Presidential Statements and US Use of Force

Analysing the Relationship Between Presidential Statements of Conciliation and Hostility and US use of Armed Force

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Abstract

Studies examining the relationship between the public statements political leaders use in times of international disputes and a state’s dispute behaviour have traditionally focused on hostile statements used by political leaders to deter or compel adversaries. This ignores the reality that political leaders often use both conciliatory and hostile statements in the context of disputes and limits our understanding of how these different types of statements may have differing effects on the policies that a state employs in engaging its adversaries. It also obscures the possibility that theory linking the hostile statements of political leaders to their states’ dispute behaviour is equally applicable to conciliatory statements; the prevailing focus on hostile statements stems from scholarly convention rather than theoretical principle.

This thesis represents one of the first attempts to systematically collect data on the conciliatory statements used by US presidents during international disputes. In early chapters I highlight the omission of conciliatory statements from foregoing analyses. I demonstrate that the logical extension of much of the theory and empirical evidence present in the relevant literature is to hypothesise that conciliatory statements made by political leaders in the context of disputes will be negatively associated with that leader’s state using armed force against its dispute adversaries. I also hypothesise that the more the balance of conciliatory and hostile statements used by a political leader favours conciliatory statements, the lesser the odds that the state in question will use armed force against its adversaries.

Later chapters are dedicated to explaining my methodological approach and empirical findings. Using McManus’ (2014) dataset of 272 dyadic militarised interstate disputes involving the US between 1950-2010, I employ inferential statistics to test the relationships between the frequency of hostile presidential statements, conciliatory presidential statements and the use of armed force by the US. The first finding of this analysis is that conciliatory statements made by US presidents do not have a statistically significant relationship with the US’ use of force against its adversaries. This is an interesting finding, given that existing theory would suggest that conciliatory statements should be negatively correlated with the US using armed force. The second finding demonstrates that the balance of conciliatory and hostile statements shares a statistically significant relationship with the use of armed force by the US. The greater the proportion of presidential speech about a dispute accounted for by conciliatory
statements, relative to the proportion of speech accounted for by hostile statements, the lower the odds of the US using armed force against its adversary.

In concluding I discuss the above findings, highlighting how they relate to existing theory. I also consider potential avenues for future research. Finally, I reiterate the main contributions that this thesis makes to existing literature. The data collected herein are the first systematically collected on US presidents’ use of conciliatory statements in dispute settings. This data enables the first statistical analysis of whether variation in the frequency of conciliatory and hostile statements made by US presidents in dispute settings has an independent effect on the use of armed force by the US against its dispute adversaries.
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To all of the above, I hope that in time I will be able to demonstrate my thanks in ways more concrete than offered here. Thanks once more.
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List of Abbreviations

GRIT  Graduated Reciprocation in Tension-reduction

KWIC  Key Words in Context

MID   Militarised Interstate Dispute

OLS   Ordinary Least Squares

VIF   Variation Inflation Factor
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1 Introduction

*Let me start by saying words matter. Words matter when you run for President, and they really matter when you are President* – Hillary Clinton, first US presidential debate, 26th of September 2016.

1.1 A Pressing Matter

The election of Donald Trump in the 2016 US presidential election, and, indeed, the preceding campaign run by Trump, raised many questions about US and global politics. One of these questions is what impact the words uttered by political leaders, and US presidents in particular, might have on the course of international disputes. Indeed, the inflammatory remarks Trump made toward foreign states and their leaders throughout his campaigning were one of the major concerns voiced regarding his candidacy. Commentators and members of the American public expressed concern that such an approach to international relations could have material consequences for the foreign policy of the United States, antagonising allies and adversaries alike (Hosenball, Mohammed & Spetalnick, 2016; Sargent, 2016).

Yet, doubt remained regarding the motivations and consequentiality of Trump's statements. Public trust in politicians is low and declining (Pew Research Centre, 2017). This distrust or scepticism was detectable in the 2016 election. Trump's own aides and supporters promoted the idea that Trump was putting on a show during his campaigning and that his rhetoric would be moderated as he got closer and closer to the White House (see Holland & Becker, 2016; Leibovich, 2016).

Ultimately, the period surrounding the 2016 US presidential election was a time of concern or, at least, confusion regarding the potential consequences of statements made by political leaders. This confusion has continued over into the first year of Trump's presidency, as analysts and other policy-makers have attempted to understand the intentions behind and consequences of Trump's statements (see Baker & Sang-Hun, 2017; Davis, 2017). Academics too have been concerned with, and indeed confused by, this question, only for some period longer than the last two years that have seen the candidacy and election of Donald Trump as President of the United States. Recognising that, perhaps something we can all agree on, politicians talk quite a lot, there exists a body of research on what the consequences of their statements might be.

Much of this literature focuses particularly on periods of conflict between states and what consequences a political leader's statements might have in these contexts. Early
texts dealing with these questions (see George & Smoke, 1976; Schelling, 1960; Snyder & Diesing, 1977) were written during the Cold War and, likely due to this context, spoke to questions of why state leaders may or may not be able to deter aggression from adversaries via their spoken statements. In particular, the great majority of this work focused upon threatening or hostile statements. Indeed, many later works (see Bueno de Mesquita, 1992; Schultz, 2001; Sartori, 2005) still considered their subject of observation deterrent threats made by political leaders. The question they sought to answer was under which conditions such threats would be successful or unsuccessful in deterring an adversary.

This study also focuses on the context of disputes between states. However, it differs markedly from preceding literature in that it moves away from an exclusive focus on hostile statements used by political leaders. I contend herein that omitting statements in which political leaders express conciliatory intentions regarding their adversaries has been a notable gap in the scholarship on the subject of political leadership speech and its consequences. While there have now been efforts (see McManus, 2014) to investigate and compile the types of hostile statements US presidents use regarding adversaries, there has not been any effort to code and compile those statements in which US presidents express conciliatory intentions. This is despite the fact that even during times of intense disputes presidents use conciliatory statements to address adversaries. For example, in the late 1950s Dwight Eisenhower declared that the US would “always keep open the door of honest discussion” (Peters & Woolley, 2018) despite, and in response to, immediate tensions with the Soviet Union stemming from the division of Germany, European security and the race to explore outer space.

Since the end of the Cold War, investigation into the consequences of political leadership speech has broadened to investigate not only how a political leader’s statements might influence the behaviour of an opposing state, but also whether their statements might have an independent effect on the enacted foreign policy of their own state. The question becomes not whether hostile statements made by US presidents, for example, compel a certain course of action from an adversary, but, rather, whether such

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1 McManus (2014) uses the phrase statements of “resolve”, rather than “hostile statements”. However, because McManus’ (2014) definition includes negative characterisations, demands and refusals, and explicit threats regarding an adversary, and in order to more clearly differentiate these statements from those expressing conciliation, I refer to the types of statements she studies as statements expressing hostility.
statements increase/decrease the chances of the US employing certain policies towards that adversary. This thesis analyses this connection, investigating whether US presidents' use of conciliatory and hostile statements has a relationship with the US' use of armed force against adversaries.

1.2 What to Expect From the Following
The purpose of this thesis is to explore the veracity of the quote with which it began. Do words matter? In particular, do the conciliatory and hostile statements US presidents use publicly in times of international disputes matter in that they have a relationship with whether the US uses armed force against its adversaries?

I explore these questions via quantitive methods. Using a dataset including 272 dyadic militarised interstate disputes involving the US between 1950-2010, I measure the proportion of words uttered by US presidents in the context of each dispute that are accounted for by conciliatory or hostile statements. Employing logistic regression analysis I investigate whether variation in the proportion of words accounted for by conciliatory and/or hostile statements is related to variation in the US' use of armed force against adversaries; the US employs armed force in some disputes but not in others. This analysis is built upon a rigorous coding process in which I built a dictionary of conciliatory terms by reading a random sample of presidential speech made in the context of the aforementioned 272 dyadic militarised interstate disputes.

Collecting data on the use of conciliatory statements by US presidents represents a significant addition to existing literature on the nature and consequences of public verbal communication used by political leaders during times of dispute. Firstly, examining conciliatory statements forces us to re-examine existing theory. In doing so we see that existing theoretical arguments that link hostile statements made by political leaders to their state's subsequent dispute behaviour apply equally to conciliatory statements. This helps to demonstrate that the prevailing focus on hostile statements in foregoing literature is a matter of convention, rather than theoretical consideration. Secondly, it simply gives us a greater descriptive understanding of the public statements used by US presidents during disputes. Intuitively we know that US presidents express conciliation to adversaries at times, yet before now there has not been an attempt to systematically collect and codify the statements by which presidents have historically done so. Thirdly, incorporating both conciliatory and hostile statements into an analysis of how presidential statements might influence the US' dispute behaviour, such as its use of force against adversaries, offers greater analytic accuracy. Such an analysis
recognises the empirical reality that US presidents often use both conciliatory and hostile statements in a single dispute and that both types of statements may have differing effects on the odds that the US uses force against an adversary.

My statistical analysis yields two findings. First, conciliatory statements alone do not exhibit a statistically significant relationship with variation in the US’ use of force against adversaries. Variation in the proportion of words uttered by US presidents in the context of each dispute that are accounted for by conciliatory statements does not appear related to variation in the US’ use of force. This finding points to a need for further theoretical development in the field, as existing theory and empirical evidence suggest that there should be such a statistically significant relationship.

Second, when measuring presidential speech in a way that accounts for both conciliatory and hostile statements used by US presidents in the context of disputes we see that there is a statistically significant relationship between such presidential statements and the US’ use of force. I label this measure the balance of conciliatory and hostile statements; a measurement of the proportion of words uttered by US presidents about a dispute that are accounted for by conciliatory/hostile statements relative to the amount accounted for by hostile/conciliatory statements. I find that as the proportion of words uttered by US presidents about a dispute that are accounted for by conciliatory statements increases relative to the proportion of words accounted for by hostile statements the odds of the US using armed force against its adversary decrease. Statistical modelling demonstrates that the balance of conciliatory and hostile statements performs better than a measure of hostile statements alone in explaining variation in the US’ use of force, indicating that including data on conciliatory statements made by US presidents in the context of disputes contributes to explaining the US’ use of armed force against its dispute adversaries.

The remainder of this thesis proceeds as follows. In the Literature Review I explore the various arguments in existing literature for why the public statements made by US presidents regarding an adversary should or should not influence the US’ use of armed force against that adversary. These arguments almost exclusively focus on hostile statements. In the Theoretical Framework I note that if we accept the arguments suggesting that hostile presidential statements should have an influence on US use of armed force, then so too should conciliatory statements. I conclude that there is a need to test the notion that US presidential statements towards an adversary influence US use of armed force against that adversary, and to do so when measuring both hostile and
conciliatory statements. *Research Design and Methodology* parts one and two explain the quantitative, statistical processes by which I went about this testing and the data collection and coding processes through which I collected data on presidential use of conciliatory statements in dispute settings between 1950-2010. The *Descriptive Statistics* and *Inferential Statistics* chapters present the findings of this testing. I end with a discussion of the connections between the findings of the statistical testing in the latter half of this thesis and the theoretical considerations covered in the former half. I also highlight questions that remain and suggest ways in which inquiry into this subject matter could be conducted in the future.
2 Literature Review

A mentor of mine tells me that conducting a literature review is like looking for (or at least looking to explain the existence of) the “empty room”; a room yet to be furnished with the research questions, theoretical propositions, hypotheses or empirical findings of previous studies. The room represents a research gap or question yet to be asked. While the room is empty, it has parameters or boundaries. Rooms in which other researchers or interested parties have unpacked and made themselves at home surround the empty room. The surrounding rooms constitute the body of literature that our research is located within and from which our research both draws and departs. A good literature review, much like a good mystery-thriller, should give insight into what goes on next-door (although with far more clarity and less suspense).

This chapter begins by explaining the surrounding rooms. I introduce foregoing literature that has sought to examine the relationship between the public statements political leaders make in the context of disputes and the outcomes of those disputes or the behaviour of participating states therein. I trace the evolution of this literature, discuss the ways in which key concepts are conceptualised and highlight the puzzles presented. Following this I identify what I believe to be an empty room: there have been very few studies that examine conciliatory statements used by political leaders in the context of disputes; there has been an almost exclusive focus on the hostile statements of political leaders. In concluding this chapter I touch upon the ways in which I hope to help fill this research gap.

2.1 Communication in Politics

This thesis is about communication. In particular, it is about spoken communication, statements, used by political leaders in times of dispute with other countries. It seeks to explain whether there is a relationship between the statements regarding an adversary that a political leader uses and whether or not their state uses armed force against that adversary. Fundamental, then, to this enquiry is communication and how it is conceptualised.

I wish to avoid a discussion of the philosophy of language. However, it needs to be made clear at the outset that there are a number of different ways of conceptualising communication and, therefore, there are different ways to examine how communication might influence individual or group behaviour. Christer Jönsson’s (1990) *Communication in International Bargaining* provides a nice explanation of what is the key point of contention. Jönsson contrasts a “traditional approach” of studying
communication against a “constructivist approach”. The former “highlights the process
of exchanging messages while treating the meaning of these messages as given”
(Jönsson, 1990, p. 13). Constructivist thought, on the other hand, is more concerned
with the production of meaning and the power of language to construct the very objects,
categories, etc., to which we otherwise, under the traditional view of communication,
would say language refers.²

Herein I investigate the relationship between political leaders’ statements and their use
of armed force against adversaries in a manner in line with the traditional approach
described above. This is not because I believe this approach is the only one with
worthwhile things to say on the role of communication in international disputes. Nor is
it because I believe such an approach represents the best understanding of
communication as a phenomenon. Rather, as I will demonstrate below, there is a long-
existing, well-established, body of literature investigating the role of political leaders’
statements in influencing the course of international disputes that has (largely) adopted
the traditional approach to communication. I wish to examine this body of literature,
point out the gaps that I believe exist in it and go some way towards filling in these gaps
while operating under the same assumptions held in this body of literature. In doing so I
hope to show that the gaps I perceive and the propositions I have to fix them do not
simply stem from differing assumptions about the phenomenon of interest:
communication. This should help to illustrate, I think, that the gaps in the literature I
wish to highlight are a product of convention rather than scholarly perspective or
approach.

2.2 Rationalist Accounts: Bargaining and Game Theory

2.2.1 The Literature and the Puzzles it Presents
The body of literature I examine is situated within the bargaining model of war
literature. The bargaining model of war “sees the essence of conflict, violent or
otherwise, as disagreement over resource allocation and/or policy choice” (Reiter, 2003,
p. 28). States bargain to obtain the state of affairs (e.g. the division of resources) most in

² For general discussion of constructivism in international relations see Wendt (1999),
Finnemore and Sikkink (2001), and Checkel (1998). For examples where constructivist
principles are applied see Doty (1993), Weldes and Saco (1996), Howard (2004)
and Sjöstedt (2007; 2008; 2013). Also, it is worth noting that while often juxtaposed, the
schools of thought underlying both the traditional and constructivist approach to
communication, rationalism and constructivism, are not necessarily mutually exclusive
(Fearon & Wendt, 2002).
line with their preferences. Critically, a principle of this literature is that war is seen to be part of these bargaining processes, not a consequence of bargaining having failed (Reiter, 2003). War is one tactic that a state may use to pursue its objectives and strengthen its hand at the bargaining table. Blaney (1977), Schelling (1960) and Snyder and Diesing’s (1977) work is seminal.

Much of the literature consists of the application of game theory, through formal models, to the phenomena of international interaction. Examples of formal models being employed are numerous (see Bueno de Mesquita, 1992; Fearon, 1994a; Ramsay, 2011; Wagner, 2000). Some work, while not utilising formal models, accepts the same or similar rational decision making assumptions (explained below) to examine communication (see Huth, 1984; Thyne, 2006; Walter, 2009). Powell (2002) and Reiter (2003) offer explanations of the field’s development.

Reiter (2003, p. 28) groups the bargaining model of war literature among the wider literature on “...rational-choice models of politics and war.” This is because the unit of analysis, typically the state or state leaders, are considered to be rational actors and thus are expected to behave in a rational way. Bueno de Mesquita and Lalman (1992, p. 18) explain this, saying, “Our theory is... about how they [people] behave given their goals. It is about the instrumental selection of actions to maximise expected utility given particular aims.” In relation, Huth and Russett (1984, p. 500) say, “...expected utility is the product of the utility of a given outcome times the decision maker's estimated (subjective) probability of achieving the outcome.” Less explicit, but still present, is the assumption that rational actors update their beliefs or learn from what they observe.

The centrality of communication to studies in this field, of course, differs. For example, Huth and Russett (1984) focus on how relative power can alter the effectiveness of a state leader’s deterrent threats. On the other hand, Sartori’s (2005) work deliberately attempts to look at the success or failure of such threats while holding variables accounting for relative power constant. However, in one way or another, all studies in this field concern themselves with international communication and adopt what Jönsson (1990) describes as the traditional approach in their investigations.

Much of the current interest in the role of communication on the international scene, particularly in relation to the occurrence of war, held by bargaining model of war scholars stems from a puzzle to which James D. Fearon (1995) gives expression. Fearon

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3 See Myerson (1992) for a concise explanation of game theory.
(1995) explains that within a rationalist framework war is always inefficient. If war will have costs (which it seems reasonable to expect that it will) then states will always be better off avoiding war and coming to a negotiated settlement. States should prefer to reach the very same state of affairs, e.g. the same division of territory, that a war would bring about in a way that avoids war’s costs. Why then do states not negotiate a settlement? There are, Fearon argues, two primary barriers to negotiated settlement.4

1. Private information and incentives to misrepresent.
2. Inability to commit to agreements.

Barrier one raises the point that while states would like to reach a settlement without recourse to war they are hesitant to make available to the other party the very information that is necessary to do so. States have an incentive to conceal both their true capabilities that they could bring to bear on an issue and the degree to which they are resolved to doing so. As Fearon (1995, pp. 395-396) notes, states may be “...concerned that revelation would make them militarily (and hence politically) vulnerable or would reduce the chances for a successful first strike. Similarly, states may conceal their true willingness to fight in order to avoid appearing as the aggressor.” Barrier two speaks to the possibility that states may be unable to reach agreement short of armed conflict “…because one or more states would have an incentive to renege on the terms” (Fearon, 1995, p. 381).

The upshot of the puzzle Fearon (1995) presents is that the ability to communicate verbally should not have any influence upon a state’s future action in a dispute, including whether or not it uses armed force against the adversary. In fact, Fearon (1995, p. 396) claims that the ex ante probability of war is no different in a formally modelled game where such communication is allowed to when it is not. Verbal or written communication is ineffective at reducing the odds of fighting due to the above two barriers. Referring to the first barrier, Fearon (1995, p. 396) explains,

...regardless of B’s true willingness to fight, B does best to make the announcement that leads to the smallest grab by A- that is, B has an incentive to misrepresent its actual willingness to resist. But then A learns nothing from the announcement.

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4 Fearon (1995) also mentions contests over indivisible issues as a third barrier. However, he argues that contests over truly indivisible issues are rare in international relations.
Essentially, if B says that it is committed to fight over an issue, A learns nothing from this because B is incentivised to say exactly that in order to try and deter A. Moreover, were an agreement reached, statements in which a state’s leadership indicated their intention to uphold the agreement could not commit them to this course of action, due to the possibility that a changing international climate may incentivise a state leader to renge on their statements. However, importantly, these conclusions only hold if a) the communicative act in question is “cheap”, and, as a logical corollary, b) cheap signals cannot be effective in altering state behaviour. The fact that “costly” signals can influence state behaviour is not contested in the literature.5

The point of discussing Fearon’s puzzle is that it brings to the fore what much of this body of literature seeks to explain. When coupled with an observation of reality a tension becomes clear that calls for explanation. On the one hand, Fearon (1995) has offered an argument, the logic of which is “undeniable” under rationalist principles (Ramsay, 2011). The argument apparently shows that verbal and written communication should not impart new information to other parties and so should not affect the rational calculation involved in deciding on matters of war and/or negotiation. Nor should cheap communication allow them to commit to any agreement reached. However, on the other hand, we see from history a number of cases where “…countries use encouraging and compromising messages to avoid unwanted wars” (Ramsay, 2011, p. 1016).

History yeilds a number of examples of disputes in which political leaders were able to resolve the issue at hand short of using armed force by, in part, communicating to one and other their preferences and intentions through verbal or written statements. Ramsay (2011, p. 1016) cites a number of historical cases in which state leaders exchanged “encouraging and compromising messages”, helping war to be avoided. Of note are the partion of Poland between European powers in the 1700s, Germany and Great Britain dividing colonial territories in the late 1800s, Chamberlain’s diplomatic engagement with Hitler over German ambitions in Czechoslovakia and the Soviet Union and United States’ engagement with one another during the Berlin Crisis in the early 1960s. Moreover, Janice Gross Stein (1991, p. 436) has pointed to border confrontations between India and Pakistan in the late 1980s that were deescalated through “the language of reassurance rather than threat” and Amitai Etzioni (1967) argues that a

5 A discussion of cheap and costly signals is had below.
period of decreased tension between the USSR and US during the 1960s began with Kennedy's conciliatory "A Strategy of Peace" speech in November 1963.

Regarding threatening statements, Sartori (2002, p. 122) notes that despite Fearon's (1995) argument, history shows that "When states do use diplomatic threats to deter actions, they often succeed in pursuading their challengers to back down." Sartori highlights examples of the US compelling the USSR to live up to the conditions of the Anglo-Russian Treaty (in which it had agreed to remove its troops from Iran by March 1946) and the US' success in deterring Turkey from invading Cyprus in 1964 via threatening diplomatic statements. Kurizaki (2007) cites the Alaska boundary dispute of 1903 as another example of threatening statements assisting in avoiding armed violence, as threats from Theodore Roosevelt successfully helped deter Canada from challenging US claims. What could explain the tension between Fearon's (1995) supposedly undeniable logic and observed cases such as the above in which political leaders have used verbal and written statements to help settle disputes short of armed force?

2.3 Communication - A Multifaceted Phenomenon
Communication is not a homogenous group of interactions. Communication includes the use of spoken language. In this regard the literature refers to announcements (Fearon, 1995), threats (Guisinger & Smith, 2002; Sartori, 2002) and political statements (Gartzke & Li, 2003). Physical actions can communicate information also. For this reason the broader phrase "signal" is often used (see Fearon, 1994b; Gartzke & Li, 2003; Thyne, 2006). "Diplomacy" is also used to capture both "...language and other signals by one state in an attempt to convey information to another..." (Sartori, 2005, p. 3).

Importantly, communicative actions can be costly or cheap. To say a signal is cheap is to say that it has "...no effect on either side's payoffs..." (Fearon, 1995, p. 396). In other words, the act is, in itself, inconsequential with regard to the payoffs each side derives from the outcome of a dispute. Costly signals, on the other hand, refer to those signals where "... some price is imposed regardless of subsequent actions." (Gartzke & Li, p. 566). In this case the signal itself imposes a cost upon the sender. The example Gartzke and Li (2003) give is the economic cost of mobilising two aircraft carriers as a signal of preparedness to fight over an issue, as opposed to the cheap signal of verbally professing preparedness.
2.3.1 Verbal Communication

In attempting to understand the tension between Fearon's (1995) logic and empirical observation, much of the literature looks specifically at verbal statements made by state leaders. This focus is adopted because, at face value, these signals epitomise what it is for a signal to be cheap. They epitomise the form of communication from which the tension arises. From a rational viewpoint they should be ineffective in altering state behaviour but from historical observation seem to do just that. As Anne Sartori (2002, p. 125) states “Diplomacy is the epitome of ‘cheap talk.’ It includes speeches, conversations, and diplomatic notes.” Tingley and Walter (2011, p. 996) add, “Most bargaining models assume that verbal threats or promises that inflict no costs on the sender will have little or no influence on those receiving the message.” In essence the view that permeates the literature really amounts to simply believing in the popular saying “talk is cheap.”

But does talk being cheap really prevent it from being consequential in international affairs and, specifically, the decision of a state to employ armed force? If not, then this would explain the tension between Fearon's (1995) logic and empirical observation. As will be shown below, most of the work in the bargaining model of war literature, including Fearon (1994a) himself, ultimately concludes that verbal statements can be influential. Verbal statements announcing a state’s policy are cheap, yet it is argued that they can a) inform an adversary as to a state’s willingness and ability to fight, thus allowing both states an increased ability to negotiate a settlement short of armed force, and b) give states an increased ability to commit to a particular course of action.

2.4 Verbal Statements

The verbal statements made by political leaders in times of dispute are said to be able to be influential for a number of reasons. Some arguments posit some kind of cost that results from political leaders having made a public statement. For example, Gartzke and Li (2003, p. 568) assert that economic integration means that “The fervor with which leaders make political threats now imparts an economic cost.” Capital flight can occur when investors see war as likely in a region, suggesting that there are economic costs associated with hostile rhetoric from political leaders. Other arguments claim, utilising either formal models or laboratory experiments, that even with no associated cost public statements can serve to exchange information between adversaries (Ramsay, 6 Sartori (2002) also includes physical acts under the heading “diplomacy”, but only those that would be reasonably thought to be “cheap” in comparison to the issue on the table.
Despite some diversity in the mechanisms by which the public statements made by political leaders are said to influence both their own state’s action and the course of a dispute more generally, two types of arguments have gained the majority of scholarly attention. These arguments relate to the domestic audience costs and reputational damage that can be inflicted on a political leader via their public statements. I deal with each below.

### 2.4.1 Domestic Audience Costs

Fearon's (1994a) article, *Domestic Political Audiences and the Escalation of International Disputes* is typically cited as the starting point for the wide body of literature that has since developed on the costs domestic publics can impose on political leaders for careless use of publicly issued statements regarding an international dispute. Fearon (1994a) contested that while threats issued towards an adversary were technically cheap, they could generate costs for political leaders were they to back down at a later point. Fearon (1994a, p. 586) claims that states resolve the insufficiency of quiet diplomacy by "taking actions such as troop mobilizations and public threats that focus the attention of relevant political audiences and create costs that leaders would suffer if they backed down". Essentially, if a domestic public disliked a political leader's handling of an international dispute, and, in particular, their backing down from a confrontation after having made threatening statements, they may be inclined to impose costs upon the leader. Fearon (1994) treats politicians as having interests in retaining office and so conceptualises these costs as being removed from office at the next election.

In this way, due to the potential domestic consequences of international threats, verbal statements made by political leaders become, essentially, a costly signal. This would help explain how state leaders have used their public statements to help them avoid wars with adversaries, as noted by Ramsay (2011). If it costs a political leader to make a threatening statement indicating that they are willing to use armed force and then back down from doing so, the threat is informative to an adversary. Given that Political Leader A would suffer costs for backing down after threatening, Political Leader B can infer that there is at least some degree of resolve on the part of Political Leader A to follow through on their threat, as they are willing to risk the domestic audience costs backing down would entail. Such information allows Political Leader B to develop their

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7 Following the literature, and in order to be able to collect the data required for the empirical components of this thesis, I focus herein on public statements made by political leaders. However, there has been some scholarly work conducted on secret communication also. See, for example, Kurizaki (2007) and Baum (2004).
own policy in light of this new information. They may reconsider whether they really want to continue to confront Political Leader A if there is some degree of resolve on his/her part to use armed force. Moreover, such a threat helps commit Political Leader A to the course of using armed force, as to back down would be to suffer electoral punishment.

Yet, there were many questions remaining regarding domestic audience costs imposed by a state's citizenry, not least of which was: Why would domestic publics punish their political leaders for backing down from earlier threats? Generally speaking, much of the domestic audience cost literature (see Bueno de Mesquita and Lalman, 1992; Schultz, 2001; Smith, 1998) opened by drawing on a separate body of literature that had demonstrated that unsuccessful involvement in wars had negative consequences for leadership tenure. This logic was extended, suggesting that leaders might also face abbreviated terms in office for poor management of disputes in the period prior to the use of armed force. However, greater specificity was needed and much of the literature has since been dedicated to exploring the so-called "microfoundations" of domestic audience costs.

Fearon (1994a) initially offered a somewhat vague notion of why a domestic public might punish a political leader for escalating a dispute via threats and then backing down, stating that the threat engaged the national honour and implying that the back-down would tarnish it. Somewhat more specificity was offered by Fearon (1997) when in later work he suggested that such actions indicated a mishandling of foreign policy. A similar argument was made by Smith (1998) when he argued that a leader's behaviour (such as issuing threats) in dispute management was an indication of their (in)competence. Incompetence was punished by the general public. Taking a different tack, Guisinger and Smith (2002) argued that domestic publics punished political leaders for damaging their state's reputation in the eyes of other states. In this version of the domestic audience cost argument domestic publics punished political leaders not due to their own assessment that they were incompetent, but because they believe that their leaders have lost a reputation as honest deal-brokers on the international stage by escalating a dispute and then backing down. All three of these studies utilised formal modelling techniques to reach the conclusions mentioned.

More recently, survey studies have been conducted to try and generate empirical evidence on the matter. Tomz (2007), conducting his research in the US, found that many people's (72% of respondents) objections to a president escalating a dispute
through threats and then backing down came from their dislike of the inconsistency between words and deeds. There were numerous reasons participants disliked inconsistency. The most prevalent opinion, in line with Guisinger and Smith (2002), was that such inconsistency would damage the reputation of the US on the international stage. Other responses suggested a simple preference for honesty for ethical reasons. Yet another opinion expressed was that flip-flopping by backing down after having made threats demonstrated incompetence on the part of the president, an opinion in line with Smith (1998). These findings were further explored, and largely confirmed, in a second survey of US public opinion conducted by Levy, McKoy, Poast and Wallace (2015). Furthermore, Dustin Tingley (2014), using similar survey methods, found that most people’s preferences for consistency between word and deed was such that even if the US had incentives to violate a previously made agreement with another state, and also had to the power to do so, they would prefer for the US to honour the agreement.

