo-Pacific, in its foreign policy in 2016, Japan also changed it in the ODA discourse. Furthermore, Japan uses its power as the agent of texts to control the interactions and discourses surrounding the *region* (of either definition)- what it is facing and the protection it needs, through the securitizing move.

b) Referent Object II: Japan

In addition to the *region*, another referent object that frequently appears in ODA-related documents is Japan. In the Development Cooperation Charter 2015, the backbone of Japanese ODA programs, for instance, Japan mentions its national interests as one of the ODA objectives across the paper. The interests of Japan referred to the peace, stability, and prosperity of the country. Similar notions can also be found throughout other documents analyzed:

(7) "As a *maritime* nation, Japan depends largely on maritime transport for the import of energy resources and food. Counter-piracy measures for ensuring the safety of navigation of vessels are issues involving a direct link to ***Japan*'s prosperity and existence** as a nation."

(Japan's Official Development Assistance White Paper, 2013 - 2014)

(8) "Ensuring *maritime* safety is an issue that has a direct link to ***Japan*'s existence and prosperity** as a nation…"

(White Paper for Development Cooperation, 2015 - 2018)

Texts in both examples are explicit. As seen in both examples, Japan straightforwardly uses the term 'Japan's existence as a nation' in relation to security, making itself another referent object in this ODA project. Furthermore, the documents emphasize maritime safety as one of Japan's security concerns. Anything disrupting maritime safety could be considered as a threat to Japan. Consequently, Japan carried out the maritime safety capability improvement ODA project for the PCG as a form of countermeasures to threats.

Through the aspect of the securitization theory, I recognize this process as a securitizing move, through which Japan, as a securitizing actor, claims that a referent object, which is also Japan in this case, faces existential threats. Therefore, any reaction to threats taken in an unconventional or extraordinary means could be justified.

c) Referent Object III: the Philippines (?)
As the Philippines is the recipient country of this ODA project, it is not surprising that the country appeared as the referent object in the documents:

(9) "As a result, ***PCG*** is **limited in its capability** to conduct rescue activities during stormy weather as well as the patrol activities in coastal areas, leading to non-existence of any vessels in some districts, further leading to **limited capability to respond to emergencies** in the event of *maritime* accidents as well as to monitor regularly where needed."

<div align="right">(Ex-Ante Report, 2013)</div>

(10) "The Project aims to improve the capabilities of PCG to quickly and appropriately respond to *maritime incidents* […], by providing finance necessary to procure vessels for PCG, thereby contributing to **safety of *the country*.**"

<div align="right">(JICA's Press Release, 2013)</div>

In example #9, Japan points out that the PCG, part of the Philippine government, lacks sufficient capacity to conduct their tasks, which would otherwise contribute fully to the security of the country. In example #10, Japan motivates that the provision of financial necessity to possess vessels would contribute to the PCG's capacities and, thus, the safety of the country. With the Philippines' safety declared as an objective of the project, it shows that the Philippines was framed as a referent object in these two documents. However, I found the Philippines as a referent object in only two, out of 25, documents analyzed. In other documents, the Philippines was, instead, framed as Japan's partner in carrying out this ODA project:

(11) "Maintaining open and stable seas is **essential** in ensuring **regional stability** and is an imperative issue which ***both* [Japan and the Philippines], as maritime nations**, are ***jointly*** addressing through enhancing capacity of the Philippines Coast Guard (PCG)."

<div align="right">(Japan-Philippines Joint Declaration, 2015)</div>

(12) "Steady development of the Philippines, who *shares values* with Japan, paves the way for the **stability and peace** of **the Indo-Pacific region** and realization of a free and open Indo-Pacific."

