The War Against COVID: A Critical Discourse Analysis of Former President Duterte's Speeches During the 2020 Pandemic in the Philippines

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ABSTRACT

With critical discourse analysis as the main framework, supplemented by tools and techniques of corpus linguistics and critical metaphor analysis, this study attempts to analyze the patterns of discourse during the first few months of the COVID-19 pandemic in the Philippines. This study gives particular focus on the speeches of former President Rodrigo Duterte, analyzing a total of 21 transcripts, covering the first three months of the pandemic, from March 2020 to May 2020. The analysis shows how Duterte's specific lexical and metaphorical choices contributed to the construction of the pandemic as a "war," and how these choices justified the militarized response to the pandemic.

Keywords: *Duterte speeches, critical discourse analysis, COVID-19 pandemic, pandemic discourse, political discourse, metaphors*

Key Events During the COVID-19 Pandemic in the Philippines

On March 12, 2020, in response to the rising cases of COVID-19 in the country, former President Rodrigo Duterte declared Code Red Sublevel 2 on the entirety of the Philippines, and imposed what would be the first in a long series of strict lockdowns in Metro Manila (Panelo). Thus began his administration's war on COVID.

Upon establishing the National Task Force (NTF) Against COVID-19, Duterte appointed many retired army generals in key positions. Delfin Lorenzana, who was also the secretary of National Defense, was appointed chair of the NTF Against COVID-19, with Secretary of Interior and Local Government Eduardo Año as his vice-chair (Levien). Meanwhile, the role of chief implementer for the NTF's

policies was given to Carlito Galvez Jr., and he was also later named vaccine czar. In order to stop the spread of the airborne virus, the administration deployed the Philippine National Police (PNP) and the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP), established checkpoints and curfews, and ordered the citizens not to leave their houses, or else face arrest. And for those who might resist, the president ordered his forces to "shoot them dead" (Tomacruz).

The hashtag #SolusyongMedikalHindiMilitar began trending on social media in March and early April. Many citizens criticized the lack of health-based responses to the pandemic. For instance, there was a distinct lack of accessible testing, making it difficult to assess the spread of the virus within the population. Many citizens were also afraid of getting tested: many feared that they would test positive, be forced to quarantine, and thus be unable to provide support for their families. This, in itself, was tied to the slow distribution of food and necessities amid the strict lockdowns. Health care workers also lacked support in terms of protective equipment and monetary compensation. There were even incidents where doctors and nurses had to walk many kilometers just to reach their hospitals, due to the suspension of public transportation without adequate travel measures for health care workers being put in place.

Despite the Philippine citizens raising these issues about the pandemic, the "war" continued to intensify over the following months. According to reports from human rights groups, the drug war killings increased by 50 to 70% during the pandemic (Mangosing). There were multiple cases of barangay officials punishing curfew and quarantine violators by beating them up, forcing them into cages, or sexually harassing them (Gonzales). It was also during this time that the controversial Anti-Terrorism Act was passed which was criticized for its hazy definitions of "terrorism" and provisions allowing for the jailing of suspects even without legal charges (McCarthy). One of the leading broadcast networks in the country, ABS-CBN, was also shut down around May 2020, producing a significant "chilling effect" among critics in journalism and news media. Overall, the "military rule" established to address the pandemic seemed to have been extended and wielded in other sectors of Philippine society.

These issues and incidents show the inextricable relationship between discourse and society. This paper therefore examines the metaphors of war embedded in Duterte's rhetoric, particularly in his speeches and national addresses at the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. In making these lexical choices and framing the pandemic as a war, the president thereby justified the war-like and militaristic pandemic response of his administration. Taking after Fairclough and van Dijk's ideas of ideology, social cognition, and discursive practices, this research investigates the construction of Philippine pandemic discourse as a war, as well as the implications of these discursive practices on Philippine society.

This study on pandemic discourse seeks to contribute to the growing body of knowledge on this significant chapter of human history. Furthermore, while there have already been a number of studies on the linguistics of the COVID-19 pandemic, the patterns of discourse still have their nuances across different cultures and societies. Therefore, it is worth examining within our own context, in order to see how the characteristics of the war discourse in the Philippines might fit with the broader, global discourse on the issue. This study explores how Duterte's "war on COVID" might also be seen as an extension of his brutal war on drugs, with how the war discourse has emphasized fear and compliance.

In terms of the scope of this study, it covers COVID-19 pandemic discourse over the first three months of the nationwide lockdowns, given that this time period was very crucial in establishing the discourses and policies in the years to come. Furthermore, it focuses on the official public statements and nationwide addresses of Duterte as the primary source of linguistic data. In analyzing the data, this study primarily looks at lexical and semantic linguistic features such as word choice, collocation, and connotations. It also examines figurative language, especially metaphors. Finally, this research only focuses on pandemic discourse within the context of the Philippines. Some references and examples of pandemic discourse from other countries are brought up, but these are discussed briefly for comparison and contrast.

Language and Power Relations in Medical Issues

This section is a brief survey of studies dedicated to research that delve into the intersection between discourse, power relations, and medical issues. As a matter of fact, the militarization of health-related discourses is not a new phenomenon, nor is it limited to the COVID-19 pandemic. Examining these related studies will also demonstrate the areas in which this research can develop upon previous studies.