Despite a far more complete picture as to why domestic publics might punish political leaders than existed when Fearon (1994a) initiated this inquiry in 1994, points of contention remain. Some studies have investigated the contexts in which domestic publics can impose audience costs. Fearon (1994a) supposed that such costs could only exist in democratic countries, as non-democratic leaders cannot be punished at the ballot box for their actions during international disputes. Partell and Palmer (1999), Eyerman and Hart (1996) and Gelpi and Griesdorf (2001), using multiple datasets of international disputes, conducted statistical analyses supportive of this claim. Trager and Vavreck (2011) carried out a randomised experiment the conclusions of which also supported Fearon’s (1994a) assumption, yet demonstrated that in the case of the US the political party to which a president belonged influenced how they incurred audience costs. Similarly, Schultz (2001) investigated how the existence of opposition parties in democracies, not just the ability of the citizenry to remove an elected leader from office, could allow democratic leaders to communicate effectively with their adversaries. As opposition parties do not necessarily have incentives to support an incumbent leader, where opposition party leaders support a state leader’s threats, for example, such threats can convey a state’s resolve to follow through on these threats in a way that non-democratic leaders are unable to achieve due to the lack of a political opposition.

Other studies have questioned the relationship between democracy and audience costs. Findings include that the relationship between the presence of audience costs and regime type is not linear (Slantchev, 2006), that non-democratic regimes can also feel the pinch of audience costs (Weeks, 2008) and that threats made by democratic leaders
do not differ (in terms of their success in compelling an adversary) from those issued by non-democratic leaders (Downes and Sechser, 2012; Slantchev, 2010). McManus (2014) conducted a large-n study indicating that the use of threats by US presidents was positively related to the US getting its way in a dispute. However, historical analysis has questioned whether audience costs would be responsible for this (Trachtenberg, 2012).

It should be evident that the existence and operation of domestic audience costs is not settled. However, what cannot be denied is that they are one of the most widely promoted reasons for why it is that statements made by political leaders do seem to have an influence on a state’s behaviour during disputes and, indeed, dispute outcomes (McManus, 2014). To recap the central logic of all domestic audience cost arguments, domestic publics are seen as capable of punishing leaders for their behaviour in managing international disputes. The example most widely used, as I will expand upon below, is the case in which a political leader threatens an adversary and then backs down. For a number of reasons discussed above, domestic audiences are said to oppose this and, it is argued, would punish political leaders accordingly. This means that such threats can alter both a state’s own behaviour within the dispute and the outcome of the dispute more generally (of course, the two cannot be disconnected). In the first case, a state is more likely to use armed force after its leader issues a threat to do so, due to the costs suffered by its political leader if they should back down. In the second case, the dispute outcome may be altered if the adversary is deterred by a threat, believing that the costs the adversary leader would incur if they backed down make his/her threat credible.

2.4.2 Reputation Matters
A second type of argument that has come to prevalence in the literature focuses not only on the costs political leaders face for inconsistency between word and deed but also on what they stand to gain from delivering on what they say. Anne Sartori (2002, 2005) is the leading proponent of such arguments. Sartori (2005, p. 5) claims that public statements can be used by state leaders to avoid conflict or achieve their goals in a dispute precisely because it is valuable for states to be able to do so. Following the rationalist principles expressed by Fearon (1995), Sartori argues that states want to be able to resolve their disputes without recourse to violence. However, they are only able to do so if there is some expectation that public statements of intended policy are used honestly (Sartori, 2002, p. 125). As highlighted by Fearon (1995), the ability of states to communicate in a dispute does not alter the chances that they are able to reach a negotiated settlement when states have incentives to deceive their adversary. Because
deception hinders the ability of states to resolve their disputes short of combat and states would like to achieve just that, Sartori argues that states in dispute do communicate honestly with each other some of the time. Just as they have incentives to conceal information, they also have incentives to be able to exchange information with their adversary in the hope of reaching a settlement.

According to Sartori (2002, 2005), states are not only concerned with getting the best possible outcome for themselves in a particular interaction or dispute but also want to be able to secure favourable outcomes in future interactions and disputes. States “...use diplomacy to attain a mutually beneficial ‘trade’ of issues over time” (Sartori, 2002, p. 122). A state’s reputation for honesty increases its ability to achieve this trade of issues without recourse to violence, and is thus valuable. A reputation for honesty, Sartori argues, is acquired through either being honest or simply not being discovered to have been dishonest (bluffing) in having made a threat to deter an adversary. A reputation for bluffing is acquired through being caught having made a threat against an adversary that was not backed up (in cases where the adversary was not deterred).

Sartori (2002, 2005) argues that states with a reputation for honesty can convey information through their diplomatic statements because they will lose their reputation for honesty if they are lying and are caught. States with a reputation for bluffing have no such honest reputation to lose. Where a reputation for honesty exists a state leader can effectively share information with an adversary about, for example, how committed to fighting over an issue they are because an adversary would know that state leaders are incentivised to maintain their states reputation for honesty and thus act in accordance with their threats.

As with domestic costs, the upshot of this argument is that public statements uttered by political leaders may be influential regarding both their own dispute behaviour and the dispute outcome. State leaders may be more likely to follow through on a threat, for example, because to not do so would damage their state’s reputation for honesty. Or, regarding dispute outcome, following through on the threat might not be necessary if the adversary is deterred by the threat, having recognised that the state that has threatened them has incentives to follow through on its threat in order to maintain (or establish) an honest reputation.
Sartori’s arguments are related to, yet distinct from, arguments focusing on reputations for resolve discussed by Jervis (1970) and others. Reputations for honesty are more focused on communication during disputes than are reputations for resolve. While a state’s reputation for resolve may be well known, once a dispute begins it is a state’s reputation for honesty/dishonesty that will or will not allow the state to convince its adversary that it is more or less committed to fighting over an issue then the adversary currently believes. Sartori (2005, p. 46) states, “...a reputation for resolve provides no advantage in communicating that it [a state] is more resolute than others had thought at the start of the dispute.”

Notably, as alluded to above, while Sartori (2002, 2005) pitches her work as differing from the audience cost literature, recent work has essentially combined the two. The aforementioned survey studies of Tomz (2007) and Levy et al (2015) have provided empirical evidence in support of Guisinger and Smith’s (2002) earlier claim that it may be exactly this damage to a state’s reputation that causes domestic publics to punish their political leaders for not following through on their threats.

2.5 Gaps and a Proposition to Fill Them
Perhaps stemming from the fact that key texts in the bargaining model of war literature were produced during the Cold War, much of the scholarship conducted in this field has focused on hostile interactions between states. Despite the ultimate goal being to avoid war, a great deal of the literature has focused on how one state might deter or coerce another in order to achieve this. In this regard, when it comes to public statements made by political leaders, threats are the primary type of public statements from which many studies derive their findings on the role of verbal statements between states while in dispute (see Bueno de Mesquita, 1992; Guisinger, 2002; Sartori, 2005; Schultz, 2001).

A key contribution to existing literature that I make with this thesis is to collect and code data on a subset of statements made by state leaders during international disputes that has yet to receive significant scholarly attention; conciliatory statements. Additionally, I contribute by analysing whether these statements, in conjunction with hostile statements such as threats, influence the likelihood that a state leader will use armed force against its adversary. In this final section of my literature review I discuss those studies within (or with links to) the bargaining model of war literature that have given some attention to conciliation. I discuss the role of public statements in these studies

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8 See Huth (1997) for a discussion of reputations for resolve.
before explaining how I hope to contribute to filling the gap that conciliatory statements currently represent in the literature.

2.5.1 Conciliatory Communication

Charles Osgood (1962) was one of the first academics to put forward propositions to deal with Cold War tensions between the USSR and US not by trying to deter the USSR from aggression by accruing greater armed force, for example, but through conciliatory gestures and trust-building mechanisms. Osgood’s account of the standoff between the USSR and US at that time fits nicely within the bargaining model of war literature. Osgood compares the two states to people who are standing on either end of a seesaw. The seesaw is grounded in the middle, but both ends (where the people are standing) hang out over a high cliff. Neither person wants to fall (intended to represent nuclear confrontation), yet this is not completely under their own power. The actions of the person at the other end of the seesaw very much influence the likelihood that both will fall. Osgood argues that the best option for both parties is to move towards the centre at the same time. However, where there is no trust between the two parties, even if able to communicate, this is very hard to coordinate.

Osgood believed trust between the parties was required. He proposed a process he termed GRIT (Graduated Reciprocation in Tension-reduction), in which states entered into a process of offering reciprocated conciliatory gestures. Osgood (1962, p. 87) labelled this process “tension-decreasing”, as opposed to the US’ policy of deterrence he perceived as being “tension-increasing”. Highlighting his work’s connections with the bargaining model of war literature, Osgood (1962, p. 88) stated that what he proposed is perhaps best viewed as a kind of international (rather than interpersonal) communicating and learning situation, where the communication is more by deeds than words and where what is learned - hopefully and gradually - is increased mutual understanding and trust.

Osgood (1962) recognised that such a process relied on one state being willing to start things off, thus making itself vulnerable to exploitation. He contested that the US could do so without endangering its security as a whole, but was explicit that GRIT would entail small acts in which a state’s security was diminished in the short-term. The central thesis of GRIT was that through conciliatory acts, states could communicate their interest in peace and learn, over time and through ongoing interactions, to trust the
expressions of their adversaries who claim to have the same desire. Together, the two people could make it safely off the seesaw.

Osgood's work provided a rationale upon which to undertake conciliatory actions while in dispute. He provided a set of propositions as to why we might expect the US to be able to undertake GRIT as a policy and still maintain its security. He also used his expertise in psychology to form a number of propositions regarding what type of conciliatory acts might be most likely to induce reciprocation. However, being, generally speaking, theoretical, his work did not subject his arguments to empirical analysis.

An early attempt to subject Osgood's (1962) thinking to empirical enquiry came in 1967 when Amitai Etzioni (1967) wrote *The Kennedy Experiment*. Conducting a historical analysis of the period in US-USSR relations between June 10 and November 22, 1963, Etzioni argued that the behaviour displayed by the US and USSR (and their leaders, Kennedy and Khrushchev) aligned, in large part, with what Osgood's theory had predicted. Tracing events from Kennedy's "A Strategy of Peace" speech at the American University on June 10, in which Kennedy announced the US would cease nuclear testing in the atmosphere, Etzioni points to various actions such as a Soviet halt on producing strategic bombers, US recognition of the Hungarian delegation at the UN, Soviet agreement to a direct communication link between the US and USSR, and US approval of greater trade with the USSR as representing a process approximating GRIT. What is more, Etzioni surveyed US newspapers of the time, finding that there seemed to be a softening of public opinion towards the USSR during this period.

Unfortunately, as Andrew Kydd (2000a) notes, despite a growth in interest in collective security, reassurance, and confidence building measures on the part of both academics and practitioners, since the work of Osgood and Etzioni there has not been much theoretical development of their ideas. Kydd (2000a and 2000b) himself constructs formal models and adopts rationalist principles in an attempt to show that it is possible (and rational) for states to reassure each other while in conflict or distrusting each other, thus allowing cooperation. Harking back to the problem Fearon (1995) posed, Kydd (2000b) argued that when states could benefit from cooperation (e.g. by avoiding an unwanted war), they could assure an adversary of their willingness to do so by sending costly signals. Kydd (2000b, p. 415) states, "The essence of reassurance is costly signals...exposing oneself to the risk of exploitation and demonstrating one's interest in cooperation." Kydd (2000a) gave examples of what these costly signals might look like in describing the end of the Cold War, claiming that Gorbachev's willingness to
unilaterally eliminate the USSR’s intermediate-range missiles and his withdrawal from Afghanistan all constituted costly signals of a willingness to cooperate with the US.

Other notable exceptions to the lack of attention given to conciliatory interactions between states include the work of Louis Kriesberg (1981, 1984), Janice Gross Stein (1991) and Christopher Mitchell (1990). Kriesberg (1981, 1984) notes that international disputes are waged through both coercive and non-coercive means, but that it is coercive actions that garner most scholarly, policy and popular attention. In disputes states attempt to induce adversaries to act in a way consistent with their interests. This can be achieved via coercion, defined by Kriesberg (1981, p. 37) as “violent and nonviolent negative sanctions, encompassing their actual employment and their threatened use.” These negative sanctions include things such as direct military force, the threat thereof and economic boycott (Kriesberg, 1981, p. 37). On the other hand, non-coercive inducements either persuade an adversary to consent to a state’s requests by appealing to the adversary’s self interest or propagated values, or by rewarding the adversary via positive sanctions (Kriesberg, 1981, p. 37). Analysing disputes between, among others, Israel and Egypt, and the US and Soviet Union, Kriesberg (1981) highlights common types of non-coercive inducements. These included assuring adversaries that they would not join alliances pitted against them (e.g. Sadat assured Israel that Egypt would not align with other states in the region against Israel), offers to withdraw troops from contested territories and promises to allow adversaries access to contested territories or resources (Kriesberg, 1981).

Where as Kriesberg (1981) offers a historical analysis of how conciliatory gestures or inducements have been used, Mitchell (1990), in a process similar to Osgood (1962), and as a forerunner to his later work (Mitchell, 2000), develops hypotheses regarding how a state can most effectively transfer conciliatory signals to an adversary. That is to say, he asks what characteristics conciliatory gestures should possess in order to increase the chances that they will be understood to be a conciliatory act by the adversary. Mitchell (1990) concludes that, among a list of eight characteristics, conciliatory gestures should offer benefits to an adversary, impose costs on one’s own state, involve positive acts, rather than simply refraining from acts that would damage an adversary, and increase the vulnerability of one’s own state to exploitation from the adversary. Mitchell expects that in reality all eight characteristics he cites are never fully present in any single conciliatory gesture from a state, calling on empirical analysis to determine patterns in how these characteristics interact with the international context.
in which they are made to increase or decrease the likelihood that an adversary recognises a conciliatory gesture.

Stein's (1991) work on reassurance between states differentiates itself conceptually from deterrence theory. Like many strategies of deterrence the strategy of reassurance presumes "ongoing hostility" between states (Stein, 1991, p. 432). However, strategies of reassurance root the sources of hostility "not in an adversaries' search for opportunity but in an adversary's needs and weaknesses" (Stein, 1991, p. 432). This difference in focus allows for different questions to be asked. In particular, if the ability to avoid war is not only determined by a state's ability to deter an adversary from aggression, but also by the ability to assure an adversary of one's own peaceful intentions, how could a state make its conciliatory communication as credible as its deterrent threats?

Stein discusses four strategies of reassurance states may use when they want to avoid war: restraint, the development of norms of competition, irrevocable commitment and limited security regimes. Providing examples of how each has been used historically, Stein argues that these strategies have been successfully used to convey nonthreatening intentions between adversaries in the past. As an example of irrevocable commitment, Stein discusses the tensions between Egypt and Israel in the 1970s. She argues that Sadat's visit to speak in the Israeli Knesset was so unpopular with Sadat's supporters and allies that the potential costs imposed upon Sadat helped to reassure Israel of Egypt's willingness to settle their dispute non-violently. In line with Osgood (1962) and Etzioni's (1967) work, these types of reassurance or trust-building strategies were seen as pre-negotiation techniques, helping to establish the conditions in which negotiations might actually move past the deadlock that so often characterises them.

The aforementioned studies demonstrate a potential for conciliatory interaction between states even when confronted with the barriers to communication that Fearon (1995) discusses, and continue to make valuable contributions to a literature that, as I have discussed here, typically focuses on hostile interactions between states. These studies do not extensively analyse the role of verbal statements in conciliatory interactions, however. To varying degrees, much of this literature operates on two assumptions that, as was mentioned above, were commonplace in the wider bargaining model of war literature before Fearon's (1994a) discussion of domestic audience costs. It is assumed that 1) a conciliatory gesture must impose costs on the state enacting it for it to be credible to an adversary, and, 2) public statements by political leaders do not
impose such costs. Kydd (2000b, p. 415), for example, states that "The essence of reassurance is costly signals". Mitchell (1990) argues that conciliatory gestures should impose costs on the state undertaking the gesture, in order to increase the likelihood that the adversary will interpret the act as conciliatory. Moreover, Mitchell (1990) suggests that when state leaders wish to demonstrate conciliatory intentions towards an adversary they should do so through conciliatory gestures that are relatively irrevocable, citing verbal promises or commitments as the most revocable conciliatory gestures. Like Mitchell, Stein (1991), while indicating that conciliatory language can play some trust-building role, notes that such gestures might be limited in their effectiveness and considers costly signals, through irrevocable commitments, as a central tactic of indicating conciliatory preferences to an adversary. Osgood (1962, p. 88) explicitly states that GRIT is a process whereby states indicate preferences for reduced tensions “more by deeds than words”. Etzioni (1967) discusses speeches as part of the process of de-escalation he studies, but these account for only a few of the conciliatory gestures he describes and it is hard to tell whether he perceives the speeches themselves to be notable conciliatory gestures or, rather, the enactment of the promises made therein to be what is important.

Kriesberg (1981), perhaps more than any other, focuses on the role of verbal statements of conciliation, describing the role of "persuasive arguments", "promises", "offers" and "assurances" as non-coercive inducements. However, Kriesberg’s (1981) work is an analysis of historical cases in which these types of non-coercive inducements appeared to play some role in dispute de-escalation, and a description of what these actions typically looked like. Kriesberg (1981) offers few thoughts on the extent to which non-coercive inducements are responsible for the instances of dispute de-escalation he cites, recognising the difficulty of separating out the effects of these specific actions from structural factors. For example, Kriesberg (1981, p. 44) believes that efforts by US officials to highlight to USSR officials, through their spoken statements, that it was in the interests of both the USSR and US to keep China non-nuclear, along with other non-coercive inducements, played a "contributory role" in achieving the Partial Nuclear Test Ban Agreement in 1963. However, Kriesberg (1981) is clear that it is the convergence of interests, due to structural factors such as the worsening relations between the USSR and China, which allowed the Agreement to go head.

In particular, there has not been the same analysis given to whether failing to deliver on conciliatory statements might also be able to incur audience costs or damage a state’s reputation, just as, it has been argued, happens when threatening statements are not
backed up. One exception is the recent work of Kydd and McManus (2017), who attempt to understand how state leaders may use a strategy of both threatening and assuring statements when engaging an adversary. Following the aforementioned study of Tingley (2014), they assume that state leaders pay a cost for attacking an adversary after promising not to. They find that both threats and assurances can alter the likelihood that a dispute will be resolved by armed force. Threats can help State A draw greater concessions from State B, thus decreasing the need for State A to use armed force to make the gains it wants. Assurances State A will not use armed force lessen the benefits State A would gain from armed force, as these would be counterweighted by the costs imposed on State A’s leader for violating her/his word, and thus decrease the likelihood that State A will use armed force.

2.5.2 Moving Forward

The aim of this thesis is to address the lack of analysis that the public statements made by political leaders, other than threats or other forms of hostile statements, have received. I intend to do this in three main ways. First, I demonstrate that the theoretical case used in the bargaining model of war literature to argue that threatening statements should impact a state’s dispute behaviour also applies to conciliatory statements. Specifically, I show that it is a logical extension of existing theory and empirical evidence to hypothesise that conciliatory statements made by political leaders in the context of disputes should be negatively associated with their state using armed force against its adversaries. Furthermore, and upon the same grounds, I hypothesise that the *balance* of hostile and conciliatory statements employed by state leaders should influence the odds of their states’ use of armed force against an adversary; the greater the proportion of a political leader’s speech in the context of a dispute that is accounted for by conciliatory statements, relative to the proportion accounted for by hostile statements, the less likely a state should be to use armed force against its adversary. I introduce the balance of conciliatory and hostile statements as, as noted by Kydd and McManus (2017), attempts to understand how both conciliatory and hostile remarks might influence the behaviour of the state whose leader has made such remarks are needed.

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9 Although Mitchell (1990) does recognise that domestic criticism is one form of cost that leaders may pay for initiating conciliatory gestures more generally, and Kriesberg (1981) notes that domestic conditions are an important factor in whether non-coercive inducements are attempted in the first place.

10 As I discuss further in the following theory chapter, I believe the work of Tomz (2007) and Levy et al (2015) would also support this assumption.
Second, I make the first attempt to systematically collect and codify the statements by which US presidents express conciliation in the context of international disputes. As I highlight above, while foregoing studies have analysed the nature of conciliatory interactions between states in dispute, the role that spoken statements play in these processes has received less attention. We know that political leaders use their spoken statements to express conciliation. Etzioni (1967) cites Kennedy’s *A Strategy of Peace* speech as part of a tension-reduction process that took place between the US and USSR in the early 1960s, for example. However, so far as I can see, there has not been any systematic effort made to collect data on the types of statements political leaders use to express conciliatory intentions. I construct a dictionary of words and phrases used by US presidents to express conciliation, analysing a representative sample of official transcripts of their public speech during international disputes. This will not only allow us to know what statements US presidents use to express conciliatory intentions, but, equal in importance, allow the relationship between a president’s use of conciliatory statements and their use of armed force to be tested empirically.

My third way of contributing is to conduct the first large-n quantitative analysis of whether there is a relationship between presidential use of conciliatory and hostile statements during a dispute and the US’ use of armed force against an adversary. I discuss the first of these points in the following *Theoretical Framework* chapter, with points two and three being dealt with later in the *Research Design and Methodology* chapters.
3 Theoretical Framework
This chapter outlines the case that variation in the number of conciliatory and hostile statements made by political leaders during disputes will be associated with variation in their states’ use of armed force against adversaries. The chapter has two main parts. In the first, I define key concepts; explaining what I mean by “dispute”, “armed force” and “conciliatory statements.” In the second, I link these concepts using arguments found in the literature discussed in the preceding chapter and establish hypotheses. Drawing largely on domestic audience cost literature I demonstrate that existing theory and empirical evidence suggests that variation in the use of conciliatory statements by political leaders in the context of disputes should be associated with variation in a state’s use of armed force against its adversaries; a lack of theoretical development and empirical exploration of the role of conciliatory statements in dispute settings stems from scholarly convention, rather than any theoretical basis. Similarly, I demonstrate that existing theory and empirical evidence would lead us to believe that variation in the balance of conciliatory and hostile statements - the proportion of a political leader’s speech in the context of a dispute that is accounted for by conciliatory/hostile statements, relative to the proportion accounted for by hostile/conciliatory - should be associated with variation in the use of force by the US against its adversaries. I argue that the logical extension of much of the foregoing literature is to hypothesise that conciliatory statements should be negatively associated with a state’s use of armed force.

3.1 Defining Key Concepts

3.1.1 Disputes (MIDs)
Herein disputes are understood to be “...united historical cases in which the threat, display or use of military force short of war by one member state is explicitly directed towards the government, official representatives, official forces, property, or territory of another state” (Jones, Bremer & Singer, 1996, p. 168).11 This definition is that used in the Militarized Interstate Disputes Data-set to define a militarised interstate dispute. Therefore, “MID” or simply “dispute” are often used for the sake of brevity. An example of a MID is the dispute between China and Taiwan in 2001 wherein China attempted to deter Taiwan from declaring independence (Ghosn, Palmer and Bremer, 2004). This

11 By “member” Jones, Bremer and Singer (1996) mean a member of the international state system.
dispute involved a number of individual “militarised incidents" involving both sides
during the course of the dispute.

Disputes are defined as “united historical cases” as they are composed of at least one
(and often many) "militarised incidents" (Jones et al., 1996, p. 169). A militarised
incident is a “...single military action involving an explicit threat, display, or use of force
by one system member state towards another system member state...”(Jones et al., 1996,
p. 169). These different incidents are types of behaviour: displays, threats, military
action. One of these behaviours, threats, constitutes verbal communication in itself and
highlights the focus on threatening statements in foregoing literature.

The importance of the MID period for this thesis is that it provides a time period in
which the occurrence of armed violence between the disputing parties can reasonably
be said to have been greater than zero. This provides a time period throughout which
the verbal statements of political leaders can be collected. We can then see whether
conciliatory and hostile statements used by a political leader are associated with the
occurrence of a state using armed force during this period.

The MID dataset categorises five levels of hostility, 1) no militarised action, 2) threat to
use force, 3) Display use of force, 4) use of force and 5) War. Each of these categories
contains a number of actions within it. For example, both “threat to occupy territory”
and “threat to declare war” come under category 2), while “mobilisation” and “fortify
border” come under category 3). In the example of the dispute between China and
Taiwan, given above, the dispute escalated as hostility levels increased. Initially China
threatened to declare war and (in a separate incident) threatened to use force. These
actions fall within the second category of hostility. However, as the dispute progressed
both sides engaged in displays of force, actions that fall within the third category of
hostility (Ghosn et al., 2004).

3.1.2 Armed Force
Later iterations of the MID dataset breakdown the data on hostility by participant
(Ghosn et al., 2004). This means that we can see not only the highest level of hostility
that a MID exhibited, but what the respective levels of hostility employed by each
participating state were. It is in this way that I determine whether a state used armed
force against its adversary. Armed force is defined by a handful of militarised incidents.
If a state participates in any of these incidents it is said to have employed armed force
against an adversary. I replicate the following table from Jones et al. (1996), which
defines the seven militarised incidents that constitute a use of armed force in the MID data.\textsuperscript{12}

\textsuperscript{12} I update Table 1 by including the incident type "attack." “Attack” replaced the label “raid” in later versions of the MID dataset (Ghosn et al., 2004). Both were defined in the way expressed in Table 1.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Incident</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Blockade</td>
<td>Use of ships, planes or troops by one state to seal off the territory of another state so as to prevent entry or exit of goods or personnel. Boarding, stopping, or inspection of ships, land vehicles or the confiscation of goods is sufficient evidence for the erection of a blockade.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occupation of Territory</td>
<td>Use of military force by one state to occupy the whole or part of another state’s territory for a period of more than twenty-four hours. The immediate occupation after a war by the victorious side’s army is not coded as an incident unless provisions of the treaty are violated by the occupying forces or further militarised incidents are undertaken by the state being occupied.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seizure</td>
<td>Capture of material or personnel of official forces from another state, or the detention of private citizens operating within contested territory. Seizures must last at least twenty-four hours to be included.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clash</td>
<td>Outbreak of military hostilities between regular armed forces of two or more system members, in which the initiator may or may not be clearly identified.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attack</td>
<td>Use of regular forces of a state to fire upon the armed forces, population, or territory of another state. Within this incident type, the initiator can be clearly identified and its action is not sanctioned by the target.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Declaration of War</td>
<td>Official statement by one state that it is in a state of war with another state.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of CBR Weapons</td>
<td>Use of chemical, biological or nuclear weapons from the arsenal of one state employed against the territory or forces of another resulting in less than 1000 total battle deaths per dispute.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
If any of these incidents, or a series of these incidents within a single dispute, lead to 1000 or more battle deaths then the dispute is said to have elevated to a state of war (Jones et al., 1996, p. 171).

3.1.3 Conciliatory Statements
The type of statements I am interested in are public statements made by political leaders in the context of disputes. Conciliatory statements are defined as any verbal statement made by a state’s political leader that directly refers to the dispute in question and, a) expresses a willingness, preference or commitment to interact with the other party to the dispute in a non-coercive manner, and/or, b) expresses a willingness, preference or commitment to not interact with the other party to the dispute in a coercive manner.

An element of this definition that deserves further explanation is the focus on the statements of political leaders. It is not possible to gather information on the statements made by all parties that might have some investment in how a state acts during a particular dispute. Nor is it possible to gather this information for all people who may have some say in how the state acts in such a context. Rather, we must determine whose statements would be most likely to shape state action during disputes. In this thesis political leaders are seen to be such people. Political leaders will typically have more information regarding the action of their state (and probably any other state involved in the dispute) and greater ability to influence it than others involved. Indeed, like Bueno de Mesquita and Lalman (1992, p. 11) I assume that “governments are the central agents of policy implementation in international affairs.” Also, for these reasons, it is the statements of political leaders that the political leadership of the opposing state are most likely to be interested in and responsive to.

3.2 Theoretical Links
Understanding the concepts of interest, we require a theoretical account of why variation in the amount of conciliatory statements used by a political leader in MIDs might be associated with variation in their state’s use of armed force. I argue that both domestic audience cost arguments and reputational arguments presented in the preceding Literature Review can provide such an account. This is despite the fact that until now these arguments have almost exclusively been applied to hostile statements.

3.2.1 Bargaining Model of War Revisited
Recall that the bargaining model of war literature offered initial reasons to think that communication via verbal statements would be ineffective in assisting states to resolve
their disputes without violence (Fearon, 1995). However, this begged the question as to why we find historical cases of successful, apparently costless, communication allowing states to avoid war (Ramsay, 2011). Rationalist arguments were put forward that avoided this contradiction with reality by claiming that while talk was cheap it often brought about costs later, or, alternatively, that state leaders had incentives to act in line with their earlier statements. Thus, hostile statements, it was argued, could transmit information to other states that a state leader was willing to use armed force in order to resolve the issue. These statements could also commit state leaders to a course of using armed force due to the costs imposed by domestic publics, for example, if they did not follow through.

Such arguments typically appealed to costs that domestic audiences could impose on state leaders for making empty statements, or the benefits a state may gain from its leaders having a reputation for following through on their words. I contend here that the underlying logic of both types of argument, along with recent empirical evidence yielded from testing these arguments, suggest that conciliatory statements used by political leaders during times of dispute should influence whether that leader’s state uses armed force against its adversary or not. I focus primarily on audience cost arguments, as these have come to essentially incorporate matters of reputation. A loss in reputation is why domestic publics punish leaders (Guisinger & Smith, 2002; Tomz, 2007).

### 3.2.1.1 Domestic Audience Costs and Conciliatory Statements

Most domestic audience cost arguments revolve around the notion that escalating a dispute (via threats) and then backing down is costly for the political leadership of a country because its domestic population will disapprove. As discussed above, why exactly domestic publics would act this way has been a point of contention. The disapproval of the public has been attributed to a sense that the national honour has been tarnished (Fearon, 1994), that their leaders are incompetent (Fearon, 1997; Smith, 1998) or that their state’s reputation in the eyes of other states has been lost (Guisinger & Smith, 2002). Regardless of what is said to cause audience costs, the consequence is that leaders facing such costs are less likely to back down during a dispute after having made threatening statements (Downes & Sechser, 2012).

The question is whether conciliatory statements could also incur audience costs, and thus make certain courses of action less likely. If so, intuitively, we would expect the opposite relationship to that between hostile statements and backing-down. If domestic publics punished political leaders for making conciliatory statements and then escalating a dispute, then political leaders should be less likely to escalate after having
made such statements. The focus on hostile statements has been such that, as Levy et al. (2015) note, by convention audience costs are often defined in terms of such statements. They are, by definition, consequences of hostile statements. What reasons do we have to think that conciliatory statements could also impose such costs?