(Country Development Cooperation Policy, 2018)

In both examples, Japan still mentions the Philippines but frames it as a partner in ensuring safety for the region, rather than as the referent object per se. This pattern appeared across different documents much more often than the Philippines as the referent object. Japan uses words, such as 'both (countries),' 'jointly,' and 'share,' which constitute the notion of togetherness with the Philippines. Besides words related to collectivity, Japan raises certain objective values and areas that both share, such as being maritime nations (example #11) and valuing the rule of law. As mentioned above, Japan tries to establish a sense of collectivity through texts. In other words, by showing that both countries share values and identities, it would help Japan convince audiences of the securitizing move that both countries face similar threats and, thus, need to respond to them collectively.

Although the Philippines was mentioned as the referent object, the frequency was very low, especially compared to its position as Japan's partner or other referent objects: the *region* and Japan. Furthermore, the only two documents, in which the Philippines appeared to be the referent object, were both published in 2013, the first year of the maritime safety capability improvement project. Documents in later years all referred to the Philippines as Japan's partner. Thus, I conclude that the Philippines does not serve as the referent object but rather as Japan's partner in securitizing this ODA project.

5.3.2 Threats

The other significant element of a securitizing move is existential threats. Existential threats are harms to the existence of a referent object as defined and motivated by the securitizing actors (Buzan et al., 1998). In other words, in the context of the Copenhagen school's securitization theory, threats do not need to

exist objectively, but they are subjective to the securitizing actors, who, through the securitizing move, would try to make them intersubjective (Sjöstedt, 2017). This means that the actors would try to convince and make the audience accept that those are threats. Following, by defining that something is a threat to a referent object, it would allow the securitizing actors to generate and utilize emergency mechanisms beyond rules that would otherwise bind (Buzan et al., 1998).

In this section, I identify threats to referent objects surrounding the case study project. I look specifically into and analyze how the Japanese government defines and motivates them in ODA-related documents. Two primary issues frequently appeared in different documents as threats are maritime risks and the disrespect to the rule of law.

a) Threat I: Maritime risks

As the project is directed at enhancing the PCG's maritime capability, one of the most frequently mentioned threats is maritime risks. Straightforwardly in press releases and the project report, Japan put out a list of concerns or threats in the maritime safety sector that led to the creation of the project:

> (13) "Due to (i) **increase in passenger and freight transport movements between the islands**, (ii) *improper operation* **such as aging vessels or overloading vessels**, and (iii) *natural disasters, the risk of maritime* **accidents have increased in recent years**; leading to an **increasing trend in the number of accident** occurrence in recent years. The average maritime accidents/ year during Year 2008 – 2012 compared with Year 2003 – 2007 have nearly doubled from 209 to 391."
>
> (Ex-Ante Report, 2013; JICA's Press Release, 2016)

(14) "…maritime law enforcement issues have also become important in the midst of *increasing risk* **of smuggling, illegal fishing, illegal possession of arms, terrorism, etc**. In line with the above context, *Maritime Safety has become increasingly important in the region*, where collaboration among the neighboring countries has started."

<div align="right">(Ex-Ante Report, 2013)</div>

(15) "In addition, with this increase in passenger and freight transportation, there has been a *rising risk* **of maritime crime**, and the Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) has developed cooperation relationships with Japan and other neighboring countries accordingly."

<div align="right">(JICA's Press Release, 2016)</div>

(16) "As the flow of people and goods are accelerated, **the *risks* of maritime crimes**… **have increased in recent years**. Accordingly, strengthened crackdown on **smuggling, illegal poaching, illegal possession of arms and terrorism** is *one of the important tasks of the Philippines.*"

<div align="right">(Rolling Plan, 2018)</div>

(17) "Currently, the PCG is spearheading maritime patrols in the West Philippine Sea, Benham Rise, and maritime security in coastal communities to address **smuggling, piracy, and drug trafficking**."

<div align="right">(JICA's Press Release, 2019)</div>

(18) "Our cooperation with the PCG since the 1960s aims to share **Japan's expertise** in maritime safety to **help** the Philippines address **rising maritime accidents** and **other security challenges**."