"Healing Without Waging War: Beyond Military Metaphors in Medicine and HIV Cure Research" (2016) by Nie et al. examines many common expressions and idioms in HIV medical development and practice. The military metaphors they identify include very common expressions such as "doctor's orders," "the body's defenses," "eradicating the virus," or "the patient is winning/losing the fight," among many others. They acknowledge some benefits that come with the use of these metaphors, as some patients embrace these metaphors and find them encouraging in what is often a matter of life and death. Still, they find that the use of military metaphors come with many drawbacks, such as increased risk of stigmatization of patients, a diminished emphasis on the "psychological, spiritual, communal, and social dimensions of illness and healing," and "a tendency to impose unnecessary suffering on the patient" (6).

Nie et al.'s study shares some similar goals as this research, as both question the predominance of militarized language in what is ultimately a medical issue. However, Nie et al. claim to have used a primarily philosophical and anthropological study in their research, as they compare various metaphors, imagery, and conceptions of the medical issues from across different cultures. In contrast, this research on Duterte's speeches has a primarily linguistic approach. Furthermore, "Healing Without Waging War" focuses on HIV, while the COVID-19 pandemic comes with its own unique issues and challenges, given the sheer difference in scale of the infections of the virus.

From here, it would also be crucial to examine some of the literature that has been written about the COVID-19 pandemic. Given its devastating worldwide effects, this has been a rapidly-developing field of study.

For instance, the neologisms that have been created amid the COVID-19 crisis have generated a fair amount of research interest (Al-Salman and Haider, 2021;

Asif et al.; 2021, Bharati, 2020, Haddad and Montero-Martinez, 2020, etc.). These studies explore both older terms in English that have gained new significance (such as "lockdown" or "quarantine") or entirely new expressions (such as "covidiot" or "covideo party"), as seen in the study of Bharati (123). Studies such as that of Haddad and Montero-Martinez, on the other hand, look at how the pandemic introduced new words in the Arabic languages.

There have also been several psycho-linguistic analyses on public opinion on the pandemic, especially on social media (Bantugan, 2020, Kučera, 2021, Nicomedes and Avila, 2020). Bantugan studied editorial cartoons made by Filipinos, which were posted on Facebook following the implementation of the first Enhanced Community Quarantine (ECQ) in Metro Manila. His findings show that the majority of the cartoons "gravitated toward the tragic realities that call for acts of social justice and equity" (Bantugan 428). Meanwhile, the psycho-linguistic studies of Kučera, as well as that of Nicomedes and Avila, both cite high levels of fear and anxiety among their respondents, especially in the first months of the pandemic in 2020.

For this section of the survey of related studies, specific attention will be given to three studies that have tackled the formation of particular discourses amid the pandemic.

First, there is Mohammed et al.'s "The 'Nurse as Hero' Discourse in the COVID-19 Pandemic: A Poststructural Discourse Analysis" (2021). In this study, they use data from a wide range of mass media sources, including newspaper and magazine articles, corporate advertisements, posts on social media, and so on. They look at the discourse regarding nurses and their roles during the pandemic, and describe what they call the "hero discourse."

According to their findings, the "hero discourse" has three elements. First, the "nurse as necessary sacrifice" implies that they worked (or must work) "selflessly" even without necessary protective equipment (Mohammed et al. 4). Second, the "nurse as model citizen" implies that they were (or must be) compliant to any policies and measures enacted by the local government (Mohammed et al. 4). Third, "heroism is its own reward" means that long-term policy changes to improve their working conditions and compensation were not enacted, because it was viewed that their work was rewarding enough in and of itself (Mohammed et al. 6).

Overall, Mohammed et al.'s study is a good model of the kind of discourse analysis that this research sets out to do: it analyzes how a particular form of discourse was constructed, the ways in which it manifested, and the effects of this discourse. However, the focus of Mohammed et al.'s study is on the situation of nurses in Canada, the US, and the UK, and in their recommendations, they cite that their study was limited in its subjectivity, and other studies from different contexts might yield different patterns of discourse. On the other hand, this research focuses on the war discourse and militarized language within the Philippine context, and looks at how this kind of discourse might be similar or different. Furthermore, this research takes on a "top-down" approach, with a focus on the language of the authorities, compared to Mohammed et al., which follows a "bottom-up" approach, focusing on the language and discourse of lay members of society.

In relation to this, it is also worth mentioning Wicke and Bolognesi's study titled "Framing COVID-19: How We Conceptualize and Discuss the Pandemic on Twitter" (2020). The project pursues a "bottom-up" approach, similar to that of Mohammed's et al., in contrast to the "top-down approach" that this research is taking, but the study is still notable for its analysis of the war discourse in the tweets of regular citizens. They found that the war metaphor was the most common framing or approach when talking about the pandemic, with many tweets containing keywords such as "fight," "threat," "battle," "front line," and so on. Other alternative metaphors for the pandemic such as "storm" (the pandemic as a "storm that is approaching") or "monster" (the virus as something "monstrous" or "horrific") were also investigated, but they appeared much less frequently than "war" and its related concepts. Finally, the "family" frame was noted to appear fairly frequently, emphasizing the general concern of the public for their relatives and loved ones, but often still seen under the frame of an ongoing "war."

As a final example, this time of a "top-down" approach in a linguistic analysis of the pandemic, there is the study of Dada et al.: "Words Matter: Political and Gender Analysis of Speeches Made by Heads of Government During the COVID-19 Pandemic" (2020). Here, they closely examine the speeches of over twenty leaders in different countries, including: Bangladesh, Belgium, Bolivia, Brazil, Dominican Republic, Finland, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, New Zealand, Niger, Norway, Russia, South Africa, Scotland, Sint Maarten, United Kingdom, United States, and

Taiwan. They note the differences between male and female authority figures, and how those politicians had talked about and approached the pandemic crisis.