Recent empirical work in the form of survey studies seems to suggest that there are good reasons. Begun by Tomz (2007) and followed by Tingley (2014) and Levy et al. (2015), a turn to survey studies represents an important, and relatively recent, development in understanding audience costs. Earlier empirical enquiries were beset by problems of selection bias. Tomz (2007, p. 822) explains,

> The problem, which international relations scholars widely recognize, is strategic selection bias. If leaders take the prospect of audience costs into account when making foreign policy decisions, then in situations when citizens would react harshly against backing down, leaders would tend to avoid that path, leaving little opportunity to observe the public backlash.

Essentially, audience costs are hard to observe precisely because cases in which they are most likely to occur are exactly those cases in which political leaders will seek not to incur them.

The benefit of Tomz's (2007) experimental survey design is that it avoids selection bias by randomly assigning participants to one of two groups. The first group is asked about their approval/disapproval of the US president after being presented with a scenario in which the US simply refrains from getting involved in a dispute. The second group is asked to voice their approval/disapproval after being presented with a scenario in which the US president escalates a dispute by threatening the other state and then backs down.

Tomz (2007) finds that audience costs do exist. Presidents were viewed less favourably by the participants in the second of the two groups described above. More important for this current discussion, however, is why participants disapproved of the president's backing down after a threat. Tomz (2007, p. 835) found that 72% of participants dislike the president backing down after having made threatening statements because it was inconsistent. More specifically, in describing their objection to inconsistency, 84% of this initial 72% “denounced the president for breaking his word” (Tomz, 2007, pp. 835-836).
Tomz (2007) found that participants’ objections to a president breaking their word could largely be attributed to their belief that this would damage the reputation of the US in the eyes of the world. While normative reasons for objection were not precluded by the collected responses, the dominant factor seemed to be “an instrumental concern for reputation” (Tomz, 2007, p. 835). Indeed, Tomz (2007, p. 836) declares that his evidence supports a “reputation-based theory of audience costs.” Guisinger and Smith’s (2002) account in which leaders are punished for “destroying the country’s honest record and thus putting in jeopardy the future benefits of being able to communicate during a crisis” (cited in Tomz, 2007), is noted in particular.

Despite the fact that the very inconsistency Tomz (2007) claims to be responsible for domestic punishment of political leaders is, at least theoretically, equally as applicable to conciliatory statements, he only extended his analysis as far as threatening statements. A logical corollary of Tomz (2007) work is that we might also expect domestic publics to punish political leaders for making conciliatory statements and then escalating a dispute or becoming more deeply involved in it. This is equally as inconsistent as threatening a state and then backing down. Recognising that Tomz’s (2007) work implied this but that no empirical evidence existed to substantiate such a claim, Levy et al. (2015) attempted to explore this implication of Tomz’s (2007) research.

Employing similar survey methods to Tomz (2007), Levy et al. (2015, p. 994) exposed their 2226 survey participants to one of two scenarios:

1. The “Back out” condition where the president pulled back from using force after making an initial threat to do so.

2. The “Back in” condition where the president eventually turned around and deployed military force after initially saying the United States would stay out of the conflict.

After being presented with the scenario participants were asked to report their approval/disapproval of the president’s actions. Levy et al. (2015) found that a president’s approval drops 12% after promising not to become involved in a dispute and then deciding to use armed force. This supports the notion that domestic publics punish political leaders for not keeping to their conciliatory commitments not to fight, just as they punish leaders for not fighting where they threatened to do so. However,
domestic publics enact harsher punishments upon political leaders in the first of the two scenarios. Participant approval dropped by 22% in this scenario.

However, the conciliatory statements Levy et al. (2015) look at are “negative commitments”; commitments to not do things. So, while providing empirical evidence that domestic audiences punish political leaders for breaching these types of conciliatory statements, their findings do not extend to conciliatory statements in which some kind of “positive” conciliatory gesture is offered by a political leader; a commitment to do something conciliatory, rather than to refrain from doing something hostile.

Tingley’s (2014) study is similar. Seeking to understand a state’s ability to commit to an agreement with another state, and how this might change as each state’s relative power changes, Tingley finds, through similar survey methods to Tomz (2007) and Levey et al. (2015), that domestic publics do value political leaders acting consistently with their public agreements with other states. In a research design in which an increasingly powerful state proposes to take possession of US territory on an island on which both states currently have territory, an earlier public statement agreeing to this from the US political leadership increased the rate at which survey participants accepted the proposal, while all other material factors remained the same. However, Tingley (2014) does not specify what these statements involve in terms of either a “positive” commitment to, for example, sit down and work out this exchange with the challenging state, or a “negative” commitment to simply not challenge the other state in taking possession of the territory.

3.2.2 Incorporating “Positive” Conciliatory Statements
The point here is not to reiterate the content of the Literature Review. Rather, tracing these developments demonstrates that there is no theoretical reason presented by the relevant literature that would make us think that domestic audience costs are only generated by hostile statements. Thus, the fact that, as Levy et al. (2015) note, audience costs have been defined as costs imposed upon a political leader for not backing up their hostile statements, is based on convention, rather than theory.

This is also true regarding a focus on “negative” commitments to refrain from the use of armed force. Discussing whether leaders might be more severely punished by publics for threatening and then backing down or for promising to refrain from using armed force and then doing so, Levy et al. (2015, pp. 995-996) conclude “there were no obvious theoretical reasons for predicting which direction this asymmetry might take, much less
its magnitude." Similarly, there are no obvious theoretical reasons for focusing only on those statements that are conciliatory in the sense that they promise to refrain from using armed force. If inconsistency is the motivating factor for a public to punish their political leaders, this suggests they will do so when their leaders make “positive” conciliatory statements towards an adversary and then use armed force against them. As made explicit by my definition of conciliatory statements in section 3.1.3, I include both positive and negative conciliatory statements in my analysis herein.

For the above reasons, I believe existing theory and empirical evidence entail Hypothesis 1;

H1: The use of conciliatory statements by a political leader during an MID will be negatively associated with their state using armed force in that MID.

3.2.3 Why a Negative Association?
It is, perhaps, somewhat easier to hypothesise on the nature of the relationship between conciliatory statements and a state’s use of armed force than it is to do so for the relationship between hostile statements and a state’s use of armed force. This has to do with the nature of hostile statements.

Following the logic of audience costs, making threats against an adversary decreases the chances that a state leader will back down from a dispute, as leaders wish to avoid the costs of doing so (Downes and Sechser, 2012). Some studies even suggest that domestic punishment can be so costly for leaders that they will prefer fighting wars they will not win to backing down from earlier threats (Trager and Vavreck, 2011). The issue, in terms of hypothesising a relationship between such hostile statements and a state’s use of armed force, is that while these statements commit a state leader to the use of armed force, they may also make armed force unnecessary. If the threat is successful and the adversary backs down or is compelled to act in accordance with the threat, then there is no longer the need for the political leader to pursue armed force. As Matthew Baum (2004, p. 605) puts it, threats “may increase the odds of winning without firing a shot.” Thus, threatening statements increase a political leader’s willingness to use armed force to achieve their goals, but simultaneously increase the chances of their goals being achieved without the use of force.

This tension does not exist with conciliatory statements. As demonstrated above, if inconsistency is the reason why domestic publics punish political leaders for backing down from threats, then punishments should equally be expected for not fulfilling conciliatory commitments. This means a state leader who makes conciliatory statements
will be less likely to use armed force. Regarding the adversary's behaviour, it might be asked whether conciliatory statements would invite aggression from an adversary, which in turn might require the use of armed force to repel them. However, it is difficult to think of an explanation conforming to the rational decision-making principles of the bargaining model of war that would predict this to occur systematically. Kydd and McManus (2017) demonstrate that assurances (essentially negative conciliatory statements) offered by one state to another increase the range of dispute outcomes that satisfy both parties and can be achieved without fighting over an issue.

3.2.4 Possible Objections to Hypothesis One

I have tried to show that Hypothesis One (H1) is the logical hypothesised relationship between conciliatory statements and a state's use of armed force when accepting the core tenets of the bargaining model of war and the empirical evidence we have regarding how domestic audience costs work. However, I am aware that there could be further objections questioning whether this relationship will be borne out in reality. I discuss what I think will be two common objections and show that H1 is still logically plausible in light of these objections:

1. Conciliatory statements could precede a use of armed force as such statements could be used deceptively by state leaders with hostile intentions to claim that they had made conciliatory efforts but that armed force was necessary due to the aggression of their adversary.

2. A "rally 'round the flag" effect might mean that domestic publics do not punish political leaders for acting inconsistently with conciliatory statements.

Regarding the first point, domestic audience cost arguments recognise that political leaders have incentives to lie; they merely serve to point out that this deception is not costless, as domestic publics punish political leaders for doing so. A pertinent question is how successfully political leaders might be in convincing their publics that new information came to light in the period between making a statement (either hostile or conciliatory) and breaching that statement by acting inconsistently, thus, perhaps, mitigating domestic backlash.

Levy et al. (2015), in an extension of their investigation into audience costs, ask this question. Interestingly, they find that participants in their survey rewarded the US president for backing down from a threat when presented with a scenario in which the president had received new information suggesting that to intervene was not in the US' interests. Participants rewarded the president for being prudent and approval of
his/her handling of the dispute increased. A decision to intervene after promising not to, even when citing new information that suggested to do so was in US interests, was not met by a similar increase in approval, however. The president had almost the exact same approval rating when having threatened to intervene and then doing so.

What does this suggest? It suggests that political leaders are able to mitigate audience costs by citing new information explaining why they breached earlier statements. Levy et al. (2015) found that if a president were to break a promise not to intervene with armed force they did better (in terms of approval ratings) to claim that this decision was based on information that had come to light since having made the promise. However, this does not suggest that we would see systematic use of this tactic by political leaders in order to conceal hostile intentions. Levy et al. (2015) found that where the US used armed force there was no notable difference to presidential approval between the scenario in which the president stated his/her intentions to use force outright and the scenario in which the president used force after saying that they would not do so. In essence, where there is an intention to use armed force, the president has no incentive to conceal this from the population. Thus, domestic public behaviour does not provide a rationale upon which we would see conciliatory statements being positively associated with a state’s use of armed force. Where a state leader intends to use armed force they do just as well in domestic approval by stating this upfront (Levy et al., 2015).

Regarding the second of the objections mentioned above, I would argue that the presence of a “rally ‘round the flag” phenomenon does not rule out domestic publics punishing political leaders in the ways described above; they are not mutually exclusive. Patrick James and Jean Sébastien Rioux (1998, p. 783) explain the logic behind this “rally effect” as such:

In periods of internal political or economic strife, the ruling elites redirect public concern toward a real or imagined external threat. The people then are expected to “rally ‘round the flag” together to protect the nation.

Thus, the question regarding audience costs is why domestic publics would punish political leaders at a time of heightened nationalism, when they are supposedly supporting domestic leaders and institutions against an external threat.

The first thing to say is that the existence, operation and magnitude of a “rally effect” is not clear-cut. As James and Rioux’s (1998) study of disputes involving the US between
1953-1994 demonstrates, rally effects did not necessarily lead to large jumps in presidential popularity. Moreover, the presence of such an effect seemed to depend on contextual factors such as which state the US was confronting and the specific escalatory steps that US presidents took.

The second, more important point, I think, is that it is consistent with both domestic audience cost arguments and notions of a rally around the flag effect that political leaders may be rewarded for disputing with other states, yet punished for doing so in such a way whereby they break their publicly made commitments (hostile or conciliatory). There are no obvious theoretical grounds upon which to predict whether one effect will be greater than the other. However, empirical evidence supporting the existence of audience costs suggests that where political leaders escalate a dispute in the hope of gaining domestic popularity, they are better off making consistent statements in doing so, rather than saying that they will not escalate a dispute to begin with. Thus, as with the first objection discussed above, rally around the flag arguments do not seem to provide an account of why we would expect to see conciliatory statements having a positive association with a state’s use of armed force.

3.2.5 Theorising a Connection Between Conciliatory and Hostile Statements, and the Use of Armed Force

I want to extend the theoretical discussion beyond merely talking about conciliatory or hostile statements. It is necessary to talk about the balance of statements struck by a political leader. I have demonstrated in the foregoing that existing literature has largely excluded conciliatory statements from analysis. This has not only ignored the role conciliatory statements might play in influencing the policies a state leader employs in a dispute but has also obscured the fact that political leaders often use both conciliatory and hostile statements during the same dispute, perhaps strategically.

The data on US presidents’ use of conciliatory and hostile speech that I have collected for this project, which I present in the fourth chapter, Descriptive Statistics, confirms a belief that I think many of us hold intuitively; in the context of a single dispute political leaders often use both hostile and conciliatory statements to address their adversary. An example would be the political leader who expresses a desire to resolve a dispute non-violently, and expresses the measures they are undertaking to achieve this, but in the same breath announces the military steps they are willing to take in order to achieve their goals.
The essential point here is that the communication used by a political leader over the course of a dispute can rarely be said to be either “hostile” or “conciliatory”. Rather, it is more accurate to talk in terms of their communication being more or less conciliatory or hostile. By more or less I mean that it is likely that in any dispute conciliatory and hostile statements will account for differing proportions of all the words a political leader makes regarding a dispute. To take a fictional example, there could be a dispute in which conciliatory statements account for 5% of all the words regarding a particular dispute. Hostile statements might account for 10% of all words regarding this dispute. In this case, the balance of a political leader’s statements could be said to be more hostile than conciliatory. I discuss how this can be measured in the following Research Design and Methodology Two chapter. However, for now I hypothesise;

H2: The more conciliatory the balance of conciliatory and hostile statements used by a political leader during a dispute, the less likely it will be that this leader’s state employs armed force. A logical corollary of this is that the more hostile the balance of conciliatory and hostile statements used by a political leader during a dispute, the more likely it will be that this leader’s state employs armed force.

The underlying logic of this relationship is very similar to that of H1. As discussed in section 3.2.3, it is hard to hypothesise a relationship between hostile statements and a state’s use of armed force. However, regardless of whether hostile statements are positively or negatively associated with a state’s use of armed force, given that preceding theory and empirical evidence suggest that conciliatory statements will be negatively associated with the use of armed force, the larger the proportion of words uttered by a political leader about a dispute that are accounted for by conciliatory statements, relative to the amount accounted for by hostile statements, the less likely it should be that a state would use armed force against its adversary.

Although I present this as the second hypothesis, I consider it the more important of the two hypotheses I test herein. H2 is my central hypothesis. I have argued that H1 is a logical outcome of the bargaining model of war and domestic audience costs literatures. However, like the literature it stems from, H1 only accounts for one side of the coin, so to speak. While it focuses on the other side of the coin, conciliatory as opposed to hostile

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13 It is worth noting that a large proportion of the statements a leader makes regarding a dispute are likely to be neither hostile or conciliatory. An example would be descriptive statements in which a political leader might update citizens as to the latest developments in a dispute, etc.
statements, it does not account for the empirical reality that in disputes both type of statements are often used and the effects of one possibly interact with the effects of the other. H2, like H1, is an extension of theory and empirical evidence found in the literature discussed in the Literature Review. However, it also accounts for the empirical reality that in many disputes political leaders use both conciliatory and hostile statements. Few studies have attempted to account for both conciliatory and hostile statements, although Kydd and McManus' (2017) recent work has headed in this direction.

3.2.6 Levels of Commitment Entailed by a Statement
Until now the statements a political leader uses during a dispute have been discussed in terms of their nature or type; some statements are said to be conciliatory, some are said to be hostile. However, there is another aspect of statements made by political leaders that might be important with regard to whether they (the statements) influence the likelihood that a state uses armed force; the level of commitment expressed by each statement.

Both conciliatory and hostile statements can express more or less commitment to a conciliatory or hostile course of action in dealing with an adversary. McManus (2014) has recognised this. McManus (2014, p. 730) defines resolved statements (which I have labelled “hostile” here for reasons explained in footnote 1) as “statements that indicate a state is committed to a position” and highlights negative characterisations, threats, demands and refusals as pertinent subcategories. However, negative characterisations, demands and refusals, and threats are not treated as equally hostile statements by McManus (2014). Rather, they exist in a hierarchy based on the level of hostility such statements express. Explicit threats towards an adversary are said to express the greatest degree of hostility, whereas negative characterisations are said to express the least hostility of the categories.

I attempt to measure conciliatory statements similarly. I subcategorise conciliatory statements as expressing either willingness, preference or commitment to interact with an adversary non-coercively. I explain in the following Methodology and Research Design chapter how I measure these different commitment levels. For now, I simply want to touch upon the reasons we have for believing that commitment levels should matter.

I show in the above how domestic audience cost arguments link a political leader’s statements towards an adversary and the decision of whether or not to use armed force against that adversary. The basic contention is that domestic publics punish political
leaders for inconsistency between their statements and deeds. The question then becomes whether domestic audiences punish leaders more for acting in a way inconsistent with highly committed statements (whether conciliatory or hostile) than they do for acting inconsistently with less committed statements. While there has not been much research conducted on this question, preliminary findings seem to suggest that they do.

Trager and Vavreck (2011) investigated how much control of audience costs political leaders had during a dispute prior to the initiation of armed force. What were the things that political leaders could do in order to manage the costs that they would pay were they to act inconsistently with their earlier statements? Trager and Vavreck (2011) found that the language that political leaders use was influential. They state,

> Our results indicate that the magnitude of audience costs are indeed under direct presidential control based on the rhetoric or language that presidents use when issuing threats. Vague threats, relative to specific ones, yield lower audience costs if left unfulfilled...presidents do not have to engage the enemy militarily in order to increase the penalties that come from backing down – they just have to choose more dramatic, specific language (Trager and Vavreck, p. 527).

Similarly, Levy et al. (2015) recognise the possibility that their finding that domestic publics punish political leaders more for backing down from a threat to use armed force than they do for not fulfilling a promise to not use armed force could be due not to a difference between the two types of statements (a hostile threat versus a conciliatory promise) but because in their experiment the threat was made with more explicit conditions upon which it would be enacted.

Measuring the level of commitment that conciliatory and hostile statements involve helps to account for the effect that these differences may have on whether a state ultimately uses armed force against an adversary. A more specific commitment to non-coercion, for example, is likely to be punished more harshly by a domestic public than a less specific statement presenting non-coercion as one of a suite of options. In the *Inferential Statistics* chapter I test for a relationship between conciliatory and hostile statements, and use of armed force, while differentiating between the commitment levels of both conciliatory and hostile statements.
3.2.7 Concluding Remarks and Further Considerations

This chapter began by outlining central concepts. I explained the definitions I adopt from existing literature with regard to disputes and armed force, and went on to define a conciliatory statement. Drawing on literature presented in the preceding chapter I outlined the theoretical case linking the public speech of political leaders in times of dispute and their states’ use of armed force against adversaries. As a result I hypothesised that conciliatory statements used by political leaders in the context of disputes should be negatively associated with a state’s use of armed force against its adversaries. Similarly, I hypothesised that the more conciliatory the balance of conciliatory and hostile statements used by a political leader during a dispute, the less likely it will be that this leader’s state employs armed force. I ended this process of drawing theoretical connections by highlighting how the commitment expressed by conciliatory and hostile statements is another factor to account for in analysing the relationship between political leaders’ statements and their states’ use of armed force.

In establishing the above theoretical connections between political leadership speech and a state’s use of armed force I drew on domestic audience cost literature. A point that needs to be made clear is that while I have demonstrated that the hypotheses established earlier in this chapter extend from theory and empirical evidence produced by studies analysing domestic audience costs, the empirical testing that takes place in this thesis (the methods of which are explained in the following chapters) is not intended to help establish whether or not domestic audience costs exist. Rather, I have discussed audience costs at such length because they motivate my hypotheses and ground my empirical enquiry in the preceding literature. I am interested in whether the use of hostile and, in particular, conciliatory statements by political leaders in the context of dispute have an independent effect on whether or not armed force is used against dispute adversaries. It is this relationship on which I hope to shed light. This is fundamentally an empirical question. Domestic audience cost literature is helpful in that it helps us hypothesise about this relationship.
4 Research Design and Methodology One

The two immediately preceding chapters have laid the foundation for empirical work to be conducted. The following empirical component of this thesis relates to the Literature Review and Theoretical Framework chapters in the following two ways. Firstly, it seeks to go some way towards filling the research gaps illustrated in the Literature Review. Secondly, it aims to provide evidence from empirical observation in order to test the hypotheses presented in the Theoretical Framework.

I have split my research design and methodology section into two chapters. This first chapter is designed to explain how I went about collecting and coding information on the conciliatory statements used by US presidents. I have explained above that this is an under-examined phenomenon. McManus (2014, p. 5) claims that she conducts her own work (on hostile statements) amidst a lack of knowledge regarding the universe of statements that presidents use to signal hostility. This is also true of conciliatory statements. To this author’s knowledge there has not been a previous effort to empirically collect or codify US presidential statements that are conciliatory in nature. For this reason, I have put aside space to discuss this matter thoroughly. The second of these chapter details the variables used in my statistical analysis and how they are operationalized. It also outlines the statistical techniques by which I test the hypotheses presented in the Theoretical Framework.

This chapter proceeds as follows. First, a unit of analysis is identified and defined. Defining a unit of analysis is the most basic step in outlining any quantitative research design, but also helps to delimit the time period over which data on conciliatory statements was collected. Second, I explain the process by which I collected the body of statements US presidents made in the context of each dispute. Third, I recount the process by which I coded some of these statements as conciliatory. Fourth, I discuss steps I took to ensure my coding of statements as conciliatory was rigorous. In the following discussion I indicate where my coding/process follows McManus (2014).

4.1 Unit of Analysis
The unit of analysis herein is the dyadic militarised interstate dispute (MID) involving the United States (US) between 1950-2010. I use McManus’ (2014) dataset of 272 cases of dyadic MIDs in which the US was one disputing party. There are a number of reasons why the selection of this data is appropriate in testing the hypotheses present in the Theoretical Framework chapter.
McManus (2014) argues that dyadic MIDs are an appropriate unit of analysis for her exploration of the role of hostile statements in dispute settings. Noting pragmatic benefits, McManus (2014, p. 4) states, "Using the MID dataset allows me to test my hypothesis on the largest possible set of relevant observations". McManus also observes theoretical benefits. Citing Dafoe, Renshon and Huth (2014) she continues, "...most MIDs engage a state’s reputation, so they should be good cases for testing expectations derived from domestic audience cost theory and international reputational cost theory" (McManus, 2014, p. 4). Both these benefits also apply here. The long-standing and widely accepted *Militarised interstate Disputes Dataset* (Palmer, D’Orazio, Kenwick & Lane, 2015) provides comprehensive data on interstate disputes over the time period of interest. Moreover, it is beneficial that MIDs are disputes in which domestic audiences might punish political leaders for their handling of disputes, as domestic audience cost theory was drawn upon in forming the hypotheses presented in the *Theoretical Framework*.

### 4.1.1 What Does it Mean for a MID to be “Dyadic”?

Many MIDs are multilateral, made of two conflicting blocs at least one of which is composed of multiple states. World War Two and the Korean War are two examples of such disputes that escalated to warfare. To break these MIDs down into dyadic MIDs is to break the participating states into dyads. For example, during the Korean War the United States fought against both North Korea and China. Therefore, there are two dyads, and two dyadic MIDs, of interest: US-North Korea and US-China.

It is important to use data on dyadic MIDs herein, as such data tells us which members of an opposing bloc the US used armed force against; not simply whether the US used armed force against the opposing bloc. In trying to analyse whether the statements made by presidents about North Korea, for example, influence the odds of the US using armed force against North Korea, we need to know whether the US ultimately used armed force against North Korea specifically, not, for example, states such as China that were aligned with North Korea during the Korean War.

### 4.1.2 Why the US?

Although consideration had been given to focusing solely on dyadic MIDs involving the US prior to reading McManus (2014), her article does offer reasons for adopting this focus. McManus states, "Because of limits on my ability to measure statements across all countries, I restrict my analysis to dyadic MIDs in which the United States was involved between 1950-2010" (McManus, 2014, p. 4). I am also faced with such limitations. It is not feasible to attempt to collect and analyse all the many statements made by leaders of
every country over all distinct militarised interstate disputes. Inevitably, some subsection of MIDs needs to be identified for study. MIDs involving the US made sense upon pragmatic grounds. The primary reason for this, as McManus notes, is that documentation recording the public communication of the US political leadership is readily available and offers no language barriers to access. More will be said about these benefits below.

There are, in addition to the pragmatic reasons, theoretical reasons for selecting dyadic MIDs involving the US as the unit of analysis. Primarily, the US is a democratic state (Marshall, Gurr & Jaggers, 2017). Being democratic, it has been argued, allows leaders to incur audience costs as, unlike dictatorships or other types of authoritarian regimes, domestic publics can actually punish their political leaders (Fearon, 1994). Therefore, the US is an appropriate subject upon which to test the theoretical relationship, derived from audience costs, between the public statements of political leaders and their use of armed force while in dispute.

Despite the pragmatic and theoretical strengths of having dyadic MIDs involving the US as our basic unit of analysis, there are also restrictions that this imposes. Most notably, in focusing upon the US we are restricted in what we can conclude about the relationship between conciliatory and hostile statements and a state’s use of armed force where the US is not involved. There could be something fundamentally different about the US in relation to other states that influences the relationship (or lack thereof) between these variables. A prime example would be that the US is extremely militarily powerful. This fact could influence both the statements US political leaders choose to use, as well as their use of armed force against adversaries. Factors like this need to be controlled for, and how I attempt to do so is explained in the following chapter. However, it is not possible to control for everything that makes the US different to the “average” state. Therefore, if a relationship is observed between conciliatory statements, for example, and the US’ use of armed force, this cannot be generalised to hold with regards to other states. It may, however, suggest that this idea should be taken seriously and given scholarly attention.

4.2 Data Collection - What did I aim to collect?
Before statements could be coded as either conciliatory or hostile, the body of relevant statements for each dyadic MID needed to be defined and collected. That is to say that the body of statements in which political leaders discussed a dispute needed to be compiled. In order to achieve this I collected US presidential statements made in the
context of each dispute. Similar to McManus (2014), to be considered within the context of a dispute a statement had to meet two conditions:

1. A statement had to occur during the duration of the dyadic MID. In cases where the US used armed force, a statement had to occur between the dispute’s start date and the date on which the US first used armed force.

2. A statement had to be about the adversary confronting the US in the particular dyadic MID.

I further explain components of these criteria immediately below.

4.2.1 Presidential Statements
As alluded to at the start of this chapter, I focus on statements of US presidents. In the Theoretical Framework I often referred to statements of “political leaders”, as disputes involving the US had not yet been defined as my unit of analysis. A focus on the statements of US presidents is a natural decision, given my unit of analysis and the established tradition of focusing on the statements of political leaders in the literature cited in the Literature Review.

While a number of other people within US foreign policy circles, such as the Secretary of State, undoubtedly influence US actions in dealing with disputes, focusing on the statements of presidents is advantageous for a number of reasons. Pragmatically, there exists a comprehensive collection of public statements made by US presidents, the Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States (Peters & Woolley, 2018). The Public Papers contain “All public presidential statements and remarks released by the Office of the Press Secretary since 1929” (McManus, 2014, p. 6). The existence of the Public Papers is beneficial as having to search only one resource in collecting presidential statements means more cases of disputes are feasibly included within the scope of a PhD thesis. The Public Papers also provide consistency and accuracy. Unlike media sources, the Public Papers cover all the public statements released by the Office of the Press Secretary and avoid problems of media framing.

Additionally, a focus on the statements of the president is an extension of the theoretical assumption that “governments are the central agents of policy implementation in international affairs” (Bueno de Mesquita and Lalman, 1992, p. 11). As the Commander in Chief of the US’ military, focusing upon the statements of the president hones in on the individual within the US Government that has the most individual power to implement foreign policy involving the use of armed force. While it is not possible to do
so here, future research could focus on the public statements of other members of the US government.

### 4.2.2 Statements Prior to the Use of Armed Force

It was important not to collect statements that presidents had made regarding an adversary following US use of armed force against that adversary. To do so would have raised an issue of reverse causality in the following statistical analysis. In order to test whether variation in US presidential use of statements expressing conciliation or hostility towards an adversary is correlated with variation in the US’ use of armed force against those adversaries, it is appropriate to include only such statements that occurred prior to force being used.

Unfortunately, MID incident-level data, which provides data on every militarised incident within an MID, is only available for disputes that occurred between 1993-2010 (Ghosn et al., 2004). This meant that for every dyadic MID in which the US used armed force before 1993 I had to find the date on which the US first used force by consulting secondary sources. After an extensive search, there were only four dyadic MIDs for which I felt that I could not confidently identify the first date on which the US used armed force, despite being coded by McManus (2014) as the US having used armed force. These dyadic MIDs were excluded from my analysis.

### 4.3 Data Collection - The collection process

#### 4.3.1 A Random Sample

Data was collected from a random sample of the remaining 268 dyadic MIDs included in McManus’ (2014) dataset. It quickly became apparent that it would not be feasible to collect and code all the statements US presidents had made regarding adversaries during these 268 disputes. This being the case, using R (Core R Team, 2017) statistical

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software I randomly selected 54 dyadic MIDs (20% of the total 272) that were on going for at least 100 days from which to collect data on presidential statements.

I specified that the disputes must be 100 days or longer in order for there to be enough time for presidents to have multiple opportunities to speak publicly about a dispute. Unlike in the 21st Century where the twenty-four hour news cycle and social media mean that presidents often have many engagements broadcast each day, it was not unusual during the 1950s, for example, for the president to speak on a subject publicly only a couple of times each month. Generating a random sample ensures that disputes at different chronological stages of the 1950-2010 period are represented. This is important, accounting for possible changes in use of English over the course of this time.

4.3.2 Collecting Statements

To find all the publicly made statements made by US presidents in the context of each of the aforementioned 54 dyadic MIDs the Public Papers was searched using the name of the state that was opposing the US in a particular dyadic MID,15 filtered to capture only those statements made from the starting date of the dyadic MID in question to its end date or the date on which the US first used armed force. This produced documents of all the occasions on which the US president had publicly mentioned the dispute adversary. Following this, each document was searched for references to the US’ adversary using the same search-terms that had been used to search the Public Papers.