<div align="right">(JICA's Press Release, 2019)</div>

Japan is straightforward and descriptive in all of the six examples given above. Through the texts, Japan gave an extensive list of examples of maritime risks,

including freight transport movements, natural disasters, maritime crimes, as well as piracy and terrorism. As the agent of the texts, Japan uses adjectives such as 'increased,' 'rising,' and 'improper' to stress how the challenging situations surrounding the Philippines' maritime domain have been escalating and more convincingly reason the provision of vessels to the PCG. For instance, instead of merely mentioning it as 'a risk of maritime crime,' Japan phrases it as 'a *rising* risk of maritime crime' (example #15), assigning urgency to the situation. Furthermore, in example #13, Japan cited statistical proof to strengthen its statement that maritime accidents have been increasing; thus, the provision of vessels is necessary.

In examples #14 and #16, Japan stresses the importance of this maritime safety capacity improvement project for the PCG. In the first case, Japan, again, brings the *region* into the discussion. According to the sentences, Japan motivates that maritime safety is an important issue in the region. Furthermore, example #14 mentioned, "Maritime Safety has become *increasingly important* in the region…," meaning that the level of importance for the maritime safety domain in the region is not static but increasing. It is clear that, in this context, the *region* acts as the beneficiary and the referent object of this project. In example #16, Japan discusses the level of importance in a slightly different context. In this case, it speaks on behalf of the Philippines that combating maritime crimes, such as smuggling and terrorism, was an *important task* for the Philippines. Furthermore, given that the document is the Rolling Plan that JICA follows as guidance for ODA projects for five years, Japan gives the Philippines the responsibility to tackle those maritime crimes throughout the five-year time. Through the texts, Japan, as the agent of texts, defines the necessity of the project for the Philippines. If the DAC sees that the project is relevant and significant, Japan might not be criticized. Thus, the more important the project is framed to be, the more it would benefit Japan as the donor country who is standing at the borderline of the DAC's principles.

In example #18, the threat is still maritime risks. Additionally, Japan uses the words 'Japan's expertise' as well as 'to help the Philippines' in describing the threats and

how to address them. The term *expertise* shows that Japan was confident with its knowledge and capability to help the Philippines address those threats. Although the Philippines was positioned as Japan's partner, it was still framed as inferior to Japan in terms of knowledge and capability. Japan uses its agent position, who has power over texts and, thus, discourses, to assign the Philippines with the inferior position, and the direct responsibility to handle those maritime risks and other security challenges.

b) Threat II: Disrespect to the rule of law (and the South China Sea)
Apart from maritime risks, Japan also refers to threats in other forms of maritime activities. Through the analysis of all documents, another threat that concerns Japan is the disrespectful actions of other entities to the rule of law:

> (19) "The **least desirable state of affairs** is having to **fear** that *coercion and threats will take the place of rules and laws* and that **unexpected situations** will arise at arbitrary times and places."
>
> (The 13th IISS Asian Security Summit, 2014)

> (20) "Moreover, in order to **establish and promote the *"rule of law"* at sea**, Japan is utilizing tools such as ODA to seamlessly support improvement of the law enforcement capacity of maritime security agencies, etc. in ASEAN countries through the provision of patrol vessels, technical cooperation, human resources development, etc."
>
> (White Paper on Development Cooperation, 2016)

> (21) "The principles of maritime safety and freedom of navigation are *extremely important*, and the ***rule of law* must be firmly upheld** in order to ensure those principles. This recognition was agreed upon completely in each nation I visited."
>
> (Press Conference by Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, 2017)

Compared to maritime risks, Japan discusses this threat in a much more indirect manner. In example #19, Japan uses the words 'least desirable state of affairs' to describe having to fear of coercion and threat are results of breaking the rule of law. In other words, to Japan, threats and fear happen when other actors in the international community use coercion or do not follow the rule of law. Similarly, in example #21, Japan mentions the upholding of the rule of law as a way to ensure maritime safety, which is regarded as an 'extremely important' matter. Furthermore, in the press conference, the Prime Minister stated that this notion had been completely recognized and agreed upon in each country he visited. In other words, Japan shows that other countries also support this vision, which is a way to motivate the importance and relevance of the project's objective. These examples demonstrate that Japan regards maritime law enforcement as an important matter, and the breaking of maritime law or the rule of law is seen as a threat.