In their findings, they cite that ". . . men tended to use more war rhetoric while women tended to employ personal or empathetic appeals" (Dada et al. 10). While male leaders emphasized fear and battle, female leaders focused on "compassion and social cohesion." Similarly, the Philippines' Duterte frequently used war rhetoric in his speeches, and it will be interesting to see how he compares to other leaders who used similar rhetoric in response to the pandemic. The study of Dada et al., however, focuses primarily on gender roles and relations, which is not a major area of concern for this research. Moreover, they did not include the Philippines or Filipino authority figures in their analysis. As with other studies, there may be some cultural and social differences in the discourse that emerge in my own study.

Overall, while there has already been existing research on COVID-19 linguistics, there are still other areas that this present study hopes to fill. For instance, there will always be the matter of cultural differences, where the nature of particular discourses might have subtle changes across different societies. Furthermore, the aforementioned studies focus on public opinion and perception, such as with Bantugan's analysis on Facebook users reacting to pandemic policies (2020), or Kučera's study on Czech Republic's citizens during the pandemic (2021). On the other hand, this study focuses on the discourse of authority figures, such as Duterte.

Discourse and Metaphors as Instruments of Power

Before delving into the methodology and the analysis of data, it is crucial to understand the conceptual framework behind this study, as well as the theories informing it.

This research is deeply-rooted in the field of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), which is primarily concerned with power relations and ideologies embedded in discourse. Two key figures in the establishment of CDA are Norman Fairclough and Teun van Dijk, who both write extensively on the subject. Fairclough's groundbreaking works include *Language and Power* (1989) and *Discourse and Social Change* (1992), where he elaborates on his three-dimensional framework:

discourse as text, as discursive practice, and as social practice. In this manner, he argues that ideologies are produced and reproduced in various texts; not just in the way things are said, but also in how they are said, how they are distributed, and how they are consumed. Fairclough's theoretical framework remains relevant even today, and these notions of discourse and discursive formations will inform some of the arguments later on in this study.

Meanwhile, van Dijk's "Principles of Critical Discourse Analysis" (1993) covers similar principles of power relations, ideology, and discourse, but he places more emphasis on social cognition. Here, he discusses how one's discursive practices are naturally shaped by one's own cognition or perception of the world, but also how it works both ways; one's cognition is also shaped by the discourses that they participate in. This relationship between discourse and cognition is used to examine how hegemonic social structures spread and maintain their influence by controlling discourse. His studies place an emphasis on top-down relations of dominance, or how authority figures and other influential social actors often have much more influence in the construction and reinforcement of discourse.

This perspective is crucial in the analysis of the pandemic and political discourse in the Philippines, especially with texts coming from leading authorities. In this sense, Duterte's administration can be considered the hegemonic power in Philippine society at the time, and they were able to maintain and reinforce their dominance and authority over the populace through the discourse of war. This was emphasized all the more by the pandemic situation, where the national government had to take charge in dealing with the widespread crisis. Duterte's belligerent speeches are not "mere words" either; they affected policy-making as well. As mentioned in the introduction, the administration focused on policing the citizens with curfews and checkpoints, and there was an increase in punitive measures by local authorities and human rights abuses, as seen in reports (Gonzales).

Jonathan Charteris-Black is a key figure in the study of politicians and their discourse, and he wrote extensive analyses on political speeches. He conceptualized a theoretical framework for analyzing the use of metaphors, known as Critical Metaphor Analysis (CMA). This theory is outlined comprehensively in

his book, *Corpus Approaches to Critical Metaphor Analysis* (2004) where he builds upon the previous works on CDA and shows how metaphors work in establishing and reinforcing particular ideologies in texts.

There are two core concepts in Charteris-Black's arguments that are relevant to this study. First, he argues that metaphors bring together two different ideas and their corresponding contexts. He quotes another scholar, Paul Ricoeur, who says, ". . . we are not dealing any longer with a simple transfer of words, but with a commerce between thoughts, that is a transaction between contexts" (2). With this, Charteris-Black emphasizes the pragmatic dimension of metaphors, and how ideas from both the source domain and the target domain of any metaphor are crucial in understanding them. The second core concept is that metaphors, due to their ability to make connections, are often used to persuade, especially in political contexts. In his analyses of political speeches, he demonstrates how different politicians use metaphors in their speeches to convince their audiences and constituents to vote for them, support their policies, and so on.

Thus, his research is a valuable reference for this study on Duterte and pandemic discourse, given that the construction of the "war on COVID" makes heavy use of metaphors. In the same way that politicians across history have used metaphors for persuasion, Duterte arguably used the metaphor of war in the context of the pandemic to persuade Filipinos of the necessity of the strict policies, law enforcement, and lockdowns.

Another scholar of note for this section is Gene Segarra Navera, with his extensive work on the rhetoric of different Philippine presidents. Since these studies were written in the Philippine context, they provide more insight on the unique sociocultural aspects of political discourse in the country. Of particular note is his article, "Belligerence as Argument: The Allure of the War Metaphor in Philippine Presidential Speeches" (2020). Just like Charteris-Black, Navera recognizes the persuasive power of metaphors, and its importance in making a president's policies more acceptable to the public. In this study, he argues that the war metaphor has, in fact, been used by all Philippine presidents since the time of Ferdinand Marcos Sr. Originally, Marcos Sr. had used the war metaphor to justify his implementation of martial law, and framed it as a necessary means to

preserve "democracy" at the time. Navera argues that later Philippine presidents all used similar war metaphors (the so-called "Marcosian rhetoric") but against different enemies: insurgency, crime, poverty, drugs, and even criticism. Duterte, who is quite well-known for his belligerent speeches especially with the war on drugs, is in fact tapping into this Marcosian rhetoric. Furthermore, Navera claims that these metaphors "appeal to the public's yearning for immediate, if not, instant justice" (76). Appealing to this yearning is therefore part of what makes these metaphors so persuasive.