Some of the occasions in which presidents mention dispute adversaries are lengthy public appearances in which the adversary or dispute is only discussed briefly as one of many topics covered. Following McManus (2014), using the “control+f” function I found all the instances in a document in which the adversary was mentioned. I read every paragraph that mentioned the adversary as well as those paragraphs immediately preceding and following. I continued this process of reading preceding and following paragraphs until the adversary was no longer being discussed. I copied all those paragraphs in which the adversary or the dispute in question were discussed, from every document yielded from my initial search of the Public Papers, into a plain text file. The contents of this text file was then considered to represent all the statements made

15 Following McManus (2014) I searched using not only the common name of a country, but also often used official names and acronyms. For example, when searching for statements regarding the Soviet Union, I searched for “Soviet”, “Russia”, “USSR” and “U.S.S.R”.

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by US presidents in the context of a dispute, and was the body of text from which statements were coded.

4.4 Coding Conciliatory Statements

Having found the appropriate body of presidential statements to work with, those statements corresponding to the definition of conciliatory statements needed to be coded as such. To recap the definition presented in the Theoretical Framework, conciliatory statements are defined as any verbal statement made by a state's political leader that directly refers to the dispute in question and, a) expresses a willingness, preference or commitment to interact with the other party to the dispute in a non-coercive manner, and/or, b) expresses a willingness, preference or commitment to not interact with the other party to the dispute in a coercive manner. I created a dictionary of conciliatory words and phrases inductively. The statements of US presidents, yielded from the search described above, were read and words or phrases deemed conciliatory were selected and included in the dictionary until I felt that all conciliatory words or phrases from each document had been collected. Each instance of a conciliatory word or phrase was coded for a number of other features as well.

I coded every instance of a dictionary entry with a “moderate” or “high” based on the confidence I had that a given instance of a word or phrase matched the definition of a conciliatory statement. For example, I came across eight instances of the phrase “peaceful means” that I deemed conciliatory. Typically in these instances the president was expressing that he felt a dispute could only be resolved non-violently. However, I was only highly confident that such conciliatory sentiments were being expressed on six of the eight occasions. Therefore, two instances of “peaceful means” were coded as “moderate”, indicating that I believed them to be conciliatory but also that I was not as confident in those instances as I was in others.

Every instance of a conciliatory statement was also coded as a “1”, “2” or “3” for the commitment to non-coercion that it expressed. Statements were coded as a “1” if they express openness to conciliatory interaction with the opposing party to the dispute. Such statements present non-coercive interaction as one of a suite of options that the US could pursue. Statements were coded as a “2” if they express a preference to engage the adversary in a non-coercive manner. Such statements present non-coercive interaction with the dispute partner as the US’ preferred option of a suite of options. Statements were coded as a “3” if they express a commitment to engage the adversary in a non-coercive manner. This final category of statements presents non-coercive interaction as
the option that the US has chosen. Based on the average level of commitment to non-coercion expressed in all the instances of a given conciliatory word or phrase, each word or phrase included in my dictionary of conciliatory statements was given an overall coding of either “openness”, “preference” or “commitment”. As I demonstrate in the *Inferential Statistics* chapter, this allowed me to conduct statistical analysis in which I could differentiate between the levels of commitment expressed in conciliatory statements.

In constructing my dictionary of conciliatory terms I coded US presidential statements made in the context of 14 dyadic MIDs in which the US was involved during the 1990s, in addition to the 54 dyadic MIDs in my random sample described above. I had collected US presidential statements made in the context of these 14 disputes following the collection method described in the immediately preceding section. These statements had been collected as part of an earlier research project. Including conciliatory statements used during these disputes in my dictionary possibly means that conciliatory statements used in the 1990s are overrepresented. However, I decided that this was outweighed by the benefits of the dictionary being as comprehensive as possible. In order to best describe the statements used by US presidents to express conciliation, as well as form the best basis from which to analyse the amount of conciliatory statements used by presidents during each of the 268 dyadic MIDs included in my analysis, it is helpful that my dictionary of conciliatory statements be drawn from as big a sample of presidential statements made during disputes as possible. Thus, my dictionary of conciliatory statements was assembled by collecting and coding the statements US presidents had made in 68 (or 25%) of the 272 dyadic MIDs in which the US was involved between 1950-2010.

### 4.5 Rigour of the Coding Process

I undertook a number of steps to try to increase confidence that the words and phrases included in my dictionary of conciliatory terms were, in fact, conciliatory and would be coded this way by other researchers. Informally, throughout the course of my coding I was having regular group supervision meetings with my then primary supervisor and two fellow PhD candidates at the National Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies. Over a period of months I took samples of my coding work to these meetings for their review. Feedback was generally positive. In those very rare instances where there was unanimous group disagreement with one of my decisions I altered my decision and incorporated the group's reasoning into further coding.
Following the completion of my coding I included all the text collected from the process described in the *Data Collection - The collection process* section above into *AntConc* (Anthony, 2014) text analysis software. That is to say that I included all the statements (conciliatory or not) presidents had uttered about the 54 dyadic MIDs that composed my random sample of disputes and those 14 disputes that had been the subject of my earlier research. I then searched for certain words or phrases included in my dictionary of conciliatory statements that I was not particularly confident in having included in the dictionary. My confidence was based on the "moderate" or "high" coding of each instance of these words or phrases I described above.

My dictionary included only those instances of a word or phrase that were coded as conciliatory. Thus, while the dictionary contained a lot of useful information on, for example, the confidence with which I had coded each instance of a word or phrase as conciliatory, it did not have any information on how many instances of a word or phrase existed in the text that had not been coded as conciliatory and, therefore, were not included in the dictionary. This is vital information. In order to know whether the usual usage of a word or phrase is to express conciliation, I also needed to know how many times it had appeared in the text and I had not coded it as conciliatory.

*AntConc*'s (Anthony, 2014) concordance function allows the researcher to see key words in context (KWIC). It finds all entered search-terms and returns them with (by default) the 50 characters of text either side of the searched word or phrase. Thus, the researcher can gain some idea of not only how often a word or phrase is used in a body of text, but also how it is used, by seeing how search terms were used in a broader sentence or paragraph.\(^{16}\) Searching for dictionary items that I was not very confident in having included, I read all the instances of a word or phrase returned from the KWIC search. Where the majority of instances of a word or phrase were not used by presidents to express conciliation, even if some instances had been, this word or phrase was removed completely from the dictionary of conciliatory statements. While doing this I was particularly alert for instances of negation; dictionary entries’ conciliatory meanings being negated by immediately preceding or following statements made by a president. Following this process there were 714 instances of 390 words or phrases in the dictionary. The dictionary of 390 words and phrases is presented in Appendix A1.

\(^{16}\) *AntConc* (Anthony, 2014) also allows a user to look at each instance of a search term in the original document that it came from. Thus, where 50 characters was not enough to gain an understanding of context, *AntConc* (Anthony, 2014) allowed me to look at the original coding document. I utilised this feature where necessary.
In a final effort to ensure my dictionary had been rigorously constructed I conducted an inter-coder reliability process. I randomly selected 40 conciliatory words or phrases from the dictionary I had constructed, representing 10 per cent of dictionary entries. I also randomly selected 26 words or phrases from McManus’ (2014) dictionary of hostile statements, representing 10 per cent of the 264 items in McManus’ (2014) dictionary. Using AntConc (Anthony, 2014) I found every instance of these words or phrases a US president had used in the context of the 54 dyadic MIDs that formed my random sample. Using AntConc’s (Anthony, 2014) concordance function I produced the results with 150 characters of presidential speech either side of the search term, giving some idea of the context in which the president had made these statements. There were 445 instances of these conciliatory and hostile words and phrases. I exported the output of AntConc’s (Anthony, 2014) concordance function to Microsoft Word, highlighting the search terms and separating each instance of a word or phrase, along with its corresponding contextual text, into a separate paragraph. I randomised the order of these paragraphs.

A fellow PhD candidate at the National Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies kindly volunteered to act as an independent coder. I conducted a training session in which I presented this independent coder with instructions that can be found in Appendix A2. Following these instructions both the independent coder and I coded each of the 445 instances of the randomly selected entries from both my own and McManus’ (2014) dictionaries as either “conciliatory”, “hostile” or “neither”, using the contextual text to assist in doing so. Following this I conducted a coding comparison query in NVivo 11 (QSR International, 2014). NVivo produced a Kappa coefficient of .83, indicating an excellent degree of agreement between the coding of myself and the independent coder. This suggests that conciliatory statements can be identified and collected systematically using my definition and coding process, and that the words or phrases included in my dictionary were not the result of my own personal bias or individual interpretation. Practical constraints meant inter-coder reliability was conducted between only two coders. Nonetheless, a Kappa coefficient of 0.83 indicates that my definition of conciliatory statements and coding process are reliable.

4.6 Concluding Remarks
This chapter offered a thorough explanation of how I collected US presidential statements made in the context of dyadic MIDs and the process by which I coded some of these statements as conciliatory. I began by explaining the theoretical and pragmatic reasons for focusing on the 272 dyadic MIDs in which the US was involved between 1950-2010. Utilising a random sample of these dyadic MIDs, I identified and collected all
the public statements that US presidents had made in the context of each dispute. I did so utilising the *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States* (Peters & Woolley, 2018). Reading all the presidential speech yielded from this search, I identified instances of words and phrases that matched my definition of a conciliatory statement. Every time an instance of a word or phrase was identified it was added to my dictionary of conciliatory statements, thus being coded as conciliatory. I also coded each instance of a conciliatory word or phrase to denote the confidence in my initial coding decision and the level of commitment to non-coercion expressed. In the following chapter I discuss how the amount of conciliatory statements in each dyadic MID was measured and thus operationalised as a variable to be utilised in statistical analysis. I present this alongside a discussion of other variables to be included in my analysis.
5 Research Design and Methodology Two

In the following I familiarise the reader with the variables used in my inferential statistical analysis and discuss the process by which this analysis is conducted. First, the independent and dependent variables are defined and operationalised. In particular, I dedicate a significant amount of space to explaining how I calculate presidential use of conciliatory and hostile statements in the context of each of the 268 dyadic MIDs analysed. Second, I identify the US’ share of capabilities in a dyad and the adversary's political system as variables that need to be controlled for. I expand upon the theoretical and methodological grounds for including these variables in my analysis. I also explain how each of these variables is operationalised. Third, I explain my use of logistic regression analysis in testing for relationships between the independent and dependent variables, briefly outlining the fundamentals of this statistical technique. I conclude by discussing those statistics calculated in order to test the robustness of the relationships reported by my initial logistic regression analysis.

5.1 Variables Included in My Inferential Analysis

Table 2 presents information on the main set of variables utilised in the statistical testing conducted in the Inferential Statistics chapter. Additional variables are included and explained at later points.
Table 2 - Summary of Main Variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Definition of Concept (Where Applicable)</th>
<th>Measurement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conciliatory Statements</td>
<td>Continuous</td>
<td>Independent Variable</td>
<td>Any verbal statement made by a state’s political leader that directly refers to the dispute in question and, a) expresses a willingness, preference or commitment to interact with the other party to the dispute in a non-coercive manner, and/or, b) expresses a willingness, preference or commitment to not interact with the other party to the dispute in a coercive manner.</td>
<td>Percentage of total words uttered by US president(s) during or in the 60 days prior to a dispute that refer to the dispute or adversary in question and are conciliatory.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hostile Statements</td>
<td>Continuous</td>
<td>Independent Variable</td>
<td>“Statements that indicate a state is committed to a position” (McManus, 2014, p. 730). Hostile statements are either negative characterisations of the adversary, demands or rejections directed at the adversary or explicit threats towards the adversary.</td>
<td>Percentage of total words uttered by US president(s) during or in the 60 days prior to a dispute that refer to the dispute or adversary in question and are hostile.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balance</td>
<td>Continuous</td>
<td>Primary Independent Variable</td>
<td>See measurement column.</td>
<td>Percentage of total words uttered by US president(s) during or in the 60 days prior to a dispute that are conciliatory MINUS the percentage of total words uttered by US president(s) during or in the 60 days prior to a dispute that are hostile.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democracy</td>
<td>Dichotomous</td>
<td>Control Variable</td>
<td>Adversaries with Polity scores of seven or higher are defined as democracies, while those with Polity scores of less than seven are defined as non-democracies.</td>
<td>A dichotomous measure of an adversary’s political system. Adversaries with a polity score of seven or higher are coded “1”, democracy. Adversaries with a polity score of less than seven are coded “0”, non-democracy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relative Capabilities</td>
<td>Continuous</td>
<td>Control Variable</td>
<td>Demographic, industrial and military capabilities of the United States relative to those of the adversary it confronts in a dyadic MID.</td>
<td>Percentage of capabilities (demographic, industrial and military) in a dyad the US possesses.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Force Used</td>
<td>Dichotomous</td>
<td>Dependent Variable</td>
<td>Armed force is said to have been used when the US commits any action constituting a hostility level of “use of force” or “war,” as per the coding scheme of the MID Dataset (Ghosn et al., 2004).</td>
<td>Dichotomous measure of US’ use of armed force. Observations coded “1”, use of force, in cases where the US undertook actions constituting “use of force” or “war” per MID Dataset coding rules. Observations coded “0”, no use of force, in cases where the US did not undertake actions constituting “use of force” or “war” per MID Dataset coding rules.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 5.1.1 Dependent Variable

The dependent variable of this study is **Force Used**, a dichotomous variable measuring whether or not the US used armed force during the course of a given dyadic MID. Working with McManus’ (2014) dyadic MID dataset, in which she codes the highest level of hostility reached by each disputant, as per the coding regulations of the MID dataset.
(Ghosn, Palmer & Bremer, 2004), I converted this information into a dichotomous variable. To recap, the MID dataset categorises five levels of hostility for each participating state, 1) no militarised action, 2) threat to use force, 3) display use of force, 4) use of force and 5) war. I coded those disputes in which the US reached level four or five as a “1”, a case in which the US had employed armed force. Cases in which the highest level of hostility reached by the US was a one, two or three were coded as “0”, a case in which the US had not used armed force.

5.1.2 Independent Variables
Generally speaking, the phenomena of interest to this study are the public statements US presidents use during international disputes. In particular, I am interested in the conciliatory and hostile statements leaders use, as well as the balance that they strike between these two types of statements. For that reason, there are three main independent variables used herein: Conciliatory Statements, Hostile Statements and Balance. I have argued that of these three variables Balance should be the most reliably related to Force Used, as accounting for both the conciliatory and hostile statements a president uses is a more accurate representation of the totality of statements used by presidents during disputes. Thus, Balance is the primary independent variable of this study.

As stated in Table 2, all three independent variables are measured in terms of a percentage of total words that presidents utter during a dispute. For example, Conciliatory Statements measures the percentage of total words uttered by presidents in the context of a dispute that are conciliatory. Balance is measured slightly differently in that it is calculated by subtracting the Hostile Statements value of an observation from the Conciliatory Statements value of an observation. I explain the process by which the Conciliatory Statements value of each observation was calculated before relating this to how the Hostile Statements and Balance value of each observation was calculated.

5.1.2.1 Conciliatory Statements
The Conciliatory Statements value of each unit of observation (each dyadic MID) was calculated based on the prevalence of conciliatory statements made over the course of the dispute and in the 60 days prior to the dispute occurring. I was able to include this additional 60 days prior to each MID beginning because in the period between my initial coding of conciliatory statements (described in the preceding chapter) and my calculation of a Conciliatory Statements value for each dyadic MID Dr Roseanne McManus kindly gave me her data on presidential statements made in the context of all 272 dyadic MIDs in her (McManus, 2014) dataset. Up until that point I had collected only
the body of presidential statements made in the context of the 54 dyadic MIDs in my random sample of disputes and the 14 dyadic MIDs for which I had already collected data, as described in sections 4.2 and 4.3.

McManus (2014) had also collected statements presidents had made about a dispute adversary up to 60 days prior to the US’ dispute with that adversary beginning. I read over this text. There appeared to be no significant differences in the words or phrases that US presidents used to express either conciliation or hostility during this time period, when compared to the words or phrases used to express conciliation or hostility during disputes. In addition, this text gave me a body of US presidential statements to analyse for the 46 dyadic MIDs that began with a US use of armed force. As I mentioned in the preceding chapter, I cannot analyse presidential statements that occur after the US uses force, due to issues of reverse causality. In disputes that begin with a US use of armed force there is no time period that is both after the start date of the dispute and prior to armed force being used. Including statements that presidents made in the 60 days prior to a dispute beginning allowed me to analyse the relationship between presidential statements and US use of armed force in those disputes that the US initiated with an act of armed force. Thus, I decided to include statements made by US presidents in these preceding 60 days in my calculation of Conciliatory Statements.

An absolute number of conciliatory words or phrases used during each dispute and in the 60 days prior was not a satisfactory measure of Conciliatory Statements, as this does not account for the differing duration of disputes. McManus (2014) normalises her scores by dividing them by the length of the dispute (in days) to resolve this issue. However, even this method, I would argue, possibly omits important factors from consideration.

A daily average of conciliatory statements leaves open the possibility that international disputes may be “crowded out” during times of, for example, domestic intrigue such as political scandals or national elections. It may be the case that the president uses fewer conciliatory statements per day in a certain dispute because they simply talk about the dispute less. What is of real significance is what proportion of the president’s statements dedicated to a certain dispute were conciliatory. For that reason, the Conciliatory Statements score for each dyadic MID is measured as the percentage of the total words uttered by presidents about a dispute that are conciliatory. This is expressed as a value between zero and 1. As an example, “0.05” would indicate that five per cent of the words uttered by US presidents about a dispute adversary during the course of a dispute or in
the 60 days prior were conciliatory. In practice this involved using AntConc (Anthony, 2014) to search all the statements made by US presidents in the context of a dispute and in the 60 days prior for every instance of words or phrases included in my dictionary of conciliatory statements.

There is one point that I need to make explicit here. My dictionary of conciliatory statements was made up of both words and groups of words. That is to say there were stand-alone words as well as groups of words with a single semantic role that I coded as conciliatory. An example of a word included in my dictionary of conciliatory statements is "patience." An example of a group of words or semantic phrase is "common ground." Whether a word or phrase, all entries in my dictionary are single conceptual units of meaning and have a specific semantic role. Furthermore, some phrases in my dictionary are true collocations in that they have a quite different meaning to their constituent parts (Manning & Schütze, 1999). For example, "Olive branch" has a different meaning to either "olive" or "branch" alone. Whether single words, true collocations or simply word groups with a single semantic role, all conciliatory words and phrases were treated as single conceptual units when calculating the Conciliatory Statements score of each dyadic MID.

AntConc (Anthony, 2014) allows the user to upload a file containing all the search-terms they would like it to look for, meaning that multiple search-terms can be included in a single search. Using this list of search-terms, in my case each entry in my dictionary of conciliatory statements, AntConc (Anthony, 2014) reports the amount of "hits" there are of the search-terms within the text uploaded to the software. AntConc (Anthony, 2014) also tells the user how many words there are in a given text file. I calculated the percentage described above using the total number of words in each dyadic MID's text file and the number of "hits" that my search-terms yielded when searching that text file using AntConc (Anthony, 2014). Thus, while phrases included in my dictionary include more than one word, because they are each a single conceptual unit of meaning they were counted as a single "hit" when calculating each dyadic MID's Conciliatory Statements score.

5.1.2.2 Hostile Statements

The Hostile Statements value of each observation was calculated via a process identical to that used to calculate Conciliatory Statements. This time, however, presidential

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17 As with my initial collection and coding of statements, in cases where the US used armed force I did not include statements made after this use of force in my calculation.
statements made in the context of each of the 268 dyadic MIDs and the 60 days preceding them were searched via AntConc (Anthony, 2014) using the 264 entries in McManus' (2014) dictionary of hostile statements. Based on the number of hits yielded from the AntConc (Anthony, 2014) search and the total number of words the president uttered regarding each dispute, each observation was given a Hostile Statements score ranging between zero and one, indicating the percentage of total words used by the presidents that were hostile.

5.1.2.3 The Balance of Statements
Balance is a measure of the difference in the proportions of presidential statements made in the context of a dispute that are conciliatory and hostile. It is an attempt to recognise the empirical reality that at times presidents use both conciliatory and hostile statements in discussing an adversary. Balance is calculated by subtracting an observation's Hostile Statements score from its Conciliatory Statements score. Values of Balance are between negative one and one. Observations with negative scores represent dyadic MIDs in which hostile statements constituted a larger proportion of presidential words regarding the dispute than did conciliatory statements. Observations with positive scores represent dyadic MIDs in which conciliatory statements constituted a larger proportion of presidential words regarding the dispute than did hostile statements. For example, an observation with a Balance value of -0.02 is an observation in which hostile statements constituted two per cent more of the words uttered by US presidents about a dispute than did conciliatory statements.

5.1.3 Control Variables
I include control variables in my analysis on the basis of them having a strong theoretical connection to the independent and dependent variables as well as a history of being included in the analyses of foregoing literature cited in the Literature Review. I am wary of adopting an attitude of “the more the merrier” when it comes to the inclusion of control variables. A body of statistical scholarship denouncing the haphazard inclusion of variables in statistical models has formed (See Achen, 2002, 2005; Clarke, 2005). For this reason I include the two control variables that I believe have the strongest case for inclusion in my statistical modelling.

5.1.3.1 Relative Capabilities
Relative Capabilities is controlled for as many theorists of international relations have long held that power helps drive state behaviour. In particular, it has been widely held within the bargaining model of war literature that a state’s capabilities relative to its
adversary might influence both a state's use of armed force against an adversary and a state's political leader's statements about an adversary.

Huth and Russett (1984) note that relative capabilities play a central role in political leaders' decisions to use armed force against an adversary. Their state's relative capabilities influence decision-makers' perceptions both of what they can gain through force and how likely an adversary is to resist militarily. Indeed, empirical evidence suggests that states are more likely to use armed force where the balance of capabilities favours them (Huth, Gelpi and Bennett, 1993; Huth & Russett, 1993; cited in Sartori, 2005, p. 116). Relative capabilities may also affect a political leader's calculation on whether to make certain types of statements about an adversary. Fearon (1994b, p. 236) notes that "Conventional wisdom holds that in international disputes, a state's military threats are more likely to work the more the state is favoured by the balance of power". If this were the case then we would expect to find state leaders favoured by the balance of capabilities were more likely to make threatening statements. Indeed, Sartori's (2005) empirical analysis supports this.

Many of the studies cited in the Literature Review control for the relative capabilities of disputing states. Schultz (2001), Sartori (2005), Gartzke and Li (2003), and McManus (2014) are but some examples. I follow this tradition. Herein Relative Capabilities is measured as the percentage of capabilities - demographic, military and industrial - in a dyad that a state possesses, as per Singer, Bremer and Stuckey (1972). McManus' (2014) provides data on the percentage possessed by the US in each dyadic MID in which it was involved between 1950 and 2010.

5.1.3.2 Democracy
The political system of an adversarial state is another factor that has a history of being controlled for in foregoing literature (See Eyerman & Hart (1996); Partell (1999); Sartori (2005); Schultz (2001)). It is not hard to see why this matter has attracted a lot of attention when one considers the empirical evidence that supports the notion that

18 Although others (see Bueno de Mesquita & Lalman, 1992) have theorised that there could be a negative association between a state's share of capabilities and its use of armed force. Domestic publics may punish the leaders of powerful states for using armed force more than domestic publics of weaker states do. A greater share of capabilities suggests a greater ability to leverage a non-violent outcome to a dispute and so armed force being necessary represents a greater failure on the part of the leaders of powerful states.

19 Fearon is not an adherent to this view himself.
democracies are less likely to war with one another and more likely to resolve their disputes by nonviolent means.\textsuperscript{20} This is certainly important to account for herein. As the US is a democracy (Marshall et al., 2017), it is important to know whether its adversary in a given dispute is a democracy also. If democracies are more likely to resolve their disputes with one and other short of violence, then the US may be less likely to use armed force in those disputes where it confronts a democratic adversary.

Further more, \textit{Rival Democracy} could also be related to the statements US presidents make about an adversary. If leaders of democracies are more susceptible to audience costs than non-democracies\textsuperscript{21}, then this should counteract the incentives for democratic leaders to misrepresent their level of willingness or capability to fight. If democratic leaders recognise that both themselves and adversarial democratic leaders face potential audience costs for not following through on public statements (hostile or conciliatory), this would allow them to more easily convey information through their public statements. US presidents have more reason to believe the statements made by the leaders of democratic states than they do the leaders of non-democratic states. This could lead to a decrease in the use of both conciliatory and hostile statements by US presidents. It may simply take fewer public statements of hostile or conciliatory intentions for a dyad of democracies to find a mutually preferable non-military solution than it does a dyad of one democracy and one non-democracy.

\textit{Rival Democracy} is a dichotomous variable coded as per McManus (2014). Observations are coded as “1”, democracy, where the US confronts an adversary that scores a seven or higher on the Polity IV dataset’s Polity score (Marshall et al., 2010).\textsuperscript{22} Observations are coded as “0”, non-democracy, where the US confronts an adversary that scores a six or lower.

\textsuperscript{20} Bueno de Mesquita, Morrow, Siverson and Smith (1999), Haarvard, Bernhard and Teorell (2018), as well as Eyerman and Hart (1996), offer good discussions of this literature.

\textsuperscript{21} This is a widely held but contested assumption. See Slantchev (2006) and Weeks (2008) for further discussion.

\textsuperscript{22} Note that an often used cutoff for a state to be considered a democracy is a polity score of six or above on the Polity IV Project data. McManus, does not explain her using a score of seven as her cutoff. However, it may be due to sections of the Polity IV Project Dataset Users’ Manual that focus on democratic transitions. In these sections of the Manual it is suggested that a state transitions to a “full democracy” once it achieves a polity score of seven or higher (Marshall et al., 2017).
5.2 Measuring Commitment Levels of Statements

The statistical analysis in the following chapter also includes variables created in order to help me investigate the relationship between the commitment expressed by US presidential statements (whether hostile or conciliatory) and the US’ use of armed force. I explained the theoretical reasons behind wanting to be able to differentiate between the commitment levels of statements in section 3.2.6. I explained in section 4.4 how each word or phrase in my dictionary of conciliatory statements was classified as expressing “openness”, “preference” or “commitment”, based on the average level of commitment to non-coercive interaction each instance of a dictionary entry expressed. McManus (2014) similarly breaks down the 264 words and phrases in her dictionary of hostile statements into the three subcategories of “negative characterisation”, “demand or refusal” and “explicit threat”. Each type of hostile statement expresses more hostility than the last.

Incorporating independent variables measuring certain subsets of conciliatory and hostile statements in place of the main independent variables listed above allowed me to explore whether the relationships between the main independent variables, e.g. Conciliatory Statements, and the dependent variable, Force Used, changed when only including, for example, the most committedly conciliatory statements in my analysis. This is explained in the Inferential Statistics chapter. However, a summary of these variables can be found in Table 3.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Definition of Concept (Where Applicable)</th>
<th>Measurement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Openness</strong></td>
<td>Continuous</td>
<td>Independent</td>
<td>Statements that express openness to conciliatory interaction with the adversary. Such statements present non-coercive interaction as one of a suite of options that the US could pursue.</td>
<td>Percentage of total words uttered by US president(s) during or in the 60 days prior to a dispute that refer to the dispute or adversary in question and match the corresponding definition.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Preference</strong></td>
<td>Continuous</td>
<td>Independent</td>
<td>Statements that express a preference to engage the adversary in a non-coercive manner. Such statements present non-coercive interaction with the adversary as the US' preferred option of a suite of options.</td>
<td>Percentage of total words uttered by US president(s) during or in the 60 days prior to a dispute that refer to the dispute or adversary in question and match the corresponding definition.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Commitment</strong></td>
<td>Continuous</td>
<td>Independent</td>
<td>Statements that express a commitment to engage the adversary in a non-coercive manner. Such statements present non-coercive interaction as the option that the US has chosen in engaging the adversary.</td>
<td>Percentage of total words uttered by US president(s) during or in the 60 days prior to a dispute that refer to the dispute or adversary in question and match the corresponding definition.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Negative Characterisation</strong></td>
<td>Continuous</td>
<td>Independent</td>
<td>Statements that complain, denounce, or make other negative characterizations about a country or dispute situation (McManus, 2014).</td>
<td>Percentage of total words uttered by US president(s) during or in the 60 days prior to a dispute that refer to the dispute or adversary in question and match the corresponding definition.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Demand or Refusal</strong></td>
<td>Continuous</td>
<td>Independent</td>
<td>Statements that express a concrete demand or concrete refusal without a threat (McManus, 2014).</td>
<td>Percentage of total words uttered by US president(s) during or in the 60 days prior to a dispute that refer to the dispute or adversary in question and match the corresponding definition.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Explicit Threat</strong></td>
<td>Continuous</td>
<td>Independent</td>
<td>Statements that clearly establish a country's position and create specific expectations about what will happen if the adversary fails to comply (McManus, 2014).</td>
<td>Percentage of total words uttered by US president(s) during or in the 60 days prior to a dispute that refer to the dispute or adversary in question and match the corresponding definition.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Balance Level One</strong></td>
<td>Continuous</td>
<td>Independent</td>
<td>See measurement column.</td>
<td>Percentage of total words uttered by US president(s) during or in the 60 days prior to a dispute that refer to the dispute or adversary in question and match the corresponding definition as <strong>Openness MINUS</strong> the percentage of total words uttered by US president during or in the 60 days prior to a dispute defined as <strong>Negative Characterisation</strong>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Balance Level Two</strong></td>
<td>Continuous</td>
<td>Independent</td>
<td>See measurement column.</td>
<td>Percentage of total words uttered by US president(s) during or in the 60 days prior to a dispute that refer to the dispute or adversary in question and match the corresponding definition as <strong>Preference MINUS</strong> the percentage of total words uttered by US president during or in the 60 days prior to a dispute defined as <strong>Demand or Refusal</strong>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Balance Level Three</strong></td>
<td>Continuous</td>
<td>Independent</td>
<td>See measurement column.</td>
<td>Percentage of total words uttered by US president(s) during or in the 60 days prior to a dispute that refer to the dispute or adversary in question and match the corresponding definition as <strong>Commitment MINUS</strong> the percentage of total words uttered by US president during or in the 60 days prior to a dispute defined as <strong>Explicit Threat</strong>.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5.3 Statistical Testing

In chapter seven, *Inferential Statistics*, I employ binomial and multiple logistic regression to test the hypotheses presented in the *Theoretical Framework*. Logistic regression shares some similarities with the more commonly utilised ordinary least squares (OLS) regression, but is specifically tailored for use when the dependent variable in question is dichotomous (Gordon, 2010; Menard, 2010; Osborne, 2015). As shown above, my dependent variable, *Force Used*, is dichotomous, and so logistic regression is appropriate herein.