In a more specific context, the topic of the South China Sea has been raised in the topic of upholding the rule of law at the seas. While Japan has never explicitly claimed that certain countries' actions in the South China Sea are threatening its defined referent objects, some statements about the South China Sea situation are linked to the disrespect to the rule of law. In the IISS Asian Security Summit in 2014, for instance, Prime Minister Abe stated that:

> "We likewise support Vietnam in its efforts to resolve issues through dialogue… Would you not agree that now is the time to make a firm pledge to return to the spirit and the provisions of the ***2002 Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea*** that all concerned countries in the Sea agreed to, and **not to undertake unilateral actions** associated with a permanent physical change?"

From the statement, it is clear that the Prime Minister expressed his concern over the situations surrounding the South China Sea, emphasizing unilateral actions that are against the rule of law. Therefore, I include the South China Sea as a specific

case of disrespect of the rule of law, which Japan sees as a threat. It is important to note that while the South China Sea seems to fit the logic of referent object as an entity to be protected, Japan has never argued in any of the documents that its existence is under threat. Instead, the area acts more as a prominent example or case of the disrespect to the rule of law, especially at the seas, and such an incident is related to the existence of the actual referent objects: the *region* and Japan.

> (22) "So to reiterate [**principles of the rule of law at sea**], it means making claims that are faithful in light of international law, not ***resorting to force or coercion***, and resolving all disputes through peaceful means… *So that is all about common sense, pure and simple.*"
>
> (The 13th IISS Asian Security Summit, 2014)

> (23) "… Prime Minister Abe stated that Japan *shares deep concern with the Philippines* on **unilateral actions to change the status quo, including large-scale land reclamation and the building of outposts in the *South China Sea*.**"
>
> (Japan-Philippines Summit Meeting (November), 2015)

> (24) "*Both* [Japan and the Philippines] *share* **serious concern** on ***unilateral actions to change the status quo in the South China Sea*** including **large-scale land reclamation and building of outposts** which *contravene* the **2002 ASEAN-China Declaration on the Conduct of the Parties in the South China Sea (DOC)**."
>
> (Japan-Philippines Joint Declaration, 2015)

As explained, the South China Sea is a specific case of Japan's concerns over the disrespect to the rule of law. In example #22, Prime Minister Abe specifically refers to the rule of law at sea, showing that Japan's concern is at the seas. In both examples #23 and #24, the name the South China Sea was directly mentioned, stressing that it is a *serious* concern *shared* between the Philippines and Japan.

Again, Japan uses the word 'share' and 'both' to show its alliance with the Philippines. In example #24, the texts mention several keywords related to disputes in the South China Sea, including unilateral actions and change the status quo, which are clear examples of disrespecting the rule of law.

From the texts in example #24, Japan uses the word 'contravene' to emphasize the contradiction between the 2002 ASEAN-China Declaration on the Conduct of the Parties in the South China Sea (DOC) and unilateral actions to change the status quo. The DOC is an international agreement signed between ten ASEAN member states and China in 2002 (ASEAN, 2012). Through this non-binding Declaration, the parties agreed to respect the freedom of navigation in and overflight above the South China Sea, as well as resolve disputes by peaceful means, based on the United Nations Charter and the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (ASEAN, 2012). Moreover, the parties should undertake cooperative activities at the South China Sea through consultations and dialogues (ASEAN, 2012). Therefore, unilateral actions, as Japan mentioned, are contrary to such an agreement. Japan explicitly mentioned 'large-scale land reclamation' and 'building of outposts' as instances of unilateral actions, but it did not specify certain actors committing such actions.