This paper on the COVID-19 pandemic can thus be viewed within the context of this history, as an extension of the Marcosian rhetoric being applied by Philippine presidents in discussing various social issues of their time. The linguistic data demonstrates that during the 2020 pandemic, Duterte reappropriated the Marcosian rhetoric to justify the use of military force against the new enemy, which was the virus itself.

Overall, the works of both Charteris-Black and Navera have shown how political figures rely heavily on metaphors and narratives in their speeches, in order to construct their various agenda. In a similar manner, this study seeks to examine how the Philippine administration constructed the pandemic discourse as a "war" through particular lexical choices.

Preparing the Linguistic Data for Analysis

The linguistic data for this research covers a portion of Duterte's "Talk to the People" series, the televised Inter-Agency Task Force (IATF) briefings, and other relevant speeches broadcasted during the first three months of the nationwide lockdowns in the Philippines, from March to May 2020. This study also includes a speech from February 2020 which discussed the pandemic. This was the only speech from February about the pandemic, however, and it came prior to the lockdowns, which is why the rest of the speeches from this month were not included. There are twenty one transcripts in this dataset, which were obtained from the official Presidential Communications Office (PCO) website, with a total of 61,703 words for analysis. This specific range was chosen because these first three months were crucial in constructing and reinforcing the metaphor of war in pandemic discourse. Furthermore, the policies that were announced and enforced

during this time ultimately shaped the Philippines' pandemic response for the months and years afterward. Taking after van Dijk's top-down approach in CDA, this research focuses on Duterte's rhetoric for analysis. As the president of the country at the time, his rhetoric had a considerable impact on the construction and reinforcement of certain values and ideas in pandemic discourse, especially his particular choice of metaphor: the war on COVID.

This is a mixed methods research, combining both quantitative and qualitative data. The quantitative data comes primarily in the form of statistics on word/phrase use frequencies, along with some insights on collocation. This data was processed with the help of #LancsBox, the Lancaster University corpus analysis software, which can be downloaded for free on their website. Meanwhile, the qualitative data is primarily a lexical analysis, focusing on lexical choices and metaphors gathered from the texts. This mixed methods approach allows for a more holistic discussion of the issue, with the quantitative analysis providing a statistical foundation for the findings, while the qualitative analysis delves into and attempts to explain the general patterns found in the quantitative data.

The primary theoretical framework for data analysis is CDA, taking after the foundational works of Fairclough and van Dijk. Furthermore, certain aspects of Charteris-Black's CMA have also been crucial in the qualitative analysis of the metaphors of war.

Before moving on, however, there are a few key points to take note of with regard to the methodology behind the quantitative analysis and the software used to examine the data.

Quantitative Analysis: Addressing the Strengths and Limitations of the Software

One advantage of the #LancsBox software is that it does not rely on an in-built dictionary; rather, it categorizes all "words" (letters separated from others by spaces or punctuation marks) as "types." This allows it to process the data for texts that contain multiple languages, such as Duterte's speeches, which often combine English and Filipino.

However, there are four key points which had to be accounted for in using this software. First, it does not account for plural forms of words or tenses. For example, "soldier" and "soldiers" were logged as separate entries, as well as "die" and "died" or "fight" and "fighting." For the analysis, the variations and conjugations of certain words therefore had to be located and added up. Second, the synonyms or word equivalents in English and Filipino were also logged separately. For example, the words "sundalo" and "soldier(s)" were all logged separately, and therefore had to be added as well. Third, the multiple conjugations in Filipino were also all logged separately (e.g., "patay," "patayin," "ipapatay," "pumatay," "mamatay," etc.), and similarly had to be added up. Fourth, a good number of the linguistic data is taken up by articles, conjunctions, linking verbs, pronouns, and so on, in both English and Filipino.

Given the aforementioned four points, it would therefore be more productive to analyze the corpora in terms of particular word categories and themes. The program's search function helped in tracking down specific words among the thousands of types. The data on the word categories were then organized into graphs and tables, which are presented and discussed in the data analysis section below.

After removing the prepositions, articles, and other extraneous words, some of the lexical items that came up most frequently include words like "COVID" (149 times) or "pulis" (104 times). Synonyms and word equivalents for these words were then searched for and tallied alongside them. For example, words like "virus" and "coronavirus" were used synonymously with the word "COVID," and they were then tallied together. Meanwhile, "pulis," was used similarly as its English equivalent "police," or words like "kapulisan" (police force), "policemen," and so on. Through this process, the various word categories in the analysis were formed, which is explained in depth in the next section.

Recurring Themes in Duterte's Speeches

The data analysis comprises both quantitative and qualitative data. This section begins with the quantitative data, which also serve as the basis for the qualitative analysis of lexical choices later on in the section.