When using logistic regression a categorical variable is reported in terms of the logit or log-odds (Menard, 2010; Osborne, 2015). This resolves problems that arise when using probabilities rather than odds to predict dichotomous outcomes, as OLS regression would. A consequence is that the relationship between independent and dependent variables is reported as the change in the log-odds of the dependent variable per one unit change in an independent variable (Osborne, 2015).

Due to its use of log-odds rather than raw values, drawing inferences from logistic regression outputs tends to be less straightforward, as compared to OLS. That being the case, the odds-ratio is often considered to be more important in interpreting the relationships between variables reported by logistic regression than the logistic regression coefficients (Field, 2012). The odds ratio is the exponentiated logistic regression coefficient (Menard, 2010), reporting the change in odds of the dependent variable being a “1”, as opposed to a “0”, per one unit increase in an independent variable. In other words, the odds ratio will tell us the change in odds of the US using armed force per one unit increase in any of the aforementioned independent variables. An odds ratio value greater than one indicates that an increase in an independent variable is associated with an increase in the odds of the US using armed force. The opposite is true for odds ratio values less than one. As an example, an odds ratio value of 0.50 would indicate a 50% decrease in the odds of armed force being used per one unit increase in a given independent variable. A value of 1.50 would indicate a 50% increase. Despite these differences to OLS, logistic regression is still susceptible to problems arising from outliers and multicollinearity, which I explain below.

5.4 Robustness Tests

The results of binomial logistic regression analysis indicate whether the independent and dependent variables co-vary. The results of multiple logistic regression help us

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23 See Osborne (2015) for a discussion of the distinction.
assess whether this is still the case when controlling for possibly confounding variables. However, the results of these analyses need to undergo robustness tests. Robustness tests ensure, to the best of our ability, that the results yielded from our initial testing are not driven by anomalies in the data or violations of the assumptions upon which logistic regression analysis rests. The following robustness tests attempt to account for the possible problems of multicollinearity and influential observations. The latter is investigated using residual, leverage and DFBETA statistics.

5.4.1 Multicollinearity

Multiple regression is conducted precisely because we want to separate out the effects of numerous independent variables on a dependent variable (Allison, 1999). However, this becomes difficult when two independent variables are highly correlated. When this occurs we are confronted with multicollinearity. Multicollinearity occurs when two or more independent variables share a strong linear relationship (Allison, 1999). The central problem caused by multicollinearity is that the coefficients of the independent variables in question will have large standard errors (Allison, 1999). This has a ripple effect the ultimate upshot of which is that it will be more difficult to find statistically significant coefficients (Allison, 1999). Larger standard errors mean that the coefficients are less robust (Allison, 1999).

There are a number of ways in which to diagnose multicollinearity. A common way is through the use of variation inflation factors (VIFs) (Allison, 1999; Gordon, 2010). VIFs allow us to determine how much larger the standard error of a variable is compared to what it would be if it were not correlated with other independent variables, achieved through acquiring the square root of the VIF (Allison, 1999; Gordon, 2010). It is debated as to what value VIFs should be before we start to be concerned regarding the possibility of multicollinearity. Allison (1999) suggests that VIFs above 2.50 are of concern while Gordon (2010) states that thresholds of 4 or 10 are often used.

Using R (Core R Team, 2017), VIF figures are calculated herein to ascertain whether any of the independent variables of this study relate to such an extent that multicollinearity is present. In section 7.5 I explain that I find multicollinearity exists when including Conciliatory Statements, Hostile Statements and Balance in the same regression model. This is due to how Balance is calculated (see Table 2). The value of Balance in any dispute depends on the value of Hostile Statements and Conciliatory Statements in that same dispute. In section 7.6 I explain how I avoid issues of multicollinearity through careful logistic regression model-building; building multiple models that include
different combinations of Conciliatory Statements, Hostile Statements and Balance, but never all three at the same time.

5.4.2 Residuals
Residuals are simply "the observed values of the dependent variable minus the predicted values" (Allison, 1999, p86). The main purpose of conducting logistic regression herein is to produce an equation, the function, which speaks to the generalised relationship between the independent and dependent variables presented above. In visual terms, this is the line that one sees running through the scatter of various observations when a regression is depicted as a plot. This line represents the best fitting general relationship between two variables. Specific observations will typically differ from this line.

Statistical software such as R (Core R Team, 2017) can produce residual values for each observation, alerting us to those observations that are so far away from the line that they might have a disproportionate influence on the generalised relationship reported by a regression model. Often statistical programmes will present studentised residuals, which are simply individual residuals divided by their standard error (Allison, 1999). The values at which studentised residuals are said to become an issue differ between scholars. However, the values used are similar. Paul Allison (1999) uses a threshold of higher than 2.5 or lower than -2.5. Rachel A. Gordon (2010) uses a threshold of 2 or 3 and -2 or -3.

5.4.3 Leverage
Leverage values, often called "hat values," measure the distance of the dependent variable value in a particular observation from the mean value of the dependent variable across all the cases included in the analysis (Gordon, 2010). Leverage values range from 0-1 and the larger they are the greater the distance described above (Gordon, 2010). The effect of large leverage values is that they may "greatly alter the coefficient estimates from the model" (Gordon, 2010, p. 365). Following Chatterjee and Hadi (1986) and Hoaglin and Kempthorne (1986) Gordon (2010, p. 365) stipulates that "For moderate to large sample sizes, $2(k-1)/n$ or $3(k-1)/n$ has been suggested as a cut off for identifying high leverage". In this equation $k$ represents the "number of predictors plus one for the intercept, and thus the cutoff is two or three times the number of predictors divided by the sample size" (Gordon, 2010, p. 365). I calculate leverage values using R (Core r team, 2017).
5.4.4 DFBETAs
DFBETA statistics “provide a standardized measure of the difference between a parameter estimate when all \( n \) cases are used to estimate the regression...and when the \( i \)th case is omitted from the sample prior to running the regression” (Gordon, 2010, p. 367). Simply put, DFBETA statistics allow us to understand how much the relationship between the independent and dependent variables changes when a certain observation is excluded from the regression. DFBETA statistics are calculated for every independent variable included in a model (Gordon, 2010). This allows us to see how the inclusion or exclusion of a single observation from the regression influences the relationship between numerous independent variables and the dependent variable. Gordon (2010, p. 367), again following Chatterjee and Hadi (1986), states, “when the absolute value of the DFBETA is larger than \( 2\sqrt{n} \) there may be high influence”.

5.4.5 Dealing with Outliers and Influential Observations
The above three statistics - residuals, leverage and DFBETA - are all used to raise awareness of observations that may unduly influence the results of a regression analysis. It is important to be aware of this, as we do not want to generalise any relationship between the independent and dependent variables that is driven by a small subset of observations. In section 7.10 I explain that I do encounter observations in my data that have problematically high DFBETA and leverage values. I rerun logistic regression analysis while excluding these observations, in order to see if the initial results of my multiple logistic regression models change when doing so. The removal of problematic observations is one way to gauge sensitivity of results to outlying and influential observations (Gordon, 2010).

5.5 Concluding Remarks
In the above I described the independent and dependent variables incorporated in my statistical analysis, reiterating their conceptual definitions and explaining the ways in which they are measured. In particular I dedicated a significant amount of space to discussing how I calculated the Conciliatory Statements score of each of the 268 dyadic MIDs analysed herein, before relating this to how I calculated each dyadic MID’s Hostile Statements and Balance score. Furthermore, I explained the measurement of the control variables, Democracy and Relative Capabilities, included in my analysis, outlining their use in existing literature and the theoretical case for their inclusion in my statistical modelling. I concluded by explaining my use of logistic regression to test the hypotheses presented in the Theoretical Framework, as well as those measures used to ensure the robustness of this testing.
Before using those inferential statistical methods, however, it is important to present the data that was collected and coded via the processes described in this and the preceding chapter. I do this in the following Descriptive Statistics chapter. Descriptive statistics allow us to better understand the data being utilised and offer initial insight into the relationships between the variables incorporated in the statistical modelling conducted in chapter seven, Inferential Statistics.
6 Descriptive Statistics

In this chapter I present and discuss the data utilised in this research project. This will help familiarise the reader with patterns in the data. Understanding these patterns and seeing them presented visually is a necessary step in clarifying the inferential statistics that follow. Firstly, I offer a general overview of the data. I plot the distribution of independent variables for dyadic MIDs involving the US between 1950-2010. That is to say that I show what proportion of words uttered by US presidents in the context of dyadic MIDs between 1950-2010 were typically conciliatory or hostile. I also show the typical balance of conciliatory and hostile presidential statements. I find that hostile statements typically constitute a greater proportion of words uttered by presidents about a dyadic MID than do conciliatory statements. Secondly, I present information on the distributions of the control variables that will be incorporated into the regression models used in the Inferential Statistics chapter. I demonstrate that the US employs armed force less often where it confronts democratic adversaries or is not as strongly favoured by the balance of capabilities. Finally, I describe the relationship between the primary independent and dependent variables of this study; Balance and Force Used.

6.1 Distribution of Dyadic MIDs by Conciliatory and Hostile Statements

Looking at the distribution of dyadic MIDs by values of Conciliatory Statements and Hostile Statements allows us to understand which percentages of words uttered by US presidents about a dyadic MID were, on average, constituted by conciliatory or hostile statements. Figure 1 shows the frequency distribution of dyadic MIDs distributed upon values of Conciliatory Statements and Hostile Statements.
Figure 1 - Dyadic MIDs Distributed by Conciliatory and Hostile Statements

One of the most notable aspects of this Figure 1 is that US presidents have uttered zero conciliatory and/or hostile words in many dyadic MIDs in which the US has been involved. Moreover, conciliatory statements never constitute more than two per cent of all words uttered by the president in any dispute, and hostile statements never more than five per cent. Neither of these findings is surprising and reflect the findings of McManus’ (2014) work on hostile statements.

It should be expected that the subset of words or phrases that constitute the dictionaries of conciliatory and hostile terms utilised in this thesis will make up a small percentage of an overall corpus of text. Zipf’s law identifies that the frequency distribution of words in human languages is such that there are “a few very common words, a middling number of medium frequency words, and many low frequency words” (Manning and Schütze, 1999, p. 24). Correspondingly, “for most words our data about their use will be exceedingly sparse. Only for a few words will we have lots of examples” (Manning and Schütze, 1999, p. 25). The most common words in English language text are usually an assortment of function words, such as “the”, “to”, “of” and “a”.

Additionally, 58 of the 268 dyadic disputes are not mentioned publicly by a US president. Attempting to understand the factors determining which disputes US presidents talk about publicly is an undertaking deserving of its own research project.
However, that some disputes are not discussed at all by US presidents is not particularly surprising. International disputes compete with domestic policy, electoral cycles and other international disputes to make it into presidential statements.

The dashed vertical lines in Figure 1 intercept the x-axis at the mean values of both Conciliatory Statements and Hostile Statements. We can see that on average hostile statements constitute a higher percentage of all the words US presidents utter during dyadic MIDs. Moreover, the distribution by Hostile Statements has a higher max-value than that of Conciliatory Statements. Clearly, hostile statements were a more common feature of presidential speech towards US adversaries between 1950-2010 than were conciliatory statements. This and other relevant information on these distributions is summarised in Table 4.

Table 4 - Statistical Features of the Distributions Depicted in Figure 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statistic</th>
<th>Conciliatory Statements</th>
<th>Hostile Statements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No. of Observations</td>
<td>268</td>
<td>268</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Min value</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Max value</td>
<td>1.70%</td>
<td>4.40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>0.38%</td>
<td>0.79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standard Deviation</td>
<td>0.39%</td>
<td>0.74%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median</td>
<td>0.31%</td>
<td>0.75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Quartile</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third Quartile</td>
<td>0.60%</td>
<td>1.18%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6.1.1 Distribution of Dyadic MIDs by Balance of Conciliatory and Hostile Statements
Having seen the distribution of dyadic MIDs by both the percentage of conciliatory and hostile words, we already have some idea of what a distribution of dyadic MIDs by Balance would look like. It is here depicted in Figure 2.
Figure 2 - Dyadic MIDs Distributed by the Balance

Those dyadic MIDs distributed on the X-axis to the left of zero are cases in which a greater proportion of words uttered by US presidents about the dispute were accounted for by hostile statements, compared to conciliatory statements. As the vertical line intercepting the X-axis at the median value, as well as Figure 1, indicates, this state of affairs is more common than conciliatory statements accounting for a greater proportion.

I include the relevant statistical features of this distribution in Table 5 below.
### Table 5 - Statistical Features of Distribution Depicted in Figure 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statistic</th>
<th>Balance of Statements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No. of Observations</td>
<td>268</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Min value</td>
<td>-4.40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Max value</td>
<td>1.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>-0.42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standard Deviation</td>
<td>0.76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median</td>
<td>-0.22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Quartile</td>
<td>-0.77%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third Quartile</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### 6.1.2 Points of Note Regarding the Use of Conciliatory and Hostile Statements by US Presidents in Dyadic MIDs

There are three main points to summarise from the preceding. First, there are many disputes in which the US president does not direct any conciliatory or hostile statements toward the adversary. In many of these cases the president does not say anything regarding the adversary at all. Second, both conciliatory and hostile statements constitute a small percentage of US presidential words used in regard to an adversary. Points one and two are not surprising, as explained above. Third, hostile statements constitute a greater percentage of words used by US presidents than conciliatory statements, in most dyadic MIDs. This is an interesting finding, only made possible by utilising the data on conciliatory statements collected for this project.

#### 6.2 Control Variables

##### 6.2.1 Relative Capabilities

As one would expect, the US holds between 90% and 100% of the capabilities in a dyad on many occasions. This is, at least partially, explained by virtue of the US being one of the preeminent global powers throughout the course of the twentieth century. It is only in disputes with the Soviet Union/Russia and China that the US ever held less than 50% of the capabilities in a dispute. Examples of dispute adversaries that the US confronted when holding 99% or more of the capabilities in a dyad include Cuba, Nicaragua, Libya,
Afghanistan and Cambodia. On average the US possesses around 85% of the capabilities in a dyadic MID. This information is depicted in Figure 3 and summarised in Table 6.\textsuperscript{24}

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{figure3}
\caption{Dyadic MIDs Distributed by Relative Capabilities Held by US}
\end{figure}

\textsuperscript{24} Note that the number of observations in Table 6 is 258, ten fewer than the number of observations in Tables 4 and 5. This is due to ten observations having missing data regarding the relative capabilities of the US, and thus are excluded. Also note that while the US never holds 100% of the capabilities in a dyad, rounding makes 100% a possible value.
### Table 6 - Statistical Features of Distribution Depicted in Figure 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statistic</th>
<th>US Relative Capabilities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No. of Observations</td>
<td>258</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Min value</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Max value</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>84%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standard Deviation</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median</td>
<td>95%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Quartile</td>
<td>66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third Quartile</td>
<td>99%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This information can be disaggregated to show differences in the distribution when breaking dyadic MIDs into two groups: one in which armed force was used, one in which it was not. This is the case in Figure 4.

![Figure 4 - Relative Capabilities and US Use of Armed Force](image)
As we can see, the two distributions follow similar patterns to that present in Figure 3. However, as indicated by the mean values of the two groups (represented by the dashed vertical lines), on average the US has a greater share of the capabilities in a dyad in cases where the US does use armed force against its adversary. This suggests that the US is more likely to use armed force when it has a greater share of the capabilities in a dyad. Examples in which the US held a higher than average (i.e. above the mean value of 84% presented in Table 6) percentage of the capabilities in a dispute and used armed force include the forcible reinstatement of deposed Haitian President, Jean-Bertrand Aristide, and the use of airstrikes against Yugoslavia as a response to Yugoslav military activity in Kosovo. This relationship will be explored further in the following *Inferential Statistics* chapter. A summary of both distributions depicted in Figure 4 is provided in Table 7.

Table 7 - Statistical Features of Distributions Depicted in Figure 4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statistic</th>
<th>Force Used</th>
<th>Force Not Used</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No. of Observations</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>187</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Min value</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Max value</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>89%</td>
<td>82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standard Deviation</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median</td>
<td>96%</td>
<td>94%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Quartile</td>
<td>91%</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third Quartile</td>
<td>98%</td>
<td>99%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6.2.2 Democracy

Regarding the political system of the US’ adversaries it is worth asking two things. First, in what proportion of the US’ dyadic MIDs does the US confront a democracy, and in what proportion does the US confront a non-democracy? Second, in what proportion of the US’ dyadic MIDs with democracies does the US use armed force, and in what proportion of the US’ dyadic MIDs with non-democracies does the US use armed force?

Figure 5 speaks to the first question, illustrating that in only 20 of the 268 dyadic MIDs between 1950-2010 did the US confront a democracy.
Figure 5 - Dyadic MIDs by Democratic or Non-democratic Adversary

Figure 6, on the other hand, breaks these groups (dyadic MIDs involving a democratic adversary and dyadic MIDs involving a non-democratic adversary) into the proportions in which armed force was or was not used.
Of the 20 dyadic MIDs in which the US confronted a democracy the US employed armed force six times, representing 30% of these disputes. The US used armed force in 71 of the 177 disputes in which it confronted a non-democratic adversary, representing 40% of such disputes. Figure 5 and Figure 6 suggest, respectively, that the US is both less likely to confront democratic states in the first place and less likely to use armed force against such states when in dispute with them. As with relative capabilities, the relationship between adversary political system and US use of armed force is further explored in the next chapter.

6.3 Presidential Speech and the Use of Armed Force

In the final section of this chapter I turn to the primary relationship examined in this thesis; the relationship between the balance of conciliatory and hostile statements utilised by US presidents and the US’ use of armed force as a tool to resolve disputes. What needs to be explained is whether the number of conciliatory and hostile statements varies between those disputes in which armed force is used and those disputes in which it is not used.

6.3.1 Conciliatory Statements and Use of Armed Force

Information on how the distribution of dyadic MIDs by Conciliatory Statements changes when armed force is or is not used is presented in Figure 7. The lack of lower whiskers
on the boxplots in Figure 7 is due to the many disputes (both those in which the US does or does not use armed force) that do not have any conciliatory statements made about them by US presidents. The median percentage of conciliatory words employed is very similar in both types of cases; those that exhibit US use of armed force and those that do not.

We see the differing mean values represented by the two diamond-shaped points. These mean values are 0.34% and 0.39% for disputes in which the US does and does not use armed force respectively. The more elongated upper half of the left-hand boxplot indicates that higher percentages of words are accounted for by conciliatory statements in the third and fourth quartile of the distribution of those disputes where armed force is not used, explaining the increased mean value.

![Boxplot Image](image)

**Figure 7 - Conciliatory Statements and the Use of Armed Force**

The higher mean value of Conciliatory Statements in dyadic MIDs in which the US does not use armed force is in line with the theoretical expectations discussed in the Theoretical Framework and is consistent with H1:

H1: The use of conciliatory statements by a political leader during an MID will be negatively associated with their state using armed force in that MID.
However, there is a large amount of overlap in both of the boxplots in Figure 7. This might indicate that while, on average, disputes in which the US does not use armed force have higher values of Conciliatory Statements than do disputes in which the US does not use armed force, this difference could be explained by chance, rather than a correlation between Conciliatory Statements and Force Used. This is explored further in the following chapter.

6.3.2 Hostile Statements and Use of Armed Force

The opposite relationship is seen between Hostile Statements and Force Used, as is displayed in Figure 8.

![Figure 8 - Hostile Statements and Use of Armed Force](image)

The two boxplots exhibit a greater degree of difference here than those in Figure 7. The presence of a lower whisker in the right-hand boxplot indicates that where force is used there are more hostile words, and that at least some hostile words are used in the majority of cases. The higher median line, third quartile segment and upper whisker in the right-hand boxplot all indicate that hostile statements constitute a higher percentage of all words uttered about a dispute when armed force is used by the US, compared to when it is not used. This difference is also seen in the separation of the mean values.

Note that the y-axis in Figure 8 is scaled differently than that in Figure 7, as is the y-axis in Figure 9 below.
again depicted by the diamond-shaped points. These values are 0.96% and 0.72% for the right and left-hand plot respectively.

6.3.3 The Balance of Statements and Force Used

When accounting for both conciliatory and hostile statements by distributing dyadic MIDs upon values of the Balance variable, Figure 9 is produced.

![Figure 9 - Balance of Statements and Use of Armed Force](image)

Figure 9 speaks to H2:

H2: The more conciliatory the balance of conciliatory and hostile statements used by a political leader during a dispute, the less likely it will be that this leader’s state employs armed force. A logical corollary of this is that the more hostile the balance of conciliatory and hostile statements used by a political leader during a dispute, the more likely it will be that this leader’s state employs armed force.

However, what we can deduce about H2 from Figure 9 is limited. Aspects of this figure support H2. The balance of conciliatory and hostile statements is closer to even, as opposed to more strongly favouring hostile statements, in disputes where armed force is not used. With the two diamond-shaped points once again representing the mean values, we see that the mean in cases where armed force is used is lower (meaning
greater hostile statements relative to conciliatory statements) than the mean value in cases where it is not. The two mean values are, respectively, -0.61% and -0.34%.

Yet, as with Figure 7, although not to the same extent, the distributions depicted by the left and right-hand boxplots exhibit substantial overlap. It is right to question whether the differences in these distributions are the product of chance, rather than a statistically significant relationship between Balance and Force Used. Despite the aforementioned features of Figure 9, it does not offer clear support for H2. In fact, it highlights the need for further investigation of the relationship between Balance and Force Used via inferential statistical techniques, as conducted in the following chapter.

6.3.4 Conciliatory and Hostile Statements, and the Use of Armed Force – Levels of Commitment

As can be seen from the above, the relationships between political leadership statements and the use of armed force hypothesised in the Theoretical Framework need to be subjected to further examination. Inferential statistical analysis is used in the next chapter to further test H1 and H2. In conducting this analysis it is worth testing H1 and H2 while accounting for the different levels of commitment expressed by conciliatory and hostile statements. In section 3.2.6 a case was made for not only why the number of conciliatory and hostile statements might be connected to the likelihood of the US using armed force, but also why the level of commitment expressed by such statements might be influential. I account for the different levels of commitment expressed by conciliatory and hostile statements by establishing independent variables measuring certain subsets of conciliatory and hostile statements. These variables are defined and operationalised in Table 3.

In constructing Figure 10, I removed those conciliatory and hostile statements that expressed the lowest level of commitment to conciliation or hostility respectively. In the case of conciliatory statements, words or phrases that express openness to non-coercive interaction with an adversary were removed. Only conciliatory statements that express a preference for, or commitment to, non-coercive interaction are retained. In the case of hostile statements, those words or phrases that are associated with negative characterisation of an adversary are removed. Words or phrases associated with concrete demands and refusals or explicit threats are retained. Figure 10 measures the percentage of words accounted for by Preference and Commitment minus the percentage of words accounted for by Demand or Refusal and Explicit Threat.26

26 See Table 3 for definition and operationalisation of these variables.
Figure 10 – Excluding the Least Committedly Conciliatory or Hostile Statements

Using this smaller subset of more highly committed conciliatory and hostile statements the same relationship holds as presented in Figure 9 above. Armed force is less often used in disputes where the balance of statements is less heavily weighted towards hostile statements. The two mean points are the clearest demonstration of this, with the mean of the left-hand plot being higher than that of the right-hand plot.

This process can be extended to only account for the most committedly conciliatory and hostile statements. In the case of conciliatory statements this means retaining those statements that express a commitment to non-coercive interaction with the adversary. In the case of hostile statements this means retaining those statements that express an explicit threat towards an adversary. The balance of these statements is measured by subtracting the percentage of words accounted for by explicit threats from the percentage of words accounted for by statements expressing a commitment to non-coercive interaction; Balance Level Three as defined in Table 3, in other words. Figure 11 displays the resulting box-and-whisker plots.
Figure 11 – Including Only the Most Committedly Conciliatory and Hostile Statements

The trend in figures 9 and 10 is here repeated, with those cases in which the US uses armed force exhibiting a lower mean value. Notably, both mean values are above zero in Figure 11, indicating that statements highly committed to conciliation in this data represent a higher percentage of all words used by US presidents during disputes than do statements expressing a high degree of hostility, regardless of whether armed force is employed or not. While, on average, as depicted in Figure 9 by virtue of both mean values being lower than zero, hostile statements constitute a higher percentage of words uttered by US presidents about disputes, *highly* hostile statements constitute a smaller percentage than do *highly* conciliatory statements.

Figures 9, 10 and 11 all demonstrate that in dyadic MIDs where force is not used the proportion of conciliatory to hostile statements is greater than in dyadic MIDs where force is used. This is the case whether looking at all the conciliatory and hostile statements used by US presidents, or only the most committedly conciliatory and hostile statements. Like Figure 9, figures 10 and 11 do not tell us anything conclusive about H2. While it is the case that where force is not used the proportion of conciliatory to hostile statements is greater than in dyadic MIDs where force is used, this difference may be the product of chance. Whether H2 is supported is subject to the results of the following inferential statistical analysis.
6.4 Concluding Remarks

As stated at the outset, the goal of this chapter is to familiarise the reader with the data used in this study. To begin, my unit of analysis, the dyadic MID involving the US between 1950-2010, was distributed upon values of the independent variables: *Conciliatory Statements, Hostile Statements* and *Balance*. We saw that on average conciliatory and hostile statements account for only a small percentage of words uttered by US presidents about dyadic MIDs. Despite this, on average, hostile statements were a more common feature of presidential speech than conciliatory statements throughout this time period.

Following this, I presented data on my two control variables, *Democracy* and *Relative Capabilities*. First I explored how observations of the unit of analysis were distributed across varying values of these two variables. Second, I investigated the relationship between these variables and US use of armed force. I found that the US typically possesses around 85% of the capabilities held between itself and its adversary, and that this figure increases to 89% when looking at those cases in which the US used armed force; suggesting that the US is more likely to use armed force when the balance of capabilities is more strongly in its favour. Regarding the political system of the adversary, the US rarely confronted democracies and, compared to non-democracies, used armed force against them less often when it did. This indicates that the US may be less inclined to use armed force when confronting a democratic adversary.

Finally, I began to look for possible relationships between the independent and dependent variables of this study: the balance of conciliatory and hostile statements, and US use of armed force. I compared how dyadic MIDs were differently distributed upon values of *Conciliatory Statements* and *Hostile Statements* when armed force was or was not used. I examined the relationship between *Balance* and *Force Used* by comparing how dyadic MIDs were differently distributed upon values of *Balance* when armed force was or was not used, as seen in Figure 9. Using figures 10 and 11 I examined if the relationship between the balance of conciliatory and hostile statements, and use of armed force, changed when retaining only those conciliatory and hostile statements that expressed greater levels of commitment.

In analysing the descriptive statistics presented above, I found that support for H1 and H2 was mixed. Regarding H1, higher levels of conciliatory statements are used in disputes where the US did not use armed force, compared to those where it did. We would expect to find this to be the case were H1 correct. However, the difference is
slight and could be the result of chance, rather than a statistically significant relationship between Conciliatory Statements and Force Used. Regarding H2, conciliatory statements account for a greater percentage of all words uttered by US presidents about a dyadic MID, relative to the percentage accounted for by hostile statements, in disputes where the US does not use armed force. We would expect this to be the empirical state of affairs if H2 was supported. Moreover, the difference in the balance of hostile and conciliatory statements between disputes where armed force is used, and those where it is not, is more stark than the difference in conciliatory statements. That is to say that Balance varies more between disputes where force is used, and those where it is not, compared to Conciliatory Statements. However, this variation is still limited and may be the result of chance, rather than a statistically significant relationship between Balance and Force Used. As with H1, inferential statistical analysis is required in order to be able to accept or reject H2 with confidence. It is to this analysis that I now turn.
7 Inferential Statistics
In the Descriptive Statistics chapter I highlighted patterns of interest within the data. In the final section of that chapter I demonstrated that increased use of conciliatory statements by US presidents in the context of dispute seemed to be negatively associated with the US’ use of armed force. Conversely, increased hostile statements in the context of dispute seemed to be positively associated with the US’ use of armed force. Consequently, in dyadic MIDs where force is not used the proportion of conciliatory to hostile statements is greater than in dyadic MIDs where force is used. To determine whether these differences are simply due to chance requires inferential tests.

This chapter has three sections, each designed to further explore and substantiate the relationships between the variables defined in Research Design and Methodology Two and preliminarily investigated in the preceding Descriptive Statistics chapter. In the first I use binomial logistic regression in an attempt to understand the relationship between US presidential statements and US use of armed force. This first section gives an indication of whether there is a relationship between presidential statements and US use of armed force, as well as what the nature of that relationship is (positive or negative). I find that, contrary to H1, while Hostile Statements and Balance exhibit a statistically significant relationship with US use of armed force, Conciliatory Statements does not. In the second section I employ multiple logistic regression, in order to understand how the results of the first section might change when including the control variables discussed in the research design and methodology chapters. My analysis demonstrates that Balance is negatively associated with the US using armed force, as hypothesised by H2. Balance is also the measure of US presidential statements most reliably related to US use of armed force. Finally, in the third section, I perform robustness tests to ensure that the findings in section two are not the result of, for example, outliers in the data.

7.1 Normalising the Data
In order to make the outputs of the various regression models discussed in this chapter more interpretable, the raw data presented in the preceding chapter underwent z-score transformation, as described in Cohen (2013). When an observation undergoes z-score transformation it is converted from the original unit of measurement to standard deviations from the mean. The main benefit of using z-scores, as opposed to raw scores, is that doing so makes different distributions comparable. As Cohen (2013, p. 100) states, "In any distribution for which μ and σ can be found, any raw score can be
expressed as a z-score”. 27 Z-scores from different distributions can be directly compared, which means “Telling someone how many standard deviations your score is above or below the mean is more informative than telling your actual (raw) score” (Cohen, 2013, p. 100). Because all the variables that will be included as predictor variables in the statistical models below are distributed differently, as demonstrated in the Descriptive Statistics chapter, converting the data to z-scores makes the results of the statistical models more easily comparable and interpretable. All variables in the following analysis are converted to z-scores except for Democracy and Force Used, as dichotomous variables such as these cannot be converted in this manner.