Finally, in example #22, along with talking about respecting international laws, Prime Minister Abe remarked, 'So that is all about common sense, pure and simple.' The tone of the sentence shows a certain level of sarcasm that respecting the rule of law is a simple, logical task. However, according to examples #23 and #24, it is clear that Japan sees that some actors might not be complying with the agreement by exercising unilateral actions and, therefore, do not belong to the side of Japan and the Philippines.

5.4 Analysis of Social Practices

The following step is the analysis of social practices, which zooms out from the language and the discursive practices to focus more on a broader picture (Fairclough, 2006). The social practice focuses on explaining and understanding social phenomena to which the discourses belong and how they affect each other. I incorporate findings from the analysis of discursive practices and texts in this section.

5.4.1 Referent Objects

a) Referent Object I: the region

From the Textual Analysis section, I found that Japan frames the Asia-Pacific or the Indo-Pacific region as the prime referent object, although the project is based solely in the Philippines. This could be explained by the concept of the audience in the securitization theory. According to Buzan et al. (1998), a securitizing move does not automatically become successful; instead, it needs approval from the audiences to become a successful securitization. Thus, choosing the pool of audiences and the strategy for the securitizing move is an important task for a securitizing actor like Japan.

Most of the documents analyzed have an original version in Japanese but were translated and published in English. This means that these documents target audiences who do not understand Japanese. Therefore, the audience pool could be any foreign individuals, institutions, wider international civil society, or other governments. Furthermore, the audiences, especially of those documents based on the development setting (such as the White Papers and press releases produced by JICA), could include the DAC member states for the process of ODA evaluation. Thus, keeping a referent object to a broader scale makes the project appear more relevant and impactful to targeted audiences, especially when such a project is at risk of criticism. Focusing on the bilateral benefits for the Philippines as the referent object would make a logical sense, which Japan briefly did in the two documents in 2013. However, demonstrating that such a project is relevant and has benefits on

a broader international community would give Japan more chances to have this project accepted. Therefore, the *region* is the important referent object of Japan's securitized ODA project to the Philippines in the process of making a securitizing move.

Moreover, the way Japan defines and expands the definition of the *region* can be explained by Morgenthau's concept of foreign aid as a foreign policy tool. The shift in the definition of the *region* in ODA-related documents from 2017 is a relevant move when accounting for contemporary Japanese foreign policy. In August 2016, the Japanese government introduced the *Free and Open Indo-Pacific Strategy* into their foreign policy. According to Satake (2019), there are various reasons why Japan decided to expand the scope of regional focus to involve a greater and more diverse pool of actors. Some believe that Japan uses FOIP to justify its greater military engagement in the Indian Ocean, while Satake (2019) understands FOIP as a 'regional order-building strategy.'

Nevertheless, I found that all of the documents related to ODA started to shift the definition of the *region*, as the referent object, from Asia-Pacific to Indo-Pacific. Furthermore, the FOIP concept started to occupy an entire section in the White Paper for Development Cooperation 2017 and 2018, indicating that the strategy has great importance in the ODA realm. In other words, Japan uses the foreign aid platform to broadcast, promote, and incorporate its foreign policy, showing that the Japanese government treats ODA as a foreign policy tool, which supports Morgenthau's argument.

Besides using foreign aid projects to promote foreign policies, Japan can also more conveniently shape the image of its FOIP strategy. While the Japanese government has been advertising FOIP as an inclusive strategy for regional cooperation, many observers tend not to believe so. Since the establishment, FOIP has been perceived as the strategy for Japan to gain allies to contain the rapidly rising China as well as to counter the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), China's development assistance

program launched in 2013 (Hosoya, 2019; Satake, 2019). The integration of FOIP into the ODA discourses allows Japan to discuss such security issues, which traditionally contain a rigid image, in a development discussion, which portrays a more philanthropic and cooperative image. It could be one way to help Japan convince the foreign policy's audiences that FOIP is, instead, a cooperative scheme. In other words, Japan uses its foreign aid program as a tool to not only fulfill but also benefit its foreign policy.

