"Reconstructing Public Opinion: The Securitization in Japan National Security Strategy of 2022 Under Prime Minister Fumio Kishida"

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MOTTO

七 転 び 八 起 き

Nana Korobi Ya Oki

“Fall down seven times, rise eight.”

(Japanese proverb)

DEDICATIONS

My heartfelt appreciation goes to my father, mother, and brothers for their enduring encouragement, understanding, and patience during the ups and downs of this academic journey. Their love and support have been my anchor, motivating me to persevere in the face of challenges.

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Best Regards,

Davin Krisna Ibrahim

FOREWORD

It is with great pleasure and a sense of accomplishment that I present this thesis, entitled "Reconstructing Public Opinion: The Securitization in Japan National Security Strategy of 2022 Under Prime Minister Fumio Kishida." The journey leading to the completion of this academic endeavor has been both challenging and rewarding. However, throughout the process, I have been fortunate to receive guidance, support, and inspiration from various individuals and sources.

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Best Regards,

Davin Krisna Ibrahim

ABSTRACT

This study examines how external military threats, primarily emanating from China, North Korea, and Russia, have been securitized by Japan under the leadership of Prime Minister Fumio Kishida, as well as their impact on public support for Japan's National Security Strategy. Japan released three documents in December 2022, which include a Defense Buildup Program, a National Security Strategy, and a National Defense Strategy, to reorganize its security policies for the upcoming years. Unlike previous attempts, Japan's current defense initiatives are experiencing notable approval from the public. To reveal the construction of the surge in public support, this study utilizes qualitative methods based on the securitization theory and content analysis. The study found that the public's perception of security, which had previously opposed most military initiatives, has gradually changed due to the securitization process of external military threats from China, North Korea, and Russia. In this securitization process, the Japanese Government utilized speech acts that are linguistically more assertive and consistent compared to the usual security discourse. As the security climate becomes more challenging for Japan, securitization speech acts become instrumental in constructing a heightened support and threat perception to the securitization audience. This audience acceptance, in turn, paves the way for the implementation of exceptional security policies, including the enactment of counterstrike capabilities, an increase in Japan's defense budget to 2% of GDP, and a substantial military buildup across both traditional and cross-domain contexts.

Keyword: Japan, Securitization, Public Opinion, National Security Strategy,

Speech Act