7.2 Binomial Logistic Regression
The main independent variable in this study is the Balance variable. I argued in section 3.2.5 that it is more important to capture the balance between hostile and conciliatory statements in presidential speech than just conciliatory or hostile statements alone. For this reason, I present the output of the binomial logistic regression in which I use Balance as the independent variable as Model 1 in Table 8. I present this alongside Model 2 and Model 3 where Hostile Statements and Conciliatory Statements are used as the respective independent variables. All three models include Force Used as the dependent variable.

27 “μ” represents the mean of a distribution; “σ” represents the standard deviation.
### Table 8 - Binomial Logistic Regression Models

*Dependent variable:* Force Used

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model 1</th>
<th>Model 2</th>
<th>Model 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Coefficient (Standard Error)</strong></td>
<td><strong>Coefficient (Standard Error)</strong></td>
<td><strong>Coefficient (Standard Error)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Odds Ratio (90% Confidence Interval)</strong></td>
<td><strong>Odds Ratio (90% Confidence Interval)</strong></td>
<td><strong>Odds Ratio (90% Confidence Interval)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balance</td>
<td>-0.354 (0.135)</td>
<td>-0.119 (0.140)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hostile Statements</td>
<td>0.303 (0.133)</td>
<td>0.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conciliatory Statements</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>-0.912 (0.135)</td>
<td>0.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observations</td>
<td>268</td>
<td>268</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Log Likelihood</td>
<td>-157.159</td>
<td>-158.103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Likelihood Ratio</td>
<td>7.136</td>
<td>5.248</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R2 (Hosmer-Lemeshow)</td>
<td>0.022</td>
<td>0.016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R2 (Cox-Snell)</td>
<td>0.027</td>
<td>0.019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Akaike Inf. Crit.</td>
<td>318.318</td>
<td>320.207</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note:* *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

#### 7.3 Testing the Hypotheses

The results of the above binomial logistic regressions do not support H1. Due to *Conciliatory Statements* having a statistically insignificant coefficient, we do not know what the nature of the relationship between *Conciliatory Statements* and *Force Used* is, if
there is any relationship between the two at all. Moreover, Model 3 including Conciliatory Statements as its independent variable has the poorest fit to the data of the three models presented, as seen in the smaller $R^2$ values and larger AIC value.

These results are contrary to the theoretical argument that Conciliatory Statements should be negatively associated with Force Used, especially when considering that Hostile Statements does have a statistically significant relationship with Force Used. In the Theoretical Framework chapter I argued that the theoretical arguments often utilised to assert that a state leader’s hostile statements would influence their decision of whether to use armed force were equally applicable to conciliatory statements. Recent literature (see, Levy et al., 2015; Tingley, 2014; Tomz, 2007) on audience costs suggests that domestic publics might also punish their leaders for breaking their conciliatory, not only hostile, statements. The upshot of this argument is that if we see Hostile Statements having a statistically significant relationship with Force Used, there is no theoretical reason to not also see such a relationship between Conciliatory Statements and Force Used. However, no such relationship exists.

Figures 12 and 13, which depict models 2 and 3 of Table 8, respectively, are another way of demonstrating the lack of support for H1. Figure 12 shows an association between increasing Hostile Statements values and the probability that armed force is used. The confidence interval in Figure 12 increases in those areas of the plot where there are the fewest data points, as would be expected. Conversely, Figure 13 shows only a very small decline in the probability of the US using armed force as Conciliatory Statements values increase. Moreover, the confidence interval in Figure 13, while still increasing in those areas of the plot with the least data points, suggests that there may be no association between Conciliatory Statements and the probability that the US uses armed force at all. The logistic regression output above shows that there is less than a 5% probability that the degree of co-variation between Hostile Statements and Force Used would exist due to chance alone. Conversely, as Conciliatory Statements and Force Used do not exhibit a statistically significant relationship, there is an unacceptably high probability that the co-variation between these variables is the product of chance.
The results reported in Table 8 are consistent with H2. As Balance increases, the odds of the US using armed force decrease. This is to say that as the proportion of words accounted for by conciliatory statements increases, relative to the proportion accounted...
for by hostile statements, the less likely the US is to use armed force against its adversary. As shown by the regression output in Table 8, this relationship is statistically significant; it is very unlikely to be the result of chance.

The odds ratio of Balance in Model 1, Table 8, is 0.70. This means that in disputes where the value of Balance is one standard deviation above the mean, the odds of the US using armed force is 30% lower than when the Balance value is at the mean. Figure 14, depicting Model 1 of Table 8, also demonstrates this negative relationship. I argued in the Theoretical Framework chapter that both conciliatory and hostile statements need to be accounted for in a model attempting to explain the US’ use of armed force. The fact that this model has a slightly superior fit to the data than do models including only conciliatory or hostile statements, as shown by the log-likelihood, R² and AIC values, supports this assertion. Figure 14 also reflects this.

![Figure 14 - Logistic Regression Plot, Model 1, Table 8](image)

7.4 **Incorporating Commitment Levels**  
As detailed in the preceding Descriptive Statistics chapter, additional information was collected on the level of commitment to conciliation or hostility expressed by each conciliatory or hostile statement. The theoretical reasons for including the commitment of statements in this analysis was explained in section 3.2.6.
Table 9 offers a breakdown of *Conciliatory Statements, Hostile Statements* and *Balance* by three subcategories of commitment to conciliation and hostility. The measurement of these variables is explained in Table 3. All nine variables are used as independent variables and tested against the dependent variable, *Force Used*, using binomial logistic regression. Those values in the "p-value" column that have an asterisk next to them are those that are statistically significant to a threshold of at least 0.1. Table 9 is condensed due to there being nine separate models in it.
Table 9 - Binomial Logistic Regression Breakdown of Commitment Levels

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Coefficient</th>
<th>Odds Ratio</th>
<th>%90 CI</th>
<th>P-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Openness</td>
<td>-0.069</td>
<td>0.933</td>
<td>0.726-1.165</td>
<td>0.626</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preference</td>
<td>0.009</td>
<td>1.015</td>
<td>0.802-1.253</td>
<td>0.950</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commitment</td>
<td>-0.225</td>
<td>0.799</td>
<td>0.615-1.014</td>
<td>0.139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative Characterisation</td>
<td>0.225</td>
<td>1.253</td>
<td>1.010-1.572</td>
<td>0.090*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demand or Refusal</td>
<td>0.226</td>
<td>1.253</td>
<td>1.009-1.561</td>
<td>0.087*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explicit Threat</td>
<td>0.548</td>
<td>1.729</td>
<td>1.351-2.287</td>
<td>0.0006*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balance Level One</td>
<td>-0.238</td>
<td>0.788</td>
<td>0.627-0.978</td>
<td>0.076*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balance Level Two</td>
<td>-0.209</td>
<td>0.812</td>
<td>0.649-1.011</td>
<td>0.119</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balance Level Three</td>
<td>-0.390</td>
<td>0.677</td>
<td>0.506-0.879</td>
<td>0.020*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Reflecting the finding that Conciliatory Statements did not have a statistically significant relationship with Force Used, none of the three subcategories of conciliatory statements, Openness, Preference, or Commitment are statistically significant. In contrast, when breaking Hostile Statements down into three levels of commitment all three subcategories are significant, in line with the earlier finding that Hostile Statements has a
statistically significant relationship with *Force Used*. Most noteworthy, however, is that the positive association strengthens when moving from *Negative Characterisation* through to *Explicit Threat*.

Things are a little less clear cut with regard to *Balance Level One, Balance Level Two* and *Balance Level Three*. We see from Table 9 that all three variables have the negative relationship with *Force Used* predicted in the *Theoretical Framework*. However, while this relationship is statistically significant for *Balance Level One* and *Balance Level Three*, for *Balance Level Two* it is not. These findings are discussed in light of the multiple logistic regression conducted immediately below.

### 7.5 Multiple Logistic Regression

In *Research Design and Methodology Two* I explained the variables I would be using in conducting multiple logistic regression analysis. Before building models that incorporate these variables it is worth presenting a simple correlation matrix to give some idea of the correlation each pair of variables possess. This information can be seen in Table 10.

**Table 10 - Correlation Matrix**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Democracy</th>
<th>Relative Capabilities</th>
<th>Hostile Statements</th>
<th>Balance</th>
<th>Conciliatory Statements</th>
<th>Force Used</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Democracy</td>
<td>Chi²=258</td>
<td>0.338</td>
<td>0.068</td>
<td>-0.160</td>
<td>-0.182</td>
<td>Chi²=0.067</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>d.f.=1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>d.f.=1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>p=0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>p=0.796</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relative Capabilities</td>
<td>0.338</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td>-0.114</td>
<td>-0.093</td>
<td>-0.403</td>
<td>0.212</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hostile Statements</td>
<td>0.068</td>
<td>-0.114</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td>-0.868</td>
<td>0.228</td>
<td>0.169</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balance</td>
<td>-0.160</td>
<td>-0.093</td>
<td>-0.868</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td>0.285</td>
<td>-0.221</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conciliatory Statements</td>
<td>-0.182</td>
<td>-0.403</td>
<td>0.228</td>
<td>0.285</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Force Used</td>
<td>Chi²=0.067</td>
<td>0.212</td>
<td>0.169</td>
<td>-0.221</td>
<td>-0.107</td>
<td>Chi²=258</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>d.f.=1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>d.f.=1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>p=0.796</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>p=0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 10 demonstrates no more than the magnitude of the correlation between variables. It is not supposed to be an indication of the nature (positive or negative) of the relationships between variables. Because some of the correlations depicted in Table
are biserial correlations (used when calculating the correlation between dichotomous and continuous variables), the nature of the relationship reported is meaningless (Field, 2012, p. 231). Moreover, the table does not indicate the statistical significance between variables, other than those correlations that need to be calculated through a chi-square test (due to the variables in question being categorical). In these cases I report p-values in order to stick with the conventions of presenting the results of chi-square tests. All correlations in Table 10 are based upon 258 observations, as is the analysis that follows. Ten observations that are included in the binomial testing above are excluded here due to their having missing values upon the Relative Capabilities variable.

The most notable feature of Table 10 is that it points to likely multicollinearity between the three independent variables analysed in Table 8 (Balance, Hostile Statements and Conciliatory Statements) when they are included in the same model. It makes sense that there would be multicollinearity between these three variables, due to the way in which Balance is calculated (see Table 2). The value of Balance in any dispute depends on the value of Hostile Statements and Conciliatory Statements in that same dispute.

In particular, there is a high degree of correlation between Balance and Hostile Statements. This also makes sense. As was shown in the Descriptive Statistics chapter, hostile statements are simply more common than conciliatory statements during a dispute, on average. Therefore, hostile statements typically constitute a larger part of the statements upon which Balance is calculated. In preliminary testing multicollinearity only became an issue once all three of Balance, Hostile Statements and Conciliatory Statements were included in a single model. Any combination of two of these variables did not create an issue of multicollinearity.

7.6 Model-Building
Building a model one independent variable at a time allows us to learn what each independent variable contributes to the overall ability of a model to explain values of the outcome variable. It also allows for easy comparison between models, in order to see which fits the data best. Table 11 contains four models. Each model includes an additional independent variable.

The order in which variables are added is driven by existing research, meaning that this is an example of hierarchical regression (Field, 2012, p. 264). Democracy is included first, due to the wide acceptance of the “democratic peace” thesis in international relations literature and the unambiguous theoretical expectation that a dyad including
two democratic states should be less likely to experience violent interaction. *Relative Capabilities* is included second. It is included second to *Democracy* because while, like *Democracy*, it has been included in much of the foregoing empirical literature on questions of conflict between states, there is less of a clear theoretical expectation as to the nature of the relationship between it and *Force Used*. While such states have a greater capability to use force against their adversaries, it is precisely this preponderance of power that might enable them to manage international relations and resolve their disputes without recourse to violence (Bueno de Mesquita & Lalman, 1992).

Following the addition of *Relative Capabilities*, I add *Hostile Statements*. While the speech used by political leaders has not been such a focus of international relations literature, in general, as have matters of hard power (*Relative Capabilities*) or regime type (*Democracy*), as discussed in the Literature Review, much of the existing literature on the public speech of political leaders has focused on hostile statements and their influence on international disputes. Hence, I include *Hostile Statements* in the third model of Table 11. Finally, I add *Balance*. I have argued that the balance of hostile and conciliatory presidential statements has not thoroughly been considered in foregoing literature on political leadership speech. Following Field’s (2012) advice on conducting hierarchical regression, I include new variables after the inclusion of well-established variables. Hence, *Balance* is included in the fourth model of Table 11.
# Table 11 – Multiple Regression Model-building

**Dependent variable:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Force Used</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

## Model 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Coefficient (Standard Error)</th>
<th>Odds Ratio (90% Confidence Interval)</th>
<th>Odds Ratio (90% Confidence Interval)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Democracy</td>
<td>0.132 (0.509)</td>
<td>1.14 (-0.106, 2.56)</td>
<td>0.90 (-0.187, 1.92)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relative capabilities</td>
<td>0.403 (0.161)</td>
<td>1.50 (1.16-1.97)</td>
<td>1.56 (1.20-2.06)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hostile Statements</td>
<td>0.313 (0.138)</td>
<td>1.37 (1.09-1.72)</td>
<td>0.077 (1.03-1.81)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balance</td>
<td>-0.265 (0.324)</td>
<td>0.77 (0.44-1.29)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>-0.979 (0.145)</td>
<td>0.38 (-0.997, 0.48)</td>
<td>0.37 (-1.001, 0.47)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.36 (-1.008, 0.47)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Model 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Coefficient (Standard Error)</th>
<th>Odds Ratio (90% Confidence Interval)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Democracy</td>
<td>-0.106 (0.516)</td>
<td>0.90 (-0.37-2.04)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relative capabilities</td>
<td>0.444 (0.164)</td>
<td>1.56 (1.20-2.06)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hostile Statements</td>
<td>0.313 (0.138)</td>
<td>1.37 (1.09-1.72)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balance</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>-0.997 (0.149)</td>
<td>0.38 (-0.997, 0.48)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Model 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Coefficient (Standard Error)</th>
<th>Odds Ratio (90% Confidence Interval)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Democracy</td>
<td>-0.187 (0.529)</td>
<td>0.83 (0.33-1.92)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relative capabilities</td>
<td>0.444 (0.164)</td>
<td>1.56 (1.20-2.06)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hostile Statements</td>
<td>0.37 (0.151)</td>
<td>1.001 (0.29-0.47)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balance</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>-1.001 (0.152)</td>
<td>0.37 (0.29-0.47)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Model 4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Coefficient (Standard Error)</th>
<th>Odds Ratio (90% Confidence Interval)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Democracy</td>
<td>-0.206 (0.530)</td>
<td>0.81 (0.32-1.89)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relative capabilities</td>
<td>0.399 (0.173)</td>
<td>1.49 (1.13-2.00)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hostile Statements</td>
<td>0.077 (0.318)</td>
<td>1.08 (0.63-1.81)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balance</td>
<td>-0.265 (0.324)</td>
<td>0.77 (0.44-1.29)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>-1.008 (0.152)</td>
<td>0.36 (0.28-0.47)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Notes:**
- p<0.1; p<0.05; p<0.01

**Observations:** 258

**Log Likelihood:** -151.763

**Likelihood Ratio:** 6.983

**R (Hosmer-Lemeshow):** 0.066

**R (Cox-Snell):** 0.023

**Akaike Inf. Crit.:** 307.526
Table 11 shows that the two variables that contribute most to a model’s goodness of fit to the data on US use of armed force are *Relative Capabilities* and *Hostile Statements*. Model 1, which includes *Democracy* as the sole predictor variable, has $R^2$ values of zero (when rounded to three decimal places), meaning that there is very little shared variability between *Democracy* and *Force Used*. Models two and three both offer improvements upon the model that precedes them. This is demonstrated in the increased $R^2$ values. There is around a two per cent increase in the $R^2$ value moving from Model 1 to Model 2, and again moving from Model 2 to Model 3. In other words, there is a two per cent increase in the variability between the predictor variables in a model and *Force Used* when adding either *Relative Capabilities* or *Hostile Statements* as a predictor variable. The decreased AIC values in models two and three indicate that this is not simply a consequence of having more predictor variables. Model 4 has higher $R^2$ values than any of the three preceding models. However, the AIC value being higher than that of Model 3 tells us that the additional explanatory power is outweighed by the fact that Model 4 is less parsimonious than Model 3.

This might, at first glance, suggest that *Balance* is unnecessary in predicting US use of armed force. This is inaccurate, however. Rather, it is more accurate to say that there is little benefit in including both *Balance* and *Hostile Statements* together in a model attempting to explain US use of armed force. This is likely due to the fact that the value of *Balance* in a certain dispute is, in part, driven by the value of *Hostile Statements* in a dispute.

The important model to think about in this regard is Model 3. Model 4 will be the same as that presented in Table 11 no matter which order the independent variables are included, so long as they are all included. The question is whether Model 3 performs better when altering the order in which independent variables are added such that *Balance* is added to the third model and *Hostile Statements* is added to the fourth. If it does, then this suggests including *Balance* in our models at the expense of *Hostile Statements*. Table 12 presents this alternative ordering.
### Table 12 – Multiple Regression Model-building Two

**Dependent variable:**

**Force Used**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Model 1</th>
<th>Model 2</th>
<th>Model 3</th>
<th>Model 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Coefficient (Standard Error)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Odds Ratio (90% Confidence Interval)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Democracy</strong></td>
<td>0.132 (0.509)</td>
<td>-0.106 (0.516)</td>
<td>-0.207 (0.529)</td>
<td>-0.206 (0.530)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Relative Capabilities</strong></td>
<td>0.403 (0.161)</td>
<td>1.50 (1.16-1.97)</td>
<td>1.47 (1.13-1.94)</td>
<td>1.399 (1.13-2.00)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Balance</strong></td>
<td>-0.336 (0.141)</td>
<td>0.71 (0.56-0.90)</td>
<td>0.265 (0.324)</td>
<td>0.77 (0.44-1.29)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hostile Statements</strong></td>
<td>0.077 (0.318)</td>
<td>1.08 (0.63-1.81)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Constant</strong></td>
<td>-0.979 (0.145)</td>
<td>-0.997 (0.149)</td>
<td>-1.010 (0.152)</td>
<td>-1.008 (0.152)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Observations</strong></td>
<td>258</td>
<td>258</td>
<td>258</td>
<td>258</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Log Likelihood</strong></td>
<td>-151.763</td>
<td>-148.304</td>
<td>-145.372</td>
<td>-145.343</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Likelihood Ratio</strong></td>
<td>0.066</td>
<td>6.983</td>
<td>12.848</td>
<td>12.906</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>R (Hosmer-Lemeshow)</strong></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.023</td>
<td>0.043</td>
<td>0.043</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>R (Cox-Snell)</strong></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.027</td>
<td>0.049</td>
<td>0.049</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Akaike Inf. Crit.</strong></td>
<td>307.526</td>
<td>302.609</td>
<td>298.744</td>
<td>300.686</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note:** p<0.1; p<0.05; p<0.01
We see a very similar pattern to that in Table 11 unfold when moving from Model 1 through to Model 4 in Table 12. The models that offer improvement over the model preceding them are Model 2 and Model 3. As in Table 11, there are no substantial gains in Model 4, demonstrating again that there is little value in including both Balance and Hostile Statements as predictor variables in the same model. Model 3 of Table 12 has a slightly better fit to the data than does Model 3 of Table 11, exhibited by its slightly higher $R^2$ and slightly lower AIC values. This tells us that, given there is little value in including both Balance and Hostile Statements as predictor variables in the same model, we should prefer to include Balance at the expense of Hostile Statements.

Of course, at this point Conciliatory Statements would normally be included in this model-building process. However, preliminary testing found that, as suggested by the above correlation matrix, when including Balance, Conciliatory Statements and Hostile Statements together in a single model, multicollinearity became a problem in interpreting the regression output. For this reason I present Table 13. Table 13 includes three models, all of which use Force Used as their dependent variable and contain Relative Capabilities and Democracy as control variables. Models one, two and three include Balance, Hostile Statements and Conciliatory Statements as independent variables respectively. Table 13 allows us to compare how a model including Conciliatory Statements and relevant control variables compares to similar models including either Balance or Hostile Statements.
Table 13 - Comparison of Balance, Hostile Statements and Conciliatory Statements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Model 1</th>
<th>Model 2</th>
<th>Model 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Coefficient</td>
<td>Odds Ratio (90% Confidence Interval)</td>
<td>Coefficient</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dependent variable:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ForceUsed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balance</td>
<td>-0.336</td>
<td>0.71</td>
<td>(0.141)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hostile Statements</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.313</td>
<td>1.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conciliatory Statements</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relative Capabilities</td>
<td>0.385</td>
<td>1.47</td>
<td>0.444</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democracy</td>
<td>-0.207</td>
<td>0.81</td>
<td>-0.187</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>-1.010</td>
<td>0.36</td>
<td>-1.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observations</td>
<td>258</td>
<td>258</td>
<td>258</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Log Likelihood</td>
<td>-145.372</td>
<td>-145.688</td>
<td>-148.262</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Likelihood Ratio</td>
<td>12.848</td>
<td>12.216</td>
<td>7.068</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R (Hosmer-Lemeshow)</td>
<td>0.043</td>
<td>0.040</td>
<td>0.023</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R (Cox-Snell)</td>
<td>0.049</td>
<td>0.046</td>
<td>0.027</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Akaike Inf. Crit.</td>
<td>298.744</td>
<td>299.376</td>
<td>304.524</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01
Regarding the models themselves, we can see from the model log-likelihood, R^2 and AIC values that the model including *Conciliatory Statements* has an inferior fit to the data. As noted above, those models including *Balance* and *Hostile Statements* perform similarly, but the model including *Balance* has a slight edge. In terms of the independent variables, *Balance* and *Hostile Statements* have statistically significant coefficients. *Conciliatory Statements* does not. *Balance* has the largest effect upon *Force Used*, with a coefficient of -0.336, compared to *Hostile Statements* and *Balance* (0.313 and -0.046, respectively).  

The improvements that *Balance* offers over *Hostile Statements*, both in terms of model fit to the data and increased effect size, are small. It is reasonable to ask whether these gains warrant the time and labour required to collect data (as I have done herein) on conciliatory statements. By analysing hostile statements alone, as preceding literature has tended to do, are we able to gain sufficient understanding of the relationship between the statements of political leaders and a state's dispute behaviour? I address this question in chapter 8, *Discussion and Conclusions*, arguing that it is worth utilising the balance of hostile and conciliatory statements in future research, as opposed to hostile statements alone.

### 7.7 Revisiting the Hypotheses

The multiple regression analysis conducted above supports the findings of the earlier binomial regression analysis. H1 is not supported, while H2 is supported. Regarding H1, there is no correlation between the conciliatory statements made by US presidents and their use of armed force against adversaries. Despite there being little theoretical reason to believe that hostile statements would be correlated with US use of armed force and conciliatory statements not, this is exactly the empirical state of affairs we see. While recent empirical work (Levy et al, 2015; Tingley, 2014; Tomz, 2007) suggests political leaders should face similar incentives to act in accordance with their conciliatory statements as they do their hostile statements, it appears that only hostile statements have a meaningful relationship with presidents’ decisions to use armed force.

Note that odds ratios are not suitable in comparing the effect size of multiple independent variables, where one independent variable has a positive relationship with the dependent variable and the other a negative relationship. As odds ratios can only take values of zero or greater, negative coefficients have associated odds ratios that indicate a far smaller shift in odds than do positive coefficients of the same magnitude. I thank Tim Jowett, statistical consultant at the Department of Mathematics and Statistics, University of Otago, for advice in this regard.
H2, however, is supported. *Balance* is consistently negatively related to US use of armed force, meaning that as the balance of conciliatory and hostile statements favours conciliatory statements the odds of the US using armed force decreases. Moreover, models including the *Balance* variable out-perform models accounting for only *Hostile Statements* or *Conciliatory Statements*, in terms of their fit with the data. Improvements upon using *Balance* over *Hostile Statements* in multiple regression models are modest but consistent. Finally, variation in *Balance* is associated with more variation in *Force Used* than either *Conciliatory Statements* or *Hostile Statements*, as seen by its larger coefficient.

While not part of the hypotheses put forward in the *Theoretical Framework* chapter, it is also worth speaking briefly about the control variables, *Relative Capabilities* and *Democracy*. *Relative Capabilities* consistently had a statistically significant relationship with *Force Used*. Moreover, variation in this variable was met with a larger change in the odds of the US using armed force than was variation in any other predictor variable. Across all the multiple logistic regression models above, a one-unit increase in *Relative Capabilities* was associated with the odds of the US using armed force being increased by between 45% and 50%, as reported by the odds ratio. This is an interesting finding, as while the US clearly has a greater ability to impose its will on weaker countries, it should also have a greater ability to compel with threat of force, thus mitigating the need for armed force to be used.

Conversely, *Democracy* does not have a statistically significant relationship with US use of armed force. Across the models presented above, the relationship between *Democracy* and *Force Used* was not statistically significant. This is contrary to robust evidence produced in international relations and political science literature (Bueno de Mesquita et al., 1999; Haarvard et al., 2018). I discuss this finding in the following *Discussion and Conclusions* chapter.

### 7.8 Incorporating Commitment Levels into Multiple Regression Analysis

As with the binomial testing, it is worth breaking *Conciliatory Statements*, *Hostile Statements* and *Balance* into their three respective commitment levels. Doing so will allow us to see whether any of these subcategories have meaningfully different relationships with *Force Used* than the overall variable of which they are component parts. Table 14 reports the relationships between each of these nine variables and *Force Used* when including each commitment level as an independent variable alongside *Relative Capabilities* and *Democracy*. 

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Table 14 - Breakdown of Independent Variables by Commitment Level

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Coefficient</th>
<th>Odds Ratio</th>
<th>%90 CI</th>
<th>P-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Openness</td>
<td>0.044 (0.157)</td>
<td>1.045</td>
<td>0.797-1.347</td>
<td>0.777</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preference</td>
<td>0.036 (0.148)</td>
<td>1.037</td>
<td>0.804-1.321</td>
<td>0.809</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commitment</td>
<td>-0.136 (0.159)</td>
<td>0.873</td>
<td>0.662-1.120</td>
<td>0.391</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative Characterisation</td>
<td>0.200 (0.136)</td>
<td>1.221</td>
<td>0.979-1.542</td>
<td>0.143</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demand or Refusal</td>
<td>0.276 (0.138)</td>
<td>1.318</td>
<td>1.051-1.663</td>
<td>0.046*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explicit Threat</td>
<td>0.654 (0.193)</td>
<td>1.923</td>
<td>1.433-2.697</td>
<td>0.0007*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balance Level One</td>
<td>-0.197 (0.137)</td>
<td>0.821</td>
<td>0.649-1.024</td>
<td>0.149</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balance Level Two</td>
<td>-0.247 (0.141)</td>
<td>0.781</td>
<td>0.616-0.984</td>
<td>0.081*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balance Level Three</td>
<td>-0.309 (0.179)</td>
<td>0.734</td>
<td>0.535-0.967</td>
<td>0.084*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When breaking down Conciliatory Statements into Openness, Preference and Commitment we see that all three levels reflect the overall lack of a statistically significant relationship between Conciliatory Statements and Force Used. Even when accounting for
the commitment to conciliation expressed, such statements do not share a statistically significant relationship with Force Used.

The three commitment levels of Hostile Statements, Negative Characterisation, Demand or Refusal and Explicit Threat all share a positive relationship with Force Used. Generally speaking, the trend present in the binomial testing, in which more committed hostile statements were more strongly associated with US use of armed force, is strengthened under the multiple regression testing. However, unlike in binomial testing, Negative Characterisation no longer has a statistically significant relationship with Force Used. This aligns with theoretical expectations. The co-variation between highly committed hostile statements and use of armed force by the US is greater in magnitude, and far less likely to be the result of chance, compared to the co-variation between less committed hostile statements and the use of armed force by the US.

The negative relationships between the three commitment levels of Balance and Force Used that were seen in binomial testing are also seen here. Increases in Balance at all three levels are associated with decreases in Force Used. Unlike in the results of the binomial testing, however, this negative relationship strengthens when moving from Balance Level One through to Balance Level Three. In the results of the binomial testing Balance Level Two had a smaller negative relationship with Force Used than did Balance Level One. Additionally, in the results of multiple regression testing Balance Level Two becomes statistically significant where it had not been in the results of binomial testing. Conversely, Balance Level One loses the statistically significant relationship with Force Used that was present in the results of the binomial testing. These findings are also in line with theoretical expectations. The balance of less committed conciliatory and hostile statements being increasingly favourable to conciliatory statements is less reliably correlated with US use of armed force than is the balance of more committed conciliatory and hostile statements increasingly favouring conciliatory statements.

However, it should be noted that while Balance Level Two offers marked improvement over Balance Level One, in terms of the statistical significance of their respective coefficients, Balance Level Three only offers marginal improvements over Balance Level Two. This raises a question of whether the effect of differing levels of commitment expressed by conciliatory and hostile statements could be measured using only two distinct levels of commitment, rather than three. Separating the two highest levels of commitment expressed by hostile or conciliatory statements may be unnecessary. It might suffice to simply categorise the least committedly conciliatory or hostile
statements separately from all other levels of commitment expressed. This does not undermine the notion that the commitment expressed by presidential statements has an effect on whether the US uses armed force against an adversary or not. It simply suggests that the commitment of these statements could be effectively measured using a dichotomous measure, such as coding each statement “low commitment” or “high commitment.” The details of how to classify and code commitment differently would, of course, need to be given detailed thought. I simply highlight this point here.

7.9 Logistic Regression: Summary of Results

H2 is supported by the results of the multiple logistic regression analysis above. *Balance* has the negative relationship with *Force Used* hypothesised, shares the largest correlation coefficient with *Force Used* of the three independent variables measuring presidential statements (*Balance, Hostile Statements* and *Conciliatory Statements*) and those models that include *Balance* as the measure of presidential statements fit the data on US use of armed force better than those using either *Hostile Statements* or *Conciliatory Statements*. All of this suggests that measuring the balance of conciliatory and hostile statements struck by US presidents increases our ability to explain variation in US use of armed force beyond our ability to do so when only focusing on hostile or conciliatory statements in isolation.