b) Referent Object II: Japan

In addition to the *region*, the textual analysis points to Japan as the referent object. The instance that states make itself a referent object can happen in the political sector (Buzan et al., 1998). In the case of a strong, liberal-democratic state like Japan, audiences tend to see them as protecting elements of the state from interference and external threats (Buzan et al., 1998). Looking at threats from the Textual Analysis section, both threats: maritime risks and the disrespect to the rule of law, can be considered external threats. As Japan mentioned straightforwardly in the texts, Japan, as a maritime state, depends heavily on stability in the maritime domain. Consequently, maritime risks or threats would pose a huge challenge to Japan. Furthermore, the Philippines is geographically close to Japan, and both share borders at seas. Thus, projects that protect the Philippines would mean, to a large extent, protection for Japan.

However, Japan's ODA is periodically evaluated by the DAC, which prohibits any projects for military purposes or donor countries' national interests. Therefore, although making its own state the referent object is not uncommon, I see Japan's action unexpected due to the leverage of the DAC's principles. Nevertheless, I also see it as a deliberate move because, from the securitization theory's viewpoint, Japan is the securitizing actor of this ODA project. Also, as the producer in the discursive practice, Japan has full control over the production of texts and the discourses surrounding this project. In other words, Japan could have easily hidden the notion of itself being the referent object, but Japan chose to make itself apparent

as the referent object. The motives behind this action must be significant that Japan put itself at risk of criticism from the DAC. However, this matter would require further studies related to motives and strategies in securitizing ODA.

When comparing across different documents, I see that Japan discusses itself as a referent object only in general ODA documents related directly to development assistance, including the Development Cooperation Charter 2015 and the White Paper for Development Cooperation. In a broader ODA setting, Japan talks about securing its national interests through development cooperation with recipient countries. However, I found no such statements in any of the diplomatic meetings or documents. Moreover, Japan also avoids mentioning its own national interests and instead only refers to the *region* as the referent object in diplomatic events.

The avoidance of mentioning its own national interests in a diplomatic setting is, again, related to the concept of the audiences in CDA. In diplomatic settings, such as bilateral summits, the pool of audiences is much narrower than that of the development settings. Often, the Japanese government uses ODA projects as a foreign policy tool to enhance its relationship with other countries. Therefore, mentioning Japan's own interests to these audiences might not be diplomatically appropriate. Japan is perhaps aware of the narratives of the discussions and, thus, refrains from referring to national interests as part of the projects. Instead, the Japanese government makes sure to show the other party that it emphasizes and prioritizes the counterpart's or the region's benefits in diplomatic events.

5.4.2 Threats

a) Threat I: maritime risks

Maritime safety is an important security aspect of both referent objects: the *region* and Japan, as well as the Philippines, the referent object in some rare occasions. For Japan and the Philippines, both are maritime states; thus, ensuring maritime safety would contribute directly and indirectly to both countries. Therefore, it is understandable from both development and security perspectives that Japan is putting efforts into securing waters around the Philippines by providing vessels. Maritime affairs are the critical area of the Asia-/Indo-Pacific region, as many countries are connected by water.

In connection with the FOIP strategy, through which Japan emphasizes the connectivity across the Indo-Pacific region, addressing maritime risks is a relevant action. With a safe maritime climate, Japan would be able to fulfill its foreign policy goal of FOIP in strengthening the connection for regional cooperation. Also, maritime safety would, in turn, contribute to the development of the region as, for example, it could give assurance to foreign investors. With development playing a massive part as the result of framing maritime risks as one of the threats, Japan justifies the maritime safety capability improvement project to the PCG.

b) Threat II: disrespect to the rule of law (and the South China Sea)

Buzan et al. (1998) mentioned that adhering to the rule of law put some self-limitation on the states in conducting certain actions. However, by making something as a threat, it would allow securitizing actors to adopt any exceptional means to protect the referent objects. From this point, the authors raised a very intriguing notion about the rule of law- following the rule of law would give states some level of self-limitation. However, the limitation is a trade-off for regional or international security. Consequently, when countries follow the rule of law and agree to have some capacities limited, they would expect others to do the same. In the case of Japan, if Japan strictly follows the rule of law, e.g., the International Law of the Seas, it would probably expect other countries to follow such laws as

well. From the analysis, I found that Japan highlights and values the *respect* to the rule of law and sees those who do not do so as threats to both the *region* and itself.