Figure 1 represents the frequencies of particular word categories throughout the data set:

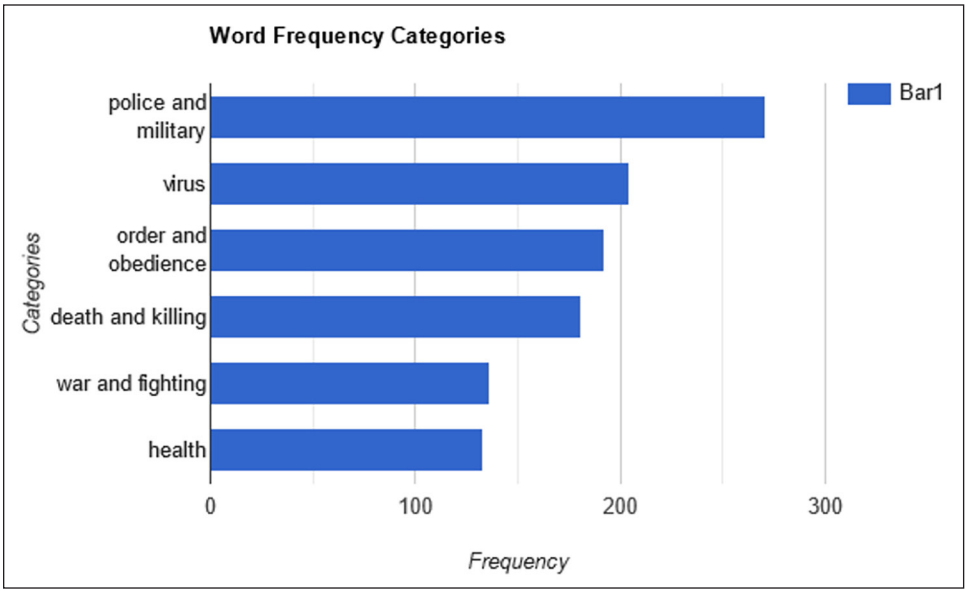

Fig. 1: Word frequency categories for Duterte's speeches.

As the data shows, words pertaining to the military and police forces have the highest frequencies throughout the speeches, appearing over 276 times through the different speeches. Table 1 presents the words and other associated terms included under this category:

Table 1: Police and military category entries.

Police and Military - 276	**Associated Words and Categories**
Police - 163 (police, pulis)	Arrest - 36 (arrest[s]), aresto, arestuhin)
Military - 71 (military, army, AFP)	Shoot - 20 (shoot, barilin, baril)
Soldier - 42 (soldier, sundalo)	Order and obedience category (see below)

Within this category, "police" is mentioned the most at 163 times (fifty-nine in English, 104 in Filipino as "pulis"). Meanwhile, the military in general was referred to a total of seventy-one times. The word "military" itself was mentioned sixty-one times, while "army" was mentioned five times, and "AFP" (Armed Forces of the Philippines) another five times. Soldiers were referred to a total of forty-two times (seven in English, thirty-five in Filipino as "sundalo"). This means that the military and police were, on average, explicitly mentioned about thirteen times in every single speech.

It is also worth mentioning some associated words that often appeared with mentions of the police and military. Though not included in Figure 1, the word "arrest" and its conjugations often appeared with these terms (fourteen times in English, twenty-two times in Filipino). Duterte often made threats of police arrest to those who will not comply with the protocols. The verbs "shoot" and "baril" ("barilin," "mabaril") also appear four and sixteen times respectively, again in relation to his orders for the police to shoot unruly citizens.

For example, in his April 1 speech, he said: "Huwag ninyong subukan ang Pilipino. Do not try to test it. Alam mo we are ready for you. Gulo o **barilan** o patayan, I will not hesitate [to order? Or sic] my **soldiers** to **shoot** you. I will not hesitate to order the **police** to **arrest** and detain you" (emphasis mine). These remarks were made as a warning to "the left" (Communist Party of the Philippines/New People's Army [CPP/NPA] militant groups), but were extended to any possible rioters or dissenters during the lockdowns.

The police and military were also often mentioned alongside words and statements in the order and obedience category, which will be discussed shortly. For now, it is clear that the police and military were expected to be the primary means of maintaining "peace and order" during the pandemic.

The second biggest word category is the virus category, which comparatively reaches a total of 204 times. The following table shows the distribution of the words:

Table 2*:* Virus category entries.

Virus - 204	**Associated Words and Categories**
COVID - 149	Death and killing category (see below)
Virus - 46	War and fighting (see below)
Coronavirus - 9	

"COVID" appears 149 times throughout the speeches, while the word "virus" itself appears only forty-six times. The word "coronavirus" is also included in this category, mentioned nine times. What makes this category interesting is how the words are often associated with two other categories: death and killing, as well as war and fighting. There are common phrases such as "the fight against COVID," "defeat the virus," or even Duterte hurling expletives at the virus (March 13, 2020). Rather than "curing" patients or preventing infections, the speeches focus on "killing" the virus, instead. The two categories (death and killing, war and fighting) will be discussed at length in their respective sections after this portion.

The third word category pertains to order and obedience, as seen in Table 3:

Table 3*:* Order and obedience category entries.

Order and Obedience - 192	**Associated Words and Categories**
Order - 28 (law and order, peace and order)	Police and military (see above)
Sunod - 61 (sumunod, sundin, sundan)	
Obey - 28 (obeys, obedience, follow)	
Rule(s) - 31	
Protocol(s) - 9	
Disobedience - 4	
Gulo - 16 (gulo-gulo, guluhin, manggulo)	

"Order and obedience" is a rather sizable category, appearing a total of 192 times. The phrases "law and order" and "peace and order" are used often, with the noun "order" appearing twenty-eight times. The Filipino word "sunod" and

its conjugations ("sumunod," "sundin," "sundan," etc.) appear sixty-one times. Meanwhile, the English words "obey," "obedience," and "follow" appear a total of twenty-eight times. These words are most often used as commands or warnings, to compel the citizens to obey the government's directives and protocols. In relation to this, mentions of "rules" and "protocols" appear thirty-one and nine times, respectively. Finally, this category also includes related antonyms such as "disobedience" (four times) and the Filipino word "gulo" and its conjugations (sixteen times), often used to warn against disobedience or creating trouble ("gulo") of any sort.