Also largely borne out by this analysis is the theoretical argument, although not directly hypothesised, that there would be a stronger correlation between highly committed statements and US use of armed force than between less committed statements and the US’ use of armed force. This was not always the case. The relationship between *Force Used* and the three commitment levels of conciliatory statements were all statistically insignificant. However, in multiple regression models this pattern emerged for *Balance* and *Hostile Statements*; correlations between hostile statements, and the balance of conciliatory and hostile statements, and US use of armed force were stronger when only measuring statements that expressed higher levels of commitment to conciliation or hostility. This suggests that not only are the type of statements that US presidents use important in influencing whether the US uses armed force during its disputes, but that the degree of commitment expressed in presidential statements is important also.

However, the findings presented above do not support H1. I claimed that many of the arguments found in the literature as to why we would expect presidential statements to have an effect on the US’ use of armed force, while often focusing on hostile statements, could equally apply to conciliatory statements. Yet, the results of the logistic regression
analysis indicate that hostile statements are a statistically significant predictor of US use of armed force, while conciliatory statements are not. This suggests that there is something specifically about hostile statements, as opposed to conciliatory statements, that means they have an independent effect on the US' use of armed force. It is likely that a conclusive explanation of why this is the case will extend beyond what is feasible to analyse in this thesis. I discuss these considerations in the next chapter.

7.10 Robustness Tests and Assumptions of the Model
To be confident in the above findings we need to ensure that the outputs of my multiple logistic regression analyses are not the result of the data breaching the assumptions of logistic regression or problematic observations, such as outliers. I conduct such checks on the model displayed in Table 15. I have chosen this model to test due to it being the model with the best fit to the data produced from the model-building conducted above and due to its inclusion of the most commonly utilised control variables in preceding literature.
In the following I briefly recount the robustness tests employed and the results produced when doing so. Please refer to section 5.4 for a full discussion of the relevant statistics.
7.10.1 Multicollinearity
In order for multiple regression models to give meaningful results the independent variables themselves cannot be highly correlated (Allison, 1999). A pertinent example of multicollinearity came in section 7.5, where it was found that Balance, Hostile Statements and Conciliatory Statements exhibited collinearity and, therefore, could not be included in the same regression models. Variation inflation factors (VIFs) are a statistical measure of whether one predictor variable has a strong linear relationship with another predictor variable (Field, p. 276). There are a number of views on the threshold at which VIF figures become problematic. Allison (1999) indicates that figures larger than 2.5 are an issue, Gordon (2010) states that thresholds of 4 or 10 are common and Field (2012) claims that figures larger than 10 are problematic. In any case, the VIF figures for the model in Table 15 are not problematic. Table 16 reports the VIF figure of each predictor variable below.

Table 16 - VIF Values

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>VIF Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Balance</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relative Capabilities</td>
<td>1.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democracy</td>
<td>1.03</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7.10.2 Outliers and Influential Cases
As outlined in Research Design and Methodology Two, I generated standardised and studentised residuals, DFBETA and leverage figures to assess whether any particular observations were having an undue influence on the results of the regression model presented in Table 15. Regarding residuals, following the guidelines offered by Allison (1999), Gordon (2010) and Field (2012), no problem was found. No residual values exceeded commonly accepted thresholds and observations that approached such thresholds were very scarce among the data. However, eight observations were found to
have DFBETA values that exceeded accepted thresholds, while 20 observations had leverage values that exceeded such thresholds.

A blanket exclusion of observations that prove problematic under robustness testing is not necessarily a resolution to the problems posed. We cannot uncritically accept regression outputs when they change significantly with the inclusion/exclusion of certain observations. Outliers and influential observations, while having a, perhaps, undue influence on a model, are still representations of empirical occurrences that cannot be uncritically excluded.

However, if the output of a model is unchanging (robust) when excluding/including these cases, we gain confidence that the output is not the product of influential observations. Table 17 shows that this is the case here. The regression model shown in Table 15 is shown again in Model 1, Table 17. It is displayed alongside Model 2 of Table 17, in which all 21 problematic observations were removed.\textsuperscript{29} We see that there are not any significant changes between the two models. \textit{Balance} retains its statistically significant relationship with \textit{Force Used}, although at the lower threshold of .1, as opposed to .05. \textit{Relative Capabilities} also retains its statistically significant relationship with \textit{Force Used}, while \textit{Democracy} still registers as insignificant. In general, the magnitude of the correlations between predictor variables and \textit{Force Used} is slightly reduced.

\textsuperscript{29} There were eight observations with problematic DFBETA values and 20 observations with problematic leverage values. However, seven of these observations were problematic upon both statistics, meaning that there were 21 problematic observations in total.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Democracy</th>
<th>Model 1</th>
<th>Model 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Force Used</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democracy</td>
<td>-0.207</td>
<td>0.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(0.529)</td>
<td>(0.32-1.88)</td>
<td>(0.590)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relative Capabilities</td>
<td>0.385*</td>
<td>1.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(0.163)</td>
<td>(1.13-1.94)</td>
<td>(0.168)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balance</td>
<td>-0.336*</td>
<td>0.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(0.141)</td>
<td>(0.56-0.90)</td>
<td>(0.147)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>-1.010*</td>
<td>0.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(0.152)</td>
<td>(0.28-0.46)</td>
<td>(0.157)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observations</td>
<td>258</td>
<td>237</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Log Likelihood</td>
<td>-145.372</td>
<td>-132.628</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Likelihood Ratio</td>
<td>12.848</td>
<td>9.218</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R (Hosmer-Lemeshow)</td>
<td>0.043</td>
<td>0.034</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R (Cox-Snell)</td>
<td>0.049</td>
<td>0.035</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Akaike Inf. Crit.</td>
<td>298.744</td>
<td>273.256</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

7.11 Testing “Linearity of the Logit”
Like all regression models, logistic regression makes a number of assumptions about the data being used. One such assumption is that logistic regression transforms the data such that continuous independent variables have a linear relationship with the log-odds
of the dependent variable (Osborne, 2015). I tested the model depicted in Table 15 for linearity of the logit as described in Field (2012, pp. 344-345). It revealed that Relative Capabilities did not have a linear relationship with the log-odds of Force Used. In confronting this problem Menard (2010) suggests assessing whether the explanatory power gained from including Relative Capabilities in the model outweighs the issue of nonlinearity of the logit. During the multiple regression model-building conducted above, Relative Capabilities was found to be one of the variables that most contributed to increasing a model’s goodness of fit to the data. For this reason, I felt that there was a strong case to be made for leaving Relative Capabilities in the model.

However, the same statistically significant relationship still exists between Balance and Force Used when removing Relative Capabilities from the model shown in Table 15, leaving Democracy as the sole control variable. Thus, in either case Balance maintains its statistical significant relationship with Force Used. I mention Balance because while it is interesting and important to clarify the relationship between Relative Capabilities and Force Used, the most important thing here is to ensure that the relationship between Balance and Force Used is not a consequence of breaching assumptions of the model. It is the statistical significance of the relationship between Balance and Force Used upon which I concluded that H2 was supported by the multiple regression analysis conducted above. This relationship is still statistically significant when excluding Relative Capabilities from the model in Table 15.

An objection to removing Relative Capabilities might be that the model in Table 15 becomes too simple, omitting relevant variables, which is also a breach of the assumptions of logistic regression (Menard, 2010). I acknowledge this potential criticism and in the following section attempt to account for variables that are not necessarily as common in preceding studies as Relative Capabilities and Democracy, but which people may argue should be included in modelling the relationship between Balance and Force Used.

7.12 Alternative Explanations

In Research Design and Methodology Two I presented the control variables I would include in my statistical analysis. I explained that there is a methodological case against including control variables without a strong theoretical account of how they might act as spurious variables in an analysis (See Achen, 2002, 2005; Clarke, 2005). For that reason, I included Relative Capabilities and Democracy as control variables, given existing theory linking these variables to both a state’s use of force and the statements employed by
political leaders during times of dispute. These variables are among the most common included in statistical models found in preceding literature.

However, there are other variables that it seems intuitive to believe may be connected to both the US using armed force during disputes and the statements that presidents make in those contexts. The salience of a dispute (or the issue over which a dispute exists) to the American public and presidential administrations, and whether the US initiates the dispute in question, might both be relevant factors. These variables were often raised by colleagues when discussing my work with me, so I take them to be important matters to deal with in conducting the present analysis.

Functionally, these variables act the same as Democracy and Relative Capabilities; including them in statistical models allows for the relationship between Balance and Force Used to be examined while accounting for variables that might have their own influence upon whether the US uses armed force or whether presidential speech is more or less conciliatory or hostile. I include them here as alternative explanations, rather than in the preceding discussion of control variables in chapter five, due to there being limited precedent for including these variables in existing literature or limited theorising behind their inclusion where they are utilised. They are alternatives to those variables (such as Democracy and Relative Capabilities) that are most commonly included in statistical models or theoretical development in existing literature.

7.12.1 The Salience of Disputes
It seems safe to assume that not all disputes will be considered equally pressing or concerning to the US public or US presidential administrations. It could be argued that the perceived salience of a dispute in the public or political consciousness might influence both the public statements presidents make regarding a dispute and also the odds that they will use armed force. While Relative Capabilities and Democracy might capture some of what it is for a dispute to be salient if, for example, confronting a state with similar military capabilities increases the perception of a dispute being salient for US interests, it is likely these variables do not capture all of what it is for a dispute to be salient.

In an attempt to include the salience of each dispute in my analysis I ran the model displayed in Table 15, this time including the NYT Hits variable produced by McManus (2014) as an additional independent variable. NYT Hits measures the daily average of New York Times articles that were published about the adversary throughout the course of a dispute. The logic is that those disputes that are of particular concern in the US
should have a higher daily average than those that are considered of lesser significance. Indeed, “the *Times* staff arguably has a good sense of which issues are salient and also plays a role in making them salient” (McManus, 2014, p. 737). With the inclusion of this variable there are no substantive changes to what is reported in Table 15. Indeed, *NYT Hits* does not have a statistically significant relationship with *Force Used*. This is depicted in Table 18, presented following the next section on dispute initiation.\(^{30}\)

### 7.12.2 Dispute Initiation

A query I have had put to me is whether we would expect those disputes the US initiates to be disputes in which the president employs more hostile rhetoric and is more likely to employ armed force. While this idea is intuitive, I have struggled to find a theoretical basis stemming from the bargaining model of war literature, which I have tried to locate this thesis within, upon which to hold tightly to this claim. Within the bargaining model of war literature a state initiating a dispute with an act short of armed force, such as increased preparedness of the military, mobilisation of previously inactive units, border fortifications, etc (Jones, Bremer & Singer, 1996), could equally be understood as attempting to deter or compel an adversary short of using force, rather than a necessary step towards armed force being used.

However, given that data on dispute initiation is available to us it is worth including it here in our modelling. I include the dichotomous *US Side A* variable used by McManus (2014) in Table 18 to account for dispute initiation. Observations are coded with a “1” where the US undertook the first militarised action of a dispute. Those observations where the US’ adversary undertook the first militarised action are coded “0”.

\(^{30}\) Also following McManus (2014), I re-ran the statistical model depicted in Table 15 while excluding single-day disputes in an effort to exclude accidental or very minor disputes. No significant changes occurred.
### Table 18 - Including NYT Hits and US Side A

**Dependent variable:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Coefficient (Standard Error)</th>
<th>Odds Ratio (90% Confidence Interval)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Balance</td>
<td>-0.323() (**) (0.149)</td>
<td>0.72 (0.56-0.92)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democracy</td>
<td>-0.398 () () (0.552)</td>
<td>0.67 (0.26-1.62)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relative Capabilities</td>
<td>0.644() () (0.313)</td>
<td>1.90 (1.16-3.25)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>US Side A</td>
<td>1.580() (***) (0.316)</td>
<td>4.86 (2.92-8.27)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NYT Hits</td>
<td>0.257 () () (0.283)</td>
<td>1.29 (0.81-2.06)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>-1.864() (***) (0.255)</td>
<td>0.15 (0.10-0.23)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Observations</td>
<td>258</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Log Likelihood</td>
<td>-131.287</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Likelihood Ratio</td>
<td>41.018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R (Hosmer-Lemeshow)</td>
<td>0.135</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R²(Cox-Snell)</td>
<td>0.147</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Akaike Inf. Crit.</td>
<td>274.574</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: \(\*\) p<0.1; \(\*\*\*) p<0.05; \(\*\*\*\) p<0.01
Table 18 demonstrates that US Side A has a statistically significant positive relationship with Force Used. Thus, while the theoretical underpinnings of the bargaining model of war literature may not provide a theoretical basis upon which to expect that a state’s initiation of a dispute would be correlated with its use of armed force in that dispute, this is the empirical state of affairs. I discuss this in the following Discussion and Conclusions chapter. For now, the most important feature of Table 18 is that Balance retains its statistically significant relationship with Force Used when accounting for the possibility that both the US’ use of armed force and presidents’ use of conciliatory and hostile statements may be influenced by either the salience of a dispute or the US having initiated the dispute in question. Thus, H2 is still supported by the output of Table 18.

7.13 Concluding Remarks
In the course of this chapter I have conducted statistical analysis in order to test the relationship between US presidential statements of conciliation and hostility in dispute settings, and US use of armed force against dispute adversaries. I found that variation in the proportion of words accounted for by conciliatory statements was not associated with variation in US use of armed force. H1 was unsupported by my analysis, as Conciliatory Statements never demonstrated a statistically significant relationship with Force Used.

On the other hand, H2 was supported by this statistical analysis. Balance consistently exhibited a statistically significant negative relationship with Force Used. This was true even when accounting for potentially confounding variables. Moreover, models including Balance consistently performed better, in terms of model fit to the data on US use of force, than models including Hostile Statements or Conciliatory Statements. This supports the asserted importance of accounting for both conciliatory and hostile statements. Efforts were made, through robustness testing and engaging with alternative explanations, to increase our confidence in these findings.

In light of these findings there is a need for further discussion. In the following Discussion and Research Agenda chapter I recap the theoretical considerations that motivated my statistical analysis, discussing how the findings of this analysis apply to the literature and theory presented in the first half of this thesis. I also acknowledge the shortcomings of this project, discuss avenues for future research and highlight the contributions made herein.
8 Discussion and Conclusions

This thesis has been an attempt to understand whether US presidential use of conciliatory and hostile statements in dispute scenarios is related to the US’ use of armed force against its adversaries. I have focused on the conciliatory statements of presidents and the balance that presidents strike between conciliatory and hostile statements when addressing an adversary, as neither has received systematic scholarly attention before now. Approaching the conclusion of this thesis, I want to touch upon what has been learnt and what could be done in the future to further enhance our understanding of the statements used by political leaders during disputes; particularly how such statements’ relate to a state’s use of force against its adversaries.

Firstly, I recap the major findings of my empirical analysis and discuss the implications of these findings for existing literature and theory, as well as future research. I offer initial thoughts on why H1 is unsupported by the preceding inferential analysis despite the fact that, as argued in the Theoretical Framework, the notion that conciliatory presidential statements should be negatively associated with the US’ use of force is a logical extension of existing theory and empirical evidence on the relationship between political leadership speech and a state’s dispute behaviour. I also expand upon what the statistical support for H2 means for existing literature and research practice. Secondly, I acknowledge some of the shortcomings of this thesis. I explain why I was unable to collect more data on the dispute behaviour of the US’ adversaries and the attempts I made to account for the political nature of the foreign policy decision-making process in the US. I finish by, thirdly, offering brief concluding remarks that speak to the contributions and real world implications of this work.

8.1 Recapping Findings, Returning to the Literature and Turning to Future Research

The findings of my empirical analysis were reported just last chapter, so I do not want to simply repeat these here. Rather, I attempt to discern and discuss those findings that have the largest implications for existing literature and theory, as well as future research. I discuss the findings of my statistical analysis with regard to hypotheses one and two. I then move on to a discussion of the relationships that the variables Democracy, Relative Capabilities and US Side A exhibited with the dependent variable Force Used. Finally, I briefly discuss contemporary circumstances that create important avenues for future research.
8.1.1 The Inconsequential Nature of Conciliatory Statements

In the Literature Review and Theoretical Framework I discussed the body of literature that has theorised, and demonstrated empirically, that domestic publics punish political leaders for acting inconsistently with the statements they make during disputes. Recent survey studies (Levy et al., 2015; Tingley, 2014; Tomz, 2007) of the American public, for example, suggest that US presidents face electoral costs if they issue conciliatory statements about a dispute only to end up using armed force during the course of that dispute. I argued that a logical corollary of these arguments is:

H1: The use of conciliatory statements by a political leader during an MID will be negatively associated with their state using armed force in that MID.

My empirical analysis showed that this was not the case. Conciliatory statements were not reliably related to the US' use of force. Hostile statements, on the other hand were, exhibiting a positive relationship with the US’ use of force. Why exactly this is the case is, of course, hard to know with a high degree of confidence. I wish to discuss one possibility here.

8.1.1.1 The Nature of Audiences

I talked a lot in the Theoretical Framework about the audiences for a political leader’s statements. I focused on domestic publics and how they act as one audience for the public statements made by political leaders. I also touched on Anne Sartori’s (2002, 2005) work, which argues that all other states are, in theory, an audience to a political leader’s statements. States uninvolved in a given dispute are an audience to the statements made by the disputing parties, watching to see which state leaders are honest and which are not. These states may need this information should they end up disputing with either presently disputing party in the future.

This work is important, as it highlights two audiences that political leaders may account for when selecting the statements they make about an adversary: their own domestic public and other states in general. However, the considerations raised by Sartori (2002, 2005) and the literature covering domestic publics may not fully explain the incentives political leaders have in making conciliatory statements. In part, this is because they do not account for other audiences, among whom there is a lot of variation, which US
presidents may be cognisant of when selecting the statements by which they address adversaries.\textsuperscript{31}

I would argue that this is particularly problematic when considering disputes involving the US between 1950-2010. Audiences somewhat specific to the Cold War period may have provided US presidents with incentives to use conciliatory statements in a manner different to that suggested when theorising from a focus on audiences such as domestic publics or members of the international state system in general, as most existing literature does. This could help explain why H1 was not substantiated by my empirical analysis.

Much of the 1950-2010 period was characterised by the Cold War. The polarisation of much of the world between the USSR and US, their allies and Non-Aligned states during this period means there were a number of different audiences for the statements of US presidents. These audiences potentially offer different incentives with regard to presidential use of conciliatory statements than do the audiences that have been the focus of preceding literature, for example, the US's domestic public. Three potential audiences that may have had specific salience in the context of the Cold War are members of the NATO alliance, members of the Non-Aligned Movement and the domestic publics of communist states.

It is possible that US presidents’ use of conciliatory statements during disputes that occurred in the Cold War, particularly those in which the US confronted a communist state, were utilised to appeal to allies and strengthen alliance bonds, promote an image of the US as benevolent in comparison to the USSR among the Non-Aligned states or foment dissent among the publics of communist states. Essentially, conciliatory statements made in the context of a single dyadic MID could be seen as part of the US' larger propaganda effort with regard to the Cold War.\textsuperscript{32} If this is the case, then perhaps the finding that presidential conciliatory statements do not have a statistically significant relationship with the US’ use of force in dyadic MIDs is not so surprising. The audiences to which conciliatory statements appeal might extend beyond those typically used in forming theorised relationships between conciliatory statements and the US’ use

\textsuperscript{31}This is not a criticism of Sartori or any other author in the field, as no author suggests that their work is a complete explanation of the statements made by political leaders.

\textsuperscript{32}I do not use the word “propaganda” in the pejorative sense that is sometimes employed. I simply refer to broader US efforts to craft certain narratives about the Cold War and the parties involved therein.
of force. US presidential decisions to make conciliatory or hostile statements towards adversaries might be driven by a broader strategy of managing the Cold War, rather than by considerations regarding the individual MIDs that composed this broader conflict.

I would contend that this is more likely to be the case for conciliatory statements than hostile statements. One might argue that hostile statements could also have been a part of the US’ propaganda campaign that appealed to the Cold War audiences I mention above. However, while the US would seem to have incentives to present itself as militarily powerful, it does not seem likely that there would be much incentive to actively present itself as hostile, as defined herein. Promoting a hostile image of the US would likely play into adverserial governments’ efforts to paint the US as an aggressor, for example.

In mentioning these issues I am not attempting to make an argument about which audiences US presidents were targeting with their statements. Nor am I trying to make any claim about how audiences like members of the NATO Alliance, the Non-Aligned states or domestic publics of communist countries reacted to US propaganda or contradictions therein. In raising these issues I am simply trying to point out that there are audiences to US presidential speech that may influence presidents’ selections of statements by which to address adversaries, but which are currently under-theorised. It is possible that the incentive structure for using conciliatory and hostile statements differs and that these differences may have been particularly pronounced during the Cold War. This is one potential explanation for the finding that conciliatory statements are not reliably related to the US’ use of armed force, while hostile statements are. Or, in other words, this is one potential explanation for why H1 was not supported by my empirical analysis. Of course, comprehensively explaining why conciliatory statements do not have a statistically significant relationship with US use of armed force, while hostile statements do, requires more investigation and analysis than can be had in this concluding chapter. Explaining this difference should be a focus of future research.

8.1.2 The Balance of Statements: A Need to “Colour in” Presidential Speech
In the foregoing analysis I attempted to account for the effect that both the conciliatory and hostile statements of US presidents might have on the odds that the US would employ armed force against an adversary by way of the Balance variable. In the Literature Review I explained how hostile statements had been the focus of the bulk of preceding literature on the statements used by political leaders in the contexts of disputes. Accounts of conciliatory statements and the influence that these might have on
dispute outcomes or the behaviour of individual states within a dispute are rare. Efforts to account for both hostile and conciliatory statements are even less common.\textsuperscript{33}

I noted that an analysis true to US presidential use of public statements during disputes must account for both conciliatory and hostile statements. My \textit{Descriptive Statistics} chapter presented data demonstrating that in many MIDs US presidents use both conciliatory and hostile statements. I hypothesised:

H2: The more conciliatory the balance of conciliatory and hostile statements used by a political leader during a dispute, the less likely it will be that this leader’s state employs armed force. A logical corollary of this is that the more hostile the balance of conciliatory and hostile statements used by a political leader during a dispute, the more likely it will be that this leader’s state employs armed force.

H2 was supported by my inferential statistical analysis. \textit{Balance} was negatively associated with \textit{Force Used}, and logistic regression models incorporating \textit{Balance} performed better than those including \textit{Conciliatory Statements} or \textit{Hostile Statements}. That is to say that models including \textit{Balance} best fit the data on the US’s use of force in those dyadic MIDs in which it was involved between 1950-2010. However, as I acknowledged in section 7.6, the gains made when incorporating \textit{Balance} in regression models are only slight, compared to models including \textit{Hostile Statements}. This raises the question of whether the effort required to collect and code conciliatory statements, in order to be able to calculate the balance of conciliatory and hostile statements, is worth while. There are a number of reasons to think that it is.

First, while it has been a lot of work collecting and coding conciliatory statements, the worthiness of this effort is not defined solely by the analytic gains that this process has yielded. I made a concerted effort in the first half of this thesis to lay out the theoretical case for why conciliatory presidential statements and the balance of conciliatory and hostile presidential statements should have independent effects on whether the US used armed force against its adversaries. This theoretical case was implicit in a lot of the foregoing literature on domestic public reaction to political leaders’ handling of international disputes. Thus, collecting and coding conciliatory statements is not just about making analytic gains, but also about testing theoretical propositions. Doing so allows us to question existing theory and extend upon it, as, for example, I begin to do

\textsuperscript{33}Although very recently work such as that by Kydd and McManus (2017) has headed in this direction.
above when discussing possible reasons that conciliatory US presidential statements did not have a statistically significant relationship with the US using armed force.

Second, it is important to keep in mind that this thesis is a first attempt at developing a comprehensive dictionary of the statements by which US presidents express conciliation to their adversaries. In that sense, this work is exploratory. Work of this type has only recently begun to be produced. McManus (2014) was the first to attempt to compile such a dictionary of hostile statements, even though the study of the effects of hostile statements has a far greater tradition, as outlined in the Literature Review. The fact that the relationship between Balance and Force Used is stronger than the relationship between Hostile Statements and Force Used, and that regression models including Balance as an independent variable instead of Hostile Statements fit the data on US use of force better, represents a good start to this exploration. How much our analysis truly stands to gain from incorporating not just hostile statements but, rather, the balance of conciliatory and hostile statements, can only be known through ongoing effort to refine our collection, coding and measurement of presidential statements. I discuss possibilities in this regard directly below.

8.1.2.1 Methodological Extensions
To begin, a corpus representative of all public presidential speech, not just public speech in the context of militarised interstate disputes, should be conducted. Studies like this one and that of McManus (2014) have identified statements that presidents use to express conciliation or hostility in dispute settings. While this allows us to see in which disputes US presidents used more or less conciliatory and hostile statements, it does not tell us whether these statements appear more or less in dispute contexts than in other contexts in which presidents speak publicly. For example, while we can measure whether a president used more hostile statements in the context of Dispute A than in the context of Dispute B, we cannot tell whether presidential speech about either of these disputes contained more hostile statements than would be expected in any randomly selected piece of public presidential speech. The words and phrases that make up my dictionary of conciliatory statements and McManus’ (2014) dictionary of hostile statements no doubt appear in public presidential speech that has nothing to do with international disputes or foreign policy more broadly.

It is important to understand whether presidential use of the terms that have been included in McManus’ (2014) and my own dictionaries are used in a quantitatively and qualitatively different manner when comparing public presidential speech in the context of disputes with public presidential speech more generally. Quantitatively, the
conciliatory dictionary entries, for example, that appear far more frequently in the context of disputes than they do presidential speech as a whole are more likely to be statements presidents consciously use to try and express conciliation during disputes. Entries in the dictionary of conciliatory statements that appear in dispute speech at the same rate that they appear in all other public presidential speech may not be as indicative of a conciliatory expression, as they appear no more frequently in the contexts of disputes than they would in any other randomly selected body of presidential speech. Qualitatively, analysing presidential speech in non-dispute contexts would help to understand which words and phrases included in the dictionary of conciliatory statements, for example, are used in a conciliatory manner across contexts, and which dictionary entries might have other meanings in other contexts. Additionally, this quantitative and qualitative analysis would likely highlight conciliatory and hostile words or phrases not yet identified.

On top of this, words or phrases used by presidents to express conciliation or hostility could be identified using linguistics resources such as WordNet (Fellbaum, 1998). WordNet has similar characteristics to a thesaurus, but is more elaborate; it links not only words—strings of letters—but also specific senses of words (Fellbaum, 1998). In other words, WordNet (Fellbaum, 1998) not only groups words together, but also groups specific meanings of words based on meaning similarity. This resource could be searched using words included in my dictionary of conciliatory statements or McManus’ (2014) dictionary of hostile statements, and would return words of similar meaning. After analysing these words in the context of US presidential speech we might find that some of these words need to be included in the existing dictionaries of conciliatory and hostile statements.

The need to analyse a corpus representative of all public presidential speech and to utilise resources such as WordNet to refine and extend our knowledge of how presidents express conciliation or hostility alludes to a broader need to engage with linguistics and certain methodological techniques therein. Corpus linguistics techniques represent one obvious starting point. Many principles of this approach to linguistics are already implicit in studies such as my own and McManus’ (2014).34 For example, corpus linguistics makes extensive use of computers for analysis, just as I used AntConc (Anthony, 2014) to calculate values of my independent variables (see section 5.1.2.1). Yet, corpus linguistics also requires qualitative analysis similar to that I conducted when

34 See Biber et al. (1998) for an introduction to corpus linguistics.
constructing my dictionary of conciliatory statements (see section 4.4) and ensuring that my coding process was rigorous (see section 4.5). Only through further work to expand our understanding of which statements presidents use to express conciliation and hostility, and to refine our measurement of their occurrence in presidential speech, can we properly begin to understand the benefit, or lack there of, of measuring the balance of conciliatory and hostile presidential statements, rather than hostile statements alone.

8.1.2.2 **Broader Benefits of Analysing the Balance of Statements**

As stated above, the analytic gains of measuring the balance of conciliatory and hostile presidential statements, as opposed to hostile statements alone, are not the only benefit of expanding our inquiry beyond hostile statements. Moving away from a focus on hostile statements to a focus on the multifaceted nature of presidential statements would add to, and challenge, existing literature and theory.

The first benefit is simply descriptive. This project represents a first attempt at trying to compile the statements by which US presidents express conciliation to adversaries. Understanding how presidents do this is, for those involved in presidential studies or US foreign policy, interesting in and of itself. Such information allows us to answer questions about which presidents were most conciliatory in their speech towards adversaries, or which adversaries of the US were spoken of in a particularly conciliatory fashion, for example.

Second, such an approach invites critical engagement with assumptions and conventions in existing literature, and, as such, promotes theory-building. For the most part, the public statements of US presidents have been read with a mind to collecting hostile statements; researchers deemed these to be most important with regard to political leaders' management of international disputes. Adopting a perspective that explicitly recognises that presidents use different types of statements to talk about an adversary within a single dispute, and strike a different balance between these statements across the many disputes in which each president is involved, suggests a reversed process in which the public speech of political leaders is read in order to find those types of statements, rhetorical techniques, etc, that are commonplace. Statistical support for H2 indicates that analytic gains can be made when analysing statements beyond those expressing hostility. However, of equal importance, explorations of presidential speech in which hostile statements are not the sole focus allow for theory-building in which presidential statements are not treated as homogenous or exclusively hostile. Gaining a greater descriptive understanding of the complexity of presidential
statements is the first necessary step in developing more nuanced theorised connections between these statements, and pertinent subcategories of these statements, and the US’ dispute behaviour.

Finally, acknowledging that there are multiple types of statements employed by presidents during disputes, and that these types of statements are balanced differently in different disputes, is more in line with the political reality of how presidential statements are determined. The bargaining model of war literature cited in the Literature Review assumes a certain mode of decision-making. “Our theory is...about how they [people] behave given their goals. It is about the instrumental selection of actions to maximise expected utility given particular aims”, state Bueno de Mesquita and Lalman, (1992, p. 18). In other words, bargaining model of war literature has an explicit theory of action. Yet, there is not a particularly strong recognition of the context in which these actions take place.