The Japanese government expressed concerns over the disrespect to the rule of law in its ODA-related documents. The South China Sea is Japan's major concern because it is one of the most strategic shipping lanes of the Southeast Asian region on which Japan depends economically and existentially (Topias, 2019). Furthermore, it involves many players in the Asia-/Indo-Pacific region, the prime referent object of Japan's maritime safety ODA project for the PCG. Thus, Japan has been advocating for respect to the rule of law at seas, especially the 2002 ASEAN-China Declaration on the Conduct of the Parties in the South China Sea, even though it is not part of the parties in the agreement. Despite the avoidance of calling out a specific actor who has been exercising unilateral actions in this disputed water, it is clear that Japan referred to China through the analysis of social practices.

China has an overlapping claim over areas in the South China Sea with the Philippines, Vietnam, Malaysia, Brunei, and Taiwan (Japan Times, 2015). The Philippines, specifically, has an opposing stance over territorial and fishing rights on the Scarborough Shoal in the South China Sea (Topias, 2019). Despite having signed the Declaration with ASEAN countries, China has been taking unilateral actions in the disputed Sea. The Philippines and Vietnam have made a diplomatic protest against China but were rejected with the argument that the areas fell within China's sovereignty (Japan Times, 2015). Thus, accounting for disputed situations that have been going on in the South China Sea area, it is evident that Japan referred to China when it mentioned 'unilateral actions' and 'disrespecting the rule of law.' Many observers of the South China Sea disputes even claimed that ODA is a way for Japan to strengthen economic and security ties with the Philippines to contain China's growing power (Kelly & Kubo, 2017).

Apart from the South China Sea context, Prime Minister Abe mentioned in his speech that Japan and China had made an agreement to create a maritime communication mechanism to prevent unexpected situations between the two countries (Japanese Cabinet, 2014). "Unfortunately, this has not led to the actual operation of such a mechanism," he remarked (Japanese Cabinet, 2014). In other words, Japan pointed out that China is an actor who cannot be held accountable for international agreements. Although the contexts have directly pointed to China, Japan always avoids straightforwardly calling out China in its ODA-related documents.

One of the prominent reasons could be that Japan is portraying itself as peaceful and cooperative. Throughout all the papers analyzed- whether a more political or development-leaning one, Japan often presents itself as a "peace-loving nation" as well as a "contributor to peace." Japan also shows that it supports peaceful or diplomatic means to address and solve international disputes. Moreover, Japan has been telling the international community, especially since the establishment of the FOIP Strategy, that it welcomes a cooperative relationship with China in the development realm within the region. Thus, referring to China as a cause of threats in the region or the international community would not only be a bold and undiplomatic move, but it would also create an inconsistent and unreliable image of Japan amongst the international community.

Furthermore, China has also been a part of many security or diplomacy platforms at which Japan delivered speeches. Therefore, it might cause disagreement or disputes between the two countries. Still, it is obvious that those texts related to threats and security concerns in the light of the rule of law refer to China. Therefore, Japan has been using its foreign aid project as a strategic tool to promote its foreign policy by creating discourses that lead the audiences to perceive Japan in a way that benefits it most.