These words often appear with other words in the police and military category, since it was those groups that Duterte relied on in maintaining "peace and order." For example, in his March 13 speech, he said, "The purpose of government is to see to it that things are in **order**. To do that, if things deteriorate, I said, the **military** and **police** will maintain **order**" (emphasis mine).

The fourth category, pertaining to death and killing, also reaches considerable numbers, appearing over 181 times. Table 4 shows the breakdown:

Table 4: Death and killing category entries.

Death and Killing - 183	**Associated Words and Categories**
Patay - 138 (papatayin, pumatay, napatay)	Virus category (see above)
Kill - 23 (kill, killed, killer)	War and fighting (see below)
Die - 22 (die, dead, deadly, dying)	

Interestingly, the words are most often spoken in Filipino, with the word "patay" and its various conjugations ("papatayin," "pumatay," "napatay," etc.) making up the bulk of the frequencies at 138 times. Meanwhile, the associated English words ("kill," "die," and their respective conjugations) appear forty-five times overall.

These words are heavily associated with the virus category. It is often one of two things: either the virus being killed (or attempting to "kill" the virus) through the health protocols, or regular citizens dying due to the virus. For example, in the April 4 speech, Duterte said, "Kung ikaw gusto mong mamatay, wala naman

nagpipigil sa iyo." Here, he was referring to quarantine violators, and how they seem to have a "death wish" in refusing to follow government protocols.

There are also noticeable associations with the next category, about war and fighting, as these two concepts are closely tied to each other. Death and killing are, so to speak, natural consequences of getting in a war or in a fight.

The fifth category includes words for war and fighting, and these also appear fairly frequently, reaching 136 times as a whole. Table 5 shows the breakdown:

Table 5*:* War and fighting category entries.

War and Fighting - 136	**Associated Words and Categories**
Laban - 25 (lumaban, lalabanan, labanan)	Virus category (see above)
Fight - 28 (fight, fought, fighting)	Death and killing category (see above)
Enemy - 34 (enemies, kalaban)	
War - 31 (war, digmaan, giyera)	
Frontliner - 12	
Frontline - 6	

This category includes the Filipino word "laban" and its conjugations ("lumaban," "lalabanan," etc.) at twenty-five times, and the English word "fight" (including "fighting") at twenty-eight times. There are also many references to enemies (twelve in English, twenty-two in Filipino as the word "kalaban"), as well as explicit mentions of war (the English word "war" at twenty, the Filipino words "digmaan" and "giyera" at eleven). Finally, this category also includes the popular term "frontliner," referring to health workers and others at the forefront of the pandemic response, at twelve instances, with the word "frontline" at six times.

This category is heavily associated with the virus category. COVID-19 is often referred to as an "unseen enemy," the main adversary in the "war" that is being fought. In his March 16 speech, Duterte said, "We are at **war** against a vicious and invisible **enemy**, one that cannot be seen by the naked eye. In this extraordinary **war**, we are all soldiers" (emphasis mine).

The sixth and final category is the health category, which appears 133 times. Table 6 shows the words included in this category:

Table 6*:* Health category entries.

Health - 133	**Associated Words and Categories**
Health - 121 (public health, health protocols, health secretary, Department of Health, etc.)	Order and obedience (see above)
Healthcare - 10	
Healthy - 2	

In contrast, the word category for "health" appears 133 times, most often as the terms "public health" or "health protocols." This word also necessarily appeared in discussions involving Department of Health (DOH) Secretary Francisco Duque, or the DOH in general. This category also includes "healthcare" (ten times) and "healthy" (two times).

What is interesting is how these words were often used in relation to the order and obedience category. "Public health" is used to justify the strict protocols, that the lockdowns and quarantines were all "for the sake of public health."

There are a few other words and categories that were not included in the graph in Figure 1 that might still be of interest. For example, drugs (including "droga," "adik," etc.) were mentioned twenty-four times. References to insurgents ("NPA," "communist," "rebel," etc.) totaled over twenty-seven times. This means that these extraneous issues were mentioned, on average, at least once per speech, despite how the addresses were meant to discuss the COVID pandemic. Furthermore, Duterte cursed a total of ninety-one times in the official transcripts. Even before the pandemic, Duterte was already known for cursing profusely and going off tangent in his speeches, especially to bring up the war on drugs. As the data shows, these characteristics persisted even in his public speeches about the pandemic.

Mapping the War on COVID

Given the word categories and quantitative data discussed earlier, several key aspects of the war on COVID discourse begin to surface, at least with respect to Duterte's speeches in the critical early phases of the pandemic. As with Fairclough's CDA model, the data about the texts also reveal insights about the discursive practices and social practices involved. Furthermore, in relation to van Dijk's framework of hegemonic powers perpetuating particular discourses, it can be seen how Duterte wielded his power and influence to construct this discourse of war.

There are three key aspects for discussion: first, the role of the police and the military, second, the concepts of order and obedience, and third, death and fighting.

First and foremost, it is evident that the police and the military played a crucial role in Duterte's pandemic response. He relied on them as his primary means of executing orders and directives, and he lent these institutions legitimacy and power. For example, on March 13, 2020, he opened his speech with "My countrymen, good evening. I am now addressing the nation together with the civilian, military, and police sectors—the organizations that would count in our enforcement of the laws to protect the people of the Republic of the Philippines." Right from the beginning, he emphasized the civilian, military, and police personnel present with him during his speech, and framed them as the sectors in charge of law enforcement to "protect the people."

All of these actions are framed as "under the orders" of the president, the highest political figure in the country, and in effect, they can be seen as extensions of his will.

Given the patterns discussed in the frequency analysis earlier, it can be observed how the linguistic data concurs with the history of the Philippine pandemic response. For instance, the primary leaders that were appointed by Duterte in the NTF for addressing the pandemic are former army generals or police officers, such as Lorenzana and Año. The initial pandemic response focused on very militaristic procedures like lockdowns and checkpoints, instead of medicine-based solutions such as mass testing and contact tracing.

The prominent role of the military and the police is further supported by the explicit war metaphors and analogies that Duterte frequently made. In the March 16 speech, when the first enhanced community quarantine was implemented, he said, "We are at war against a vicious and invisible enemy, one that cannot be seen by the naked eye. In this extraordinary war, we are all soldiers." The pandemic is framed as a "war" with the virus as the "enemy," and therefore the heightened military and police presence is justified. The studies of Navera show that Duterte tapped into a much older Marcosian rhetoric, which other Philippine presidents also used to discuss various issues of their time. In his article, "Belligerence as Argument," Navera states:

> The war frame involves the use of military or hard power in order to eliminate the enemy. In various ways and levels, this frame was also present in the rhetoric of other post-Marcos presidents such as Corazon Aquino, Fidel Ramos, and Benigno Aquino III, especially when dealing with the communist and Moro rebellions and even public criticism. (72)

This means that Duterte's words are a form of reappropriation, using a familiar and effective discursive tactic. The only thing that had changed is the kind of "enemy" that must be defeated, and in this case, it was the COVID-19 virus.

Particular lexical choices foreground and subsequently background certain concepts and values, especially the more they get repeated throughout the text. In this case, Duterte heavily foregrounded the military and the police in the pandemic response, with his repetitive mentions of them. In comparison, the DOH and Secretary Duque were only mentioned sixteen and twenty times, respectively. Amid a health crisis, Duterte chose to emphasize the role of the military, rather than that of the DOH, and these lexical choices were reflected in his policy-making.

This issue can be tied back to Charteris-Black's ideas of metaphors as persuasion. In this case, war metaphors might be used to persuade the public of the necessity for having massive police and military presence. It is, after all, supposed to be a "war," so it seems justified to have them leading the government response.

The second aspect for discussion is how the concepts of "order" and "obedience" play a more subtle but equally significant role in the discourse of war. Beyond the explicit mentions of war and death, there is a persistent command in Duterte's speeches. "Sumunod na lang kayo," is an oft-repeated phrase, frequently followed by threats of military or police action. The strict community quarantine measures and heightened police presence were also justified in this manner: that all of it was for the sake of "maintaining law and order." More than the health and safety of the citizens, Duterte would emphasize the need for "keeping the country in order," and that there would only be trouble if the people disobeyed.

The emphasis on order and obedience taps deeply into the culture of military systems, where the commands from authority figures are absolute and must be followed without question. In framing the pandemic situation as a war, Duterte therefore places himself in that position of unquestionable power; in a war where "we are all soldiers," the citizens must therefore comply with all his commands. Here, we see an overt display of hegemonic power, and how, through discourse, it is both demonstrated and reinforced.

Though it is outside the scope of this study, it is worth mentioning how these concepts of order and obedience tie in with other discourses later in the pandemic. When cases spiked, it was not the government's pandemic response which was criticized, but rather the disobedient ("pasaway") citizens who supposedly failed to comply with health protocols. A *TIME* article by Aie Balagtas-See titled "Rodrigo Duterte is Using One of the World's Longest COVID-19 Lockdowns to Strengthen His Grip on the Philippines" (2021) delves deep into Duterte's pandemic response. In the article, Balagtas-See cites Ela Atienza of the University of the Philippines, who provides a succinct summary of the misplaced priorities of the government:

> Professor Atienza explains that there has been hardly any effort to educate people about coronavirus. The priority, she says "is more on people having to obey lockdown procedures instead of [ensuring] that people will be healthy or health will be protected. People should be educated why they need to stay at home and why certain facilities have to close down." (Balagtas-See)

In terms of van Dijk's framework, the emphasis on order and obedience seems to be an effective way of maintaining the dominance of the hegemonic powers. In this case, the Philippine administration attempted to persuade the populace that all measures were for "peace and order," which also implies that to refuse or to criticize these measures was to promote chaos and disorder in society. This also ties back to the Marcosian rhetoric as discussed by Navera. In one of his studies, he argues that "the war metaphor has particularly been useful when silencing opposing views or critical perspectives while boosting the position of the government as the infallible leader of the nation" (68). Again, these linguistic patterns of "peace and order" frequently appearing in the speeches can be tied to Charteris-Black and the use of metaphors as persuasion. It appears that all the talks of maintaining order and demanding obedience seem to justify the strict lockdown measures and protocols, on top of the punitive measures of the authorities.