Interestingly, there are no ODA documents based on the development setting, such as the JICA's press releases, that discuss the disputes over the South China Sea. Most of them only mentioned the rule of law. Mentioning the South China Sea in ODA documents might indicate that Japan assists many Southeast Asian countries with political or security intentions in mind. Hence, Japan avoided keywords related to this specific situation. However, it discussed the South China Sea in the same ODA projects straightforwardly in other more political-leaning documents, such as MOFA's press releases from bilateral summits between Japan and the Philippines or security dialogue. The difference might be because ODA documents on development sides are likely to be investigated by the DAC; thus, Japan was aware of the audiences and ensured that the discourses entailed such documents align as closely as possible to the guidelines. The ambiguous and constantly shifting stance of Japan, especially towards China, is what Koga (2019) referred to as the tactical hedging strategy, introduced in the literature review. Through this strategy, Japan puts itself in an unclear position and assesses the situations throughout times to maximize its interests in international politics.

To conclude, there exists a discourse on disrespect to the rule of law as a threat to the *region* and Japan in texts on the maritime safety project. However, Japan accounts for the audiences of its texts and uses appropriate discourses for different documents. Protecting the referent objects from entities that disrespect the rule of law allows Japan to justify its ODA project, and Japan purposely avoids the South China Sea topic in its ODA documents to ensure that they contain Japan's national security concerns as least as possible.

6. Conclusion

In this section, I summarize the findings and readdress the research question. I also provide recommendations for future research in the final paragraph. In answering the research question: **How does Japan justify the maritime safety capability improvement ODA project for the Philippine Coast Guard?** I was guided mainly by the concept of foreign aid as a foreign policy tool and the Copenhagen School's securitization theory. I utilized a case study and critical discourse analysis as the analytical strategies to analyze 25 official documents produced by the Japanese governmental institutions, including MOFA, the Cabinet, and JICA. By analyzing discursive practices, texts, and social practices, I seek to identify and understand the securitizing moves used in the texts on the ODA project in focus. Guided by the literature review, I expected the Indo-Pacific region to be one of the referent objects. I also expected to see maritime-related incidents as one of the threats since the project focuses on maritime safety. Moreover, I also expected Japan to discuss China's unilateral actions in the South China Sea through a tactical hedging strategy.

As argued by securitization theorists, securitizing actors convince the audiences that the referent objects are facing existential threats through speech acts. From the analysis of discursive practice, I found that the Japanese government uses its ODA projects as a foreign policy tool to enhance its cooperation, especially in the security realm, with the Philippines. Through textual analysis, I concluded that Japan declared two **referent objects: the Asia-/Indo-Pacific region and Japan**, and two **existential threats: maritime risks and disrespect to the rule of law.** The Philippines, the only recipient country of the project, is not the referent object. Across different documents, I also found that Japan uses its power as the agent of texts to control the discourses surrounding the securitizing moves, including the definition of the *region*, the threats that the referent objects are facing, and the role of each player in the discourses, e.g., the Philippines as Japan's inferior partner. Finally, through the analysis of social practices, I found that Japan is usually driven into the direction to benefit its foreign policy and national interests. For instance,

Japan employs the tactical hedging strategy in advocating for respect to the rule of law in the South China Sea. In diplomatic documents related to ODA, Japan delicately tailored the texts to ensure that it does not appear overly aggressive or as driven by its national security concerns.

Through this study, I aimed to fill the literature gap on the justification and process of securitizing the maritime safety capability improvement ODA project for the PCG, which I consider the fundamental step to understand the securitization of Japan's foreign aid. Based on the findings, there are multiples directions I would like to recommend for future research. One of the unexpected outcomes derived from the analysis is that Japan framed itself as the referent object. Thus, the first suggestion is that researchers could focus on the rationales or strategies behind the framing of Japan as its own referent object. I would also suggest exploring how other donor countries justify their securitized ODA projects and compare with Japan- whether the referent object is kept on a broader international community, such as the region, instead of focusing merely on one country. Finally, I would recommend researchers to focus on how other stakeholders, e.g., NGOs or other recipient countries, look at the justification or the securitization of the project. Some might find the review of Japan's ODA from other stakeholders, such as Third-Party Evaluation Reports[6], a useful source. However, the researcher should keep in mind that such a report is published on MOFA's web page; therefore, the content or discourses could also be influenced by the Japanese government.

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[6] Accessible via https://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/oda/evaluation/year/index.html

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