The findings discussed above are further corroborated by other studies regarding the policymaking of the Duterte administration during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic. For instance, Karl Hapal's "The Philippines' COVID-19 Response: Securitizing the Pandemic and Disciplining the Pasaway" describes the strict lockdowns and the "draconian measures" employed by the administration during this period of time. He argues that the war against COVID was an extension of Duterte's war on drugs, necessitating a high level of police and military presence. The construction of the war discourse necessitated an "enemy" as well, and Hapal argues that while initially it was the COVID-19 virus (the "unseen enemy"), it later turned into the pasaway, or the citizens who disobeyed the lockdown and quarantine protocols. These findings in Hapal's study, among others, align quite well with the linguistic data from this research, which exhibit similar themes in the lexical choices of Duterte: the presence of the police and military, as well as the emphasis on order and obedience. Ultimately, this further demonstrates the strong connections between language and policy-making.

The final key aspect of the war discourse pertains to the related concepts of fighting and dying. These kinds of statements coming from Duterte are nothing new. Years before the pandemic, he was already quite infamous for his war on drugs and his brutal statements even in front of national television. In a speech

on September 30, 2016, he said, "Hitler massacred three million Jews . . . there's three million drug addicts. There are. I'd be happy to slaughter them." We can see that he extended this same kind of language to the COVID pandemic.

In his March 16 speech, just before declaring the first lockdowns, Duterte said, "We all have a responsibility to fight this disease and prevent it from spreading to our fellowmen. These social distancing measures are necessary to kill the adversary." Just as Atienza had mentioned, there was no mention of "treating" or "healing" a sickness, but rather Duterte focused on "killing" the "enemy," which was, in this case, the virus.

Furthermore, when the speeches are not centered around fighting and killing the virus, they are often about the Filipino citizens dying or being threatened by death. In the April 4 speech, Duterte spoke of quarantine violators: "Kung gusto ninyo, lumabas kayo, ikaw. Pero pagka naghirap ka, huwag kang magtawag sa akin. Eh ginusto mo 'yan eh, talagang mamamatay ka." ("If you want, go outside, you. But if you get into difficulties, don't call for me. Since that's what you wanted, you will really die.")

Interestingly, the majority of the times that the Filipino word "laban" was used in the speeches was not, in fact, in reference to fighting against the virus. Duterte would often directly warn the listeners and citizens of the consequences of disobeying the police; for example, he would say, "Kung lumaban ka sa pulis, it is a direct assault" ("If you fight the police, it is a direct assault") or "Huwag kang lumaban (sa pulis)" ("Do not fight the police"). Again and again, he made it clear that the citizens can die or will get killed if they do not obey him and the police. His orders to "Shoot them dead," referring to quarantine violators, made waves on social media on April 2020 (Tomacruz). Many citizens feared running out of food and resources due to weeks of lockdowns, yet his response was to threaten them with police action.

Once again, the linguistic data concur with the findings of Hapal's study: during the pandemic, Filipino citizens were often branded as pasaway, and the rising cases were blamed on citizens who did not follow strict protocols. Addressing the pandemic became primarily a matter of enforcing the law and disciplining the populace, rather than implementing health-based solutions.

Overall, the language of Duterte's speeches paints a grim picture of the Philippine pandemic response. After all, what does it mean to wage a war against a virus? The data above reveals three important things. First, the police and the military were at the forefront of the pandemic response, rather than the DOH. Second, death and killing were commonplace, or even acceptable, in the context of a "war." Finally, obedience was expected from each citizen who had to follow the orders of the "commanding officers," given that we were all "soldiers" in this war. By implication, this means that to disagree or to criticize these policies was to cause chaos and disorder. And as Duterte himself stated, those who cause such trouble should be "shot dead."

Toward Future Studies in Metaphors and Discourse

This paper has demonstrated how the war on COVID discourse was constructed through specific lexical and metaphorical choices in Duterte's speeches. In these speeches, there were many overt and explicit references to war, battle, death, and fighting, with the military and the police taking a central role in the pandemic response. This further implies that even regular citizens were treated as "soldiers" in this "war," and that the government demanded and expected their utmost obedience to and compliance with various directives. Charteris-Black has argued that metaphors are deployed for persuasion; in Duterte's discourse of pandemic in the Philippines, then, the war metaphors were deployed to persuade Filipino citizens of the need for a militaristic response, as well as of the importance of obeying government orders. These were clearly reflected in the actual government policies, as there was a focus on strict compliance, arrests for violations, and military checkpoints. Discourse, thus, intersects with policies and governance, which in turn affects the daily lives of Filipino citizens as the former are implemented.

This research has only managed to cover key areas (e.g., the lexical dimension, particularly word frequencies of the speeches) of the broad issue of pandemic discourse, and there are still various dimensions of verbal communication that are open to future research. The speeches' tone and syntax may be analyzed.

Furthermore, the top-down CDA approach of this study, which focuses on how authority figures use discourse to establish and reinforce their power, means

that the texts examined are limited to Duterte's speeches. However, discourses are shaped by many other texts from news media and the social media posts of regular citizens. Van Dijk also discusses the potential of bottom-up forms of resistance, which emphasizes how common citizens can challenge the dominant discourses of those in power and establish their own, and our modern social media age has made it even easier for the average person to participate in such discourses. These areas may be further studied, especially to determine if there are alternative discourses emerging from these interactions. The social media trend #SolusyongMedikalHindiMilitar shows one such alternative discourse, as citizens called for a more science-based, healthcare-based pandemic response.

Finally, the word frequency data was analyzed with the framework of CDA, which focuses on power relations. This influenced which words, phrases, and categories were given focus in this analysis. Other researchers might want to take on a different framework or thematic focus, in order to arrive at other possible conclusions.

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