Each president has limited, although increasing, time and opportunity to convey the messages that they want to promote publicly. The inclusion of one topic, or one type of statement in a presidential speech, for example, leaves less space for another topic or another type of statement to be included. The decision of what to include is fundamentally a political decision, something that the abstracted descriptions such as that offered by Bueno de Mesquita and Lalman (1992, p. 18) can obscure. “Balance” is both a noun and a verb. The decision to label my primary independent variable of interest, “balance”, was not coincidental in this regard. It is intended to measure the balance (used as a noun) of conciliatory and hostile residential statements, as well as acknowledge that presidents and others actively balance (used as a verb) the statements and broader messages of which all presidential speech is composed.

While the literature cited in the Literature Review has a lot to say about the audiences of presidential statements, it does not have much to say when it comes to the creators of those statements. The literature from which this thesis proceeds is surprisingly bare when it comes to an explanation of how presidential administrations, and certain individuals within them, work to form the speeches and talking points of a president. Understanding these processes would allow for a more accurate account of the reality of how presidents select the statements that they make about dispute adversaries.

8.1.3 Adversary Political System, Relative Capabilities and Dispute Initiation

My statistical analysis included variables that had a history of being controlled for in preceding literature. As outlined in section 5.1.3 there are theoretical reasons to suspect
that these variables may be related to both a president’s selection of the statements they use to address an adversary, as well as the US’ use of force against adversaries. I also included variables that helped to rule out alternative explanations for the statistically significant relationship between Balance and Force Used that the results of my statistical analysis demonstrated. While I did not hypothesise relationships between these variables and the dependent variable, Force Used, in the following I reiterate the findings my statistical analysis yielded in this regard. Focusing on Democracy, Relative Capabilities and US Side A, I briefly discuss implications for existing theory and literature as well as difficulties in interpreting these findings.

8.1.3.1 Democracy

Democracy was found to have an insignificant relationship with Force Used. This contrasts one of the most well established findings of international relations (Haavard, et al., 2018): that democracies do not war with one another. More to the point of this thesis, it is at odds with corresponding research that finds that “When disputes do emerge, democratic dyads choose more peaceful processes of dispute settlement than do other pairings of states” (Bueno de Mesquita et al., 1999, p. 791). This is interesting and calls for further investigation that cannot be adequately conducted within the confines of this thesis. However, some preliminary thoughts can be given.

Of the 268 dyadic MIDs analysed in this study, only 20 involve the US confronting another democracy. This small sample size makes interpretation of Democracy’s statistical insignificance difficult. It also speaks to the need to conceptualise the connection between two phenomena: the occurrence of disputes between democracies and the use of force between democracies. As Fearon (1994b) has pointed out, states may be strategic in selecting the disputes that they enter into. If democratic states are less inclined to enter into disputes with fellow democracies, then those disputes in which they do so may be disputes in which they are highly committed to success. If states that are highly committed to success are less likely to be satisfied with the range of outcomes that a non-military solution could yield, then they may be more inclined to use military force. This could explain both the small number of disputes in which the US confronted a democracy and the lack of a statistically significant negative relationship between a democratic rival and US’ use of force.

More concretely, there are simply differences in the data used in this study, compared to those data used in many of the studies that focus on conflict between democracies. Some use different datasets of international disputes (see Dixon, 1994). Others focus on different dependent variables than that studied here. For example, Mousseau (1998)
found that dyadic MIDs involving democratic dyads were more likely to be settled by compromise than dyads of another nature. Raymond (1994) found that democratic dyads were more likely to submit their disputes to third-party mediation than dyads involving zero or one democracies. However, while these findings speak to the relationship between democratic dyads and peaceful dispute settlement in one sense, they do not specifically speak to a democracy's use of force. Having found that democratic dyads are more likely to resolve their disputes via compromise, Mousseau (1998, p. 214) reminds the reader that compromise is “not necessarily peaceful”; it is entirely consistent that a dispute can be settled via compromise after one or both parties have employed armed force.

The finding that Democracy was not statistically significant in its relationship with Force Used may be due to these differences in focus to previous scholarship that has produced results supporting the democratic peace thesis. However, it is important to note that this study is not the only one to have found that a rival democracy was not a statistically significant predictor of dispute behaviour or outcomes. McManus (2014), for example, found that the presence of a rival democracy was not statistically significant in relation to the extent that dispute outcomes favoured the US.

8.1.3.2 Relative Capabilities

My empirical testing showed that increases in Relative Capabilities were consistently associated with increased odds of the US using armed force. The US was around 50% more likely to use armed force per one standard deviation increase in its capabilities relative to its adversaries. The general finding that being favoured by the balance of power increases the odds of a state using armed force is in line with the empirical work of McManus' (2014) and Sartori (2005).

Including Relative Capabilities in an analysis is essentially an attempt to account for the balance of power between states. There are a number of ways of measuring this, however. Preceding statistical analysis (see Sartori, 2005) found that the extent of covariation between a state's relative capabilities and its use of force against adversaries diminished when including a variable that accounted for whether each state in a dispute was a major power or not. Sartori (2005, p. 115) argues that this is probably due to the fact that variables that measure major power status and relative capabilities likely measure the same phenomenon, since “a large part of what constitutes being a major power is being militarily strong”. Therefore, a variable measuring major power status may “mop up” the impact of relative capabilities (Sartori, 2005, p. 115).
Given some of the contextual factors about the time period under analysis and my focus on the US, I would suggest that future research account for disputing parties’ possession of nuclear weapons. My reasons are similar to those outlined by Sartori (2005). The possession of nuclear weapons is somewhat captured by Relative Capabilities, due to this variable measuring military expenditure, for example (Singer, Bremer and Stuckey, 1972). However, those states that had capabilities comparable to the US throughout the time period observed (China and the USSR are two prime examples) are also those states that possessed nuclear weapons for the majority of the timespan. Separating out the effects of general capabilities from nuclear capabilities would be beneficial.

8.1.3.3 Dispute Initiation
Dispute initiation was measured and accounted for in my statistical analysis by US Side A, a dichotomous measure of whether the US undertook the first militarised action of a dispute. I only dealt with US Side A briefly in my empirical analysis. Yet, it is one of the variables that most dramatically influence the odds that the US will use armed force (see Table 18). This seems largely due to the nature of the MID Dataset data. Of the 268 observations analysed herein, there are 58 cases in which the US both initiated a dispute and used armed force in the course of that dispute. In 46 of these cases the US initiated the dispute by using armed force. In other words, the action of initiating a dispute and using force against an adversary are often one and the same.

As discussed in section 5.1.2.1, this is one of the reasons why I also analysed the statements that US presidents made about an adversary in the 60 days prior to a dispute beginning. In disputes such as the ones described above, there is no time period that is both after the start date of the dispute and prior to force being used. Analysing the statements presidents made about an adversary in the 60 days prior to disputes allowed me to analyse the role that presidential statements played in explaining the US’ use of force in those disputes where the first action the US took was to use armed force.

The 46 dyadic disputes described above have notable differences to the other disputes in the MID data. For example, the average duration of these disputes is 106 days, compared to the 154-day average of all other dyadic MIDs. This average drops to 68 days when excluding one dyadic MID in which the US breached Pakistani territory to intermittently conduct drones strikes against Taliban and Al-Qaeda targets therein over the course of 1510 days.

Moreover, these disputes seem to disproportionately represent minor or accidental disputes. For example, at least seven of these disputes are cases in which the US Coast
Guard seized or fired upon boats (often commercial) of another state. I took steps to ensure that the inclusion of these cases did not influence the main findings of my inferential analysis. I used the variable NYT Hits to try to account for the salience of disputes and found that doing so did not alter the findings of my statistical modelling. Following McManus (2014) I also re-ran my statistical analysis excluding single-day disputes, in an attempt to remove minor and accidental disputes. Again the results of my analysis did not undergo any significant changes. However, while these steps help to ensure that the 46 observations I identify above are not having an undue effect on the results of my inferential analysis, as they apply to my hypotheses, they do not help to properly explain the effect that these types of disputes have on the relationship between the US’ initiation of a dispute and the US’ use of force in a dispute. Qualitative research is needed to properly understand whether those disputes in which the US initiates a dispute with an act of force commonly exhibit different characteristics to other MIDs.

8.1.4 Contemporary Circumstances and Future Research Possibilities

As indicated in the introduction to this thesis, contemporary events such as the election of Donald Trump have drawn attention to the role that political leaders’ public statements may play in determining the course of international affairs. I wish to briefly discuss one contemporary trend that challenges my research and provides fertile ground for future scholarship. While this trend applies to many political leaders, I talk largely in relation to Trump, as he is emblematic of this trend.

The use of social media platforms such as Twitter by political leaders raises questions of which public statements can be analysed. McManus (2014, p.731) argues that written statements “issued by the White House but not spoken by the president are less likely to be important and directly associated with the president.” I follow the same logic herein. However, it is hard to know whether this position on verbal versus written statements will be tenable moving forward. Are, for example, the written tweets of political leaders important statements that are closely associated with those that tweet them or, more specifically, those whose Twitter account they are made from?

Questions such as this do not detract from studies such as this one or that of McManus (2014) that focus exclusively on verbal statements. Verbal statements used by political leaders in the context of international disputes are plentiful and, as I have argued throughout the above, it is worth understanding the relationship between such statements and the policies that states employ when engaging dispute adversaries. However, contemporary trends suggest that a future course of fruitful research would be to analyse the role of statements made on platforms different to those analysed herein.
To do so would, naturally, involve challenges, the first of which may well be around matters of authorship. There have been a number of reports demonstrating that Trump's tweets are the work of a team of individuals, not Trump alone (see Draper, 2018; Linkskey, 2018; Robinson, 2016). This raises questions of whether only tweets, and social media postings in general, that Trump himself authors should be included in an analysis of presidential statements. The tweets that appear on the @realDonaldTrump may not be written by Trump, but they are associated with the President and, indeed, deliberately immitate his style of speech (Linkskey, 2018).

Moreover, analysing these statements would likely require significant data collection on the words and phrases by which Trump expresses conciliatory and hostile sentiments on Twitter and whether these words and phrases are significantly different than the words or phrases used in other contexts, such as public addresses and personal engagements with the press. In essence, it cannot be assumed that the entries in my dictionary of conciliatory statements, and those in Mcmanus' (2014) dictionary of hostile statements, can be used to search for concilatory or hostile statements in Trump's tweets. The funadmental nature of social media platforms such as Twitter, e.g. the limiting of tweets to 280 characters, as well as potentially different social conventions with regard to communicating via tweet, versus communicating in person, mean that work would be required to understand descriptive differences between tweeting and speaking. This is a prerequisite to being able to analytically differentiate, for example, the relationship between social media statements and use of armed force against adversaries and the relationship between verbal statements and the use of armed force. Such an enquiry would be a valuable extension of Mcmanus' (2017) work exploring the relationship between hostile statements, dispute outcomes and the context in which hostile statements are made (e.g speeches to the nation versus interactions with the press).

8.2 Acknowledging Limitations
Like all scholarship this thesis has a number of limitations. I would like to candidly discuss these. In the following I note what I consider to be the most significant shortcomings of this thesis and explain how I tried to rectify them or why I could not do so.

8.2.1 Opponent Behaviour
The bargaining model of war, by definition, recognises that to explain conflict between states the decision-making processes of multiple parties need to be understood and accounted for (Powell, 2002; Reiter, 2003; Wagner, 2000). Why, the question is, can
states at times not find a mutually acceptable state of affairs (e.g. division of territory) without resorting to armed force? The construction of the MID Dataset implicitly recognises the fact that the dispute behaviour of State A is, at least in part, a response to the behaviour of State B. Beginning with later editions of the MID Dataset (see Ghosn et al., 2004), event data was collected that allowed researchers to chronologically order the actions of all participating states, and thus trace escalatory or de-escalatory processes as they unfolded back-and-forth between states.

Despite this reality, this thesis has only accounted for the behaviour of one state in a disputing dyad – the US. I tested to see whether variation in US presidential statements made about US adversaries was correlated with variation in US use of armed force against those adversaries. I did not account for the behaviour of the US’ adversaries.

I would argue that this is an issue more on methodological grounds than on theoretical grounds.\(^{35}\) I developed the hypotheses presented in the *Theoretical Framework* based on theoretical and empirical literature that makes no appeal to the behaviour of a state’s adversary. For example, much of my theoretical discussion was dedicated to the notion of audience costs. The central contention in this literature is that political leaders face costs for acting in a manner contrary to the statements they make about adversaries because they will lose electorate support in doing so (see Fearon, 1994, Levy et al., 2015; Smith, 1998; Tingley, 2014; Tomz, 2007). This literature theoretically and empirically examines the behaviour of a state’s domestic public, not a state’s adversaries.

I would frame this issue as one of variable omission. One assumption of logistic regression (and other forms of regression analysis) is that all relevant variables are included in an analysis (Menard, 2010). Variables controlling for the behaviour of the US’ adversary would be included herein, ideally. In particular, variables that measured both the statements that adversarial leaders made about the US and the US’ adversaries’ use of force would be included, as it seems plausible that variation in either of these might affect the US president’s own statements about the adversary and the odds that the US would employ force against that adversary.

Variables measuring the statements of US adversaries and the use of force by US adversaries were not included due to data inaccessibility. Regarding the statements of US adversaries, for many states that the US experienced a dyadic MID with between 1950-2010 there is simply no comprehensive data on the public statements made by

\[^{35}\text{Although, of course, the two are connected.}\]
political leaders. The Public Papers of the Presidents is a relatively unique resource. In instances where adversarial leaders used languages other than, or in addition to, English, access would be doubly difficult.

Collecting data on adversaries’ use of armed force was also unrealistic. I explained in section 4.2.2 that data recording specific militarised incidents within MIDs only exists for MIDs occurring between 1993-2010. For disputes prior to 1993 I knew whether the US had used armed force in the course of a dispute, but not on which date it had done so. The same was true of US adversaries. I collected information on when the US had first used force in disputes prior to 1993, as described in section 4.2.2. However, in order to know whether the US’ use of force was influenced by an adversary’s use of force I would need to know who used force first, meaning I would also need to know when the adversary of each dispute had used armed force.

Unfortunately, this information was far more difficult to come across for US adversaries than it was for the US itself, even consulting the resources listed in footnote 14. I believe this is largely driven by two factors. The first is the fact that the US is, and was during the period of observation, a superpower. The actions of powerful nations seem to have garnered more attention in international relations scholarship and military histories, especially within the Western academy. Relatedly, the second is the nature of the resources I have access to as an English-speaking PhD candidate. Key resources I consulted in trying to determine on which date each disputing party used armed force, such as the New York Times, likely have greater access to information on the US’ use of force in their reporting than they do information on the use of force by adversarial nations. Due to their largely US-based readership they may also have incentives to report more on the actions of the US, rather than its adversaries. For these reasons I was unable to include variables accounting for the statements of adversarial leaders or an adversary’s use of force in my analysis. I am not alone in this regard. For example, McManus (2014) was unable to account for hostile statements made by US adversaries in her analysis of hostile presidential statements.

8.2.2 An Ignorance of Political Process?
An objection to the finding that the balance of hostile and conciliatory presidential statements and the US’ use of force are related could be that both US presidential statements about an adversary and the US’ use of force against an adversary are the result of a prior policy decision. I mentioned above that a lot of the bargaining model of war literature does not contain an analysis of the political institutions in which policy decisions are made. The literature assumes political leaders’ “instrumental selection of
actions to maximise expected utility given particular aims” (Bueno de Mesquita and Lalman, 1992, p. 18). However, it ignores the institutional context in which both preferences and the expected utility of certain policies are formed.

It is possible that US presidents and others in the policy-making process decide on whether the president will use hostile or conciliatory statements about an adversary prior to the president talking about the adversary at all. Likewise, the decision over whether the US will, or is at least willing to, use force against an adversary could be made long before such an act occurs. If this is the case then the finding that the balance of US presidential statements is related to the US’ use of force could be misleading. US use of force could be determined by a set of prior policy decisions that also determined the nature of the statements the president would make about an adversary.

It is not possible to directly account for the types of decisions I mention above in my statistical analysis. The private nature of much of the US’ foreign policy making process prevents the collection (certainly in any systematic way for the 268 dyadic MIDs analysed) of the information that would be required to make a determination on these matters. I suggest, however, that my control variables and those variables I included to account for alternative explanations for the relationship between Balance and Force Used, assist in mitigating these problems.

The control variables, Democracy and Relative Capabilities, account for exactly those factors that existing literature leads us to believe will influence policy-makers’ decisions over whether to use force against an adversary or not, as discussed in section 5.1.3. Assuming that policy-makers’ decisions over whether to use force are not completely random but, rather, strategic and, therefore, driven by an analysis of an adversary’s political system or relative strength, then by including Democracy and Relative Capabilities in my analysis the foreign policy decision-making process is indirectly accounted for.

Similarly, US Side A is an attempt to account for the process of policy-making. In discussing US Side A in section 7.12.2 I mentioned that a number of colleagues had suggested to me that a state having initiated a dispute might be positively correlated with it using force during that dispute. Their belief was not that the act of initiating a dispute made using force more likely, but that the act of initiating a dispute was indicative of a related decision by policy-makers that they were willing to use force in this instance.
8.2.3 Coercive Practices Other Than the Use of Force

It needs to be made clear that the use of armed force does not account for the entire set of coercive practices that a state, and the US in particular, has at its disposal in dealing with adversaries. There are clearly, for example, economic practices that constitute attempted coercion. As a recent example, much has been made of the current “trade war” between China and the US (see Pham, 2018; Klein, 2018). These alternative coercive practices are disproportionately available to powerful states, such as the US, that have more economic and diplomatic clout than the “average” state. This, again, highlights, that the findings herein cannot be generalised to states beyond the US.

The above does not discredit my choice of armed force as a dependent variable, it simply suggests that future research on the public statements of political leaders should attempt to understand the relationship between these public statements and coercive policies other than the use of armed force. In this instance, in the context of PhD research in which I had already undertaken extensive data collection concerning the independent variable, Conciliatory Statements (see chapter 4), it was not feasible to also assemble data on numerous dependent variables (i.e. different coercive practices) and test the relationships between these dependent variables and public presidential statements. Among the many coercive practices states employ, the use of armed force against an adversary demarcates a clear “red line”, exceeding other levels of hostility. Understanding the relationship between public US presidential statements and the use of armed force by the US represents a starting point from which to explore the relationship between public statements and other forms of coercion.

8.3 Contributions and Final Concluding Remarks

That I am aware of, this thesis represents the first systematic investigation of conciliatory statements used by US presidents while in dispute. It is also the first to try to account for the balance of conciliatory and hostile statements made in these contexts, and the effect that this balance of statements might have on the odds that the US uses force against its adversaries. In doing so this thesis makes a number of contributions to the field.

First, this thesis expands upon widely accepted theory held by many bargaining model of war scholars. I demonstrated that the theoretical arguments used to ground preceding investigations into hostile statements of state leaders were equally applicable to conciliatory statements. Following the work of Levy et al. (2015), Tingley (2014) and Tomz (2007) I demonstrated that there were no theoretical reasons to believe that audience costs applied only in cases where state leaders acted inconsistently with
hostile statements. Thus this thesis challenges existing literature, demonstrating that audience cost arguments having been defined in terms of hostile statements (Levy et al., 2015) is a matter of scholarly convention, rather than theoretical principle.

Second, the work conducted herein has yielded comprehensive data on US presidential statements of conciliation. The dictionary of conciliatory statements (See Appendix A1) I have composed is a first attempt at understanding what US presidents have said to express conciliation to adversaries, let alone to understand what effect these statements might have on the US’ use of force against these adversaries. Collecting and coding these statements required reading over 1000 documents each representing a different public appearance by a US president. Due to lacking data on when the US first used force in disputes prior to 1993, it also meant consulting secondary resources to establish the exact date that the US first used force in 50 dyadic MID s. Furthermore, in order to ensure that the statements included in my dictionary were reliably conciliatory, I undertook a number of steps, including an inter-coder reliability process, to ensure that dictionary entries were not the result of personal bias or interpretation.

Finally, I conducted the first large-n study in which the balance of conciliatory and hostile statements made by US presidents was statistically tested for a relationship with the US’ use of force. I found that where the balance of statements was more favourable to conciliatory speech, the odds of the US using armed force were decreased. This relationship was more statistically robust than when measuring presidential statements accounting for only hostile statements, as previous research had usually done.

I would like to conclude by reiterating that the motivations, meanings and consequences of US presidential statements are very much part of an ongoing debate. This debate has recently entered the public domain, largely due to the election of Donald Trump as US president. As I write this conclusion Trump is about to meet with Kim Jong-un. I mentioned in my introductory chapter that Trump had publicly expressed a willingness to attend such a meeting more than a year ago (Diamond and Cohen, 2017). Did Trump’s statements expressing his willingness to meet have an independent effect on the fact that the meeting now seems destined to happen? I am not sure. What I am confident about is that while the public statements made by political leaders are not always as news-worthy as many of the events that international relations and political science scholars study, such as military coups, economic booms and busts, peacekeeping operations, electoral defeats and victories, they represent a commonplace phenomena in international politics. The fact that they are an everyday occurrence, unlike the events
listed above, is exactly why we need to understand what influence they have on, for example, a state’s use of force against its adversaries. I hope this thesis has made some inroads to that end.
9 Bibliography


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10 Appendix

10.1 A1 – Dictionary of Conciliatory Statements

Accept peace

Accommodation

Accord

Accords

Add to the tensions

Advance peace

Agreeable

Agreed framework

Agreed principles

Agreed to delay action

Agree to sign

Agree to the terms

Armaments must also be controlled

Alleviation of tension

Amicable relations

Anyone who desires war these days is insane

Arms control

Arms race

Avoid any bloodshed

Avoid bloodshed

Avoid further conflict

Avoid the level of atrocity and death
Ban all tests

Bargaining table

Been a friend

Beneficial relations are possible

Better future

Better Relations

Better relationship

Better way than resort to force

Breach the peace

Brighter and better future

Bring about a peace

Bring an end to that brutal war

Bringing Peace

Bringing peace there

Bring peace

Bring some peace

Bring the war to an end

Broader understanding

Build peace

Cannot be imposed by force

Carry out the agreements

Ceasefire

Cease-fire

Cessation of hostilities
Chance to talk
Collaboration
Commission
Commitment to the peace
Common effort
Common ground
Common interest
Community of nations
Concrete agreements
Conference table
Cooperate
Cooperative effort
Conciliation
Confer
Consider any feasible and enforceable proposal
Constructive
Continue to talk
Continuing communication
Control of force
Could be discussed
Could be progress
Decreasing tensions
Defensive
Defuse
Defusing
Desirable to reach an agreement
Devoted to peace
Dialog
Diplomacy
Diplomatic
Diplomatically
Direct conflict
Disarmament
Discussed profitably
Discussing
Discussions
Do not have to kill
Do not want war
Don't like to use military force
Don't want to have any more fighting
Do not want a conflict
Do their work
Durable peace
Earnestly
Ease the situation
Ease the tensions
Easing of tensions
Easing tensions
Economic assistance
Effective agreements
Ending the violence
End of hostilities
End the brutal war
End the conflict
End the violence
End the fighting
End to overt hostilities
End to testing
End to the arms race
End to the conflict
End to the war
Enhances our relationship
Ensure peace
Enter the talks
Equitable solution
Every alternative was explored
Every possible opportunity
Every single avenue
Exchange of visits
Exchange program
Exchanges are very useful
Exchanges of scientists
Explore every avenue

Faithfully

Find a way to work with

Force can never be the first answer

Force shall not be used

Forward in peace

Framework agreement

Fruitful meetings

Fulfill America's commitment

Fulfill our commitment

Genuine agreement

Genuine effort

Genuine peace

Give everybody time

Give them a chance

Go forward together

Go forward without bloodshed

Good agreement

Good faith

Good meetings

Good relationship

Hand of friendship

Happy solution

Harmonious
Have no argument

Have not been triggerhappy

Helped them

Help them

Holding out a hand

honest advance

Honest discussion

Honesty of our intentions

Honorable

Hopeful approach

Hoping that we will not have to use force

Hunger for peace

I have been far from triggerhappy

Impartial tribunal

Implementing the agreement

Implement the agreement

Important agreement

Important to talk

Initiative for peace

Interested in any exchanges

Interests of peace

Interim settlement

International community

Into the fold
Invite
Jaw, jaw
Joint effort
Join the world
Just peace
Just settlement
Just solution
Just solutions
Keep open lines of communication
Keep peace
Keeping the peace
Keep the peace
Lasting peace
Lasting prosperity
Lasting settlement
Legal channel
Legalities
Legitimate political bargaining
Lessening of tensions
Lessening tensions
Lessen the chance of conflict
Lifting the sanctions
Lift the sanctions
Longstanding relationship
Long-standing relationship
Lower tensions
Maintain peace
Maintain relations
Maintain the peace
Maintenance of peace
Mandate for peace
Mediators
Meeting of heads of state
Moderate
Moral decency
Moral Persuasion
More visits by our people
Move forward
Mutual understanding
Negotiate
Negotiated
Negotiating
Negotiation
Negotiations
Negotiators
Never resort to force
Nobody wants to use force
No lasting pique
Nonbelligerent

Nonviolent

No one wants a battle

No other means of protecting our rights

No personal animosity

Normal relationships

Not going to be any war

Not going to be any winner of the next war

Not going to start a war

Not going to write off

Not out to attack anyone

Not to resort to force

Not trying to provoke

No victor, no vanquished

Not wedded to a policy of hostility

Nuclear arms race

Nuclear test ban

Olive branch

Open the door

Opens the door

Opportunity to stop a war

Opposed to the use of force

Our stake in peace

Ought to be talked about
Path to peace
Patience
Patient
Peaceable
Peaceably inclined
Peace agreement
Peace approach
Peace can be protected
Peace effort
Peace force
Peace prevail
Peaceful action
Peaceful arrangements
Peaceful competition
Peaceful conclusion
Peaceful influence
Peaceful intentions
Peacefully
Peaceful means
Peaceful one
Peaceful relations
Peaceful relationship
Peaceful resolution
Peaceful solution
Peaceful ventures
Peace implementation
Peace is better than war
Peacekeeping process
Peace process
Peace talks
Peaceful and prosperous
Peaceful future
Peaceful manner
Peaceful solutions
Peaceful way
Peaceful way forward
Permanent peace
Permanent peace with justice
Persuaded
Pleasant relationship
Political settlement
Political solution
Positive relationship
Pray for peace
Prefers compliance to conflict
Prepared always to consider
Prepared to discuss
Prepared to do our part
Prepared to meet
Preserve the peace
Preserving the peace
Press for peace
Prevent war
Problems can be solved
Proceed with care
Profitable chances for talking
Promise of peace
Promote lasting peace
Promote peace
Promote the cause of peace
Promoting peace and stability
Proposals
Protected the peace
Provoke some kind of increased hostility
Reach agreement
Reach an agreement
Reach out
Ready to concede
Ready to discuss
Ready to help
Ready to participate
Ready to see if the sinner reforms
Ready to sign
Ready to support
Ready to talk
Reappraise its policies
Reasonable basis
Reasonable proposal
Reason with him
Reciprocal
Reconcile
Reconciliation
Reduce tension
Reduce tensions
Reduce the likelihood of violence
Reduce those differences
Reduction in arms
Reduction of tensions
Regret any misunderstandings
Relaxation of world tension
Relief from the sanctions
Reluctant to impose
Removes a serious obstacle
Renunciation of force
Renunciation of the use of force
Resolve the conflict
Restore a relationship

Restore peace

Restrainted

Restrain hostile developments

Restraint

Resume the discussion

Return to the talks

Right thing to do

Securing peace

Securing the peace

Seek peace

See the fighting stop

Senseless bloodshed

Settle it

Settlement of differences

Settle this problem

Sit down and talk

Special assistance

Stable peace

Stop the conflict

Stop the killing

Stop the violence

Strongly support

Struggle for peace
Substantial assistance
Support the bilateral efforts
Talks are ongoing
Talks resume
Tensions under control
Tensions will be lessened
Test ban treaty
The carrots and the sticks
Tried to act moderately
Tried to understand
Trying to act with circumspection
United states will not be guilty of aggression
Unite us
Useful exchange
Valued
Violence can end for good
Want peace
Welcome
Willing to join with
Willing to listen
Willing to meet
Willing to work out with them
Without any confrontation
Without bloodshed
Without military action

Working for peace

Work our way through this

Worked out

Work these things out

Work through this difficult issue

Work with us

Worthwhile agreement

10.2 A2 – Instructions for Intercoder Reliability Process

Context

For my thesis I have established a “dictionary” of conciliatory words or phrases used by US Presidents while in disputes with other countries. I selected these words or phrases from a random sample of all presidential speeches made while in dispute scenarios between 1950 and 2010.

As the occurrence of these words or phrases in the speeches of US Presidents will be used to calculate how conciliatory their speech towards adversaries is, it is important that we can be confident the words or phrases included in my dictionary are conciliatory. Inter-coder reliability is an important part of ensuring this.

Task

Conciliatory words/phrases are defined as...

\[\text{any verbal statement made by a state's political leader that directly refers to the dispute in question and, a) expresses a willingness, preference or commitment to interact with the other party to the dispute in a non-coercive manner, and/or, b) expresses a willingness, preference or commitment to not interact with the other party to the dispute in a coercive manner.}\]

Hostile words/phrases are defined in Roseanne McManus’ (2014) work as;

1. Negative characterisations, denouncements or complaints about the status quo or another state’s behavior.
2. Concrete demands or concrete refusals regarding the adversary.
3. Explicit threats towards the adversary.

I have randomly selected 10% of all the words/phrases I have included in my dictionary. This amounts to 40 words/phrases. I have done the same with McManus’ dictionary, randomly selecting 26 of the 264 hostile words or phrases. I proceeded to find every
instance of these words or phrases in the same body of text that I used in initially establishing my dictionary. I have “pulled them out” of the text by using the AntConc text analysis software. The software also provides 150 characters either side of the word or phrase to be coded (highlighted in red) to, hopefully, give you some context to what is being said.

What I would greatly appreciate you doing is reading through the various instances of words or phrases and making a decision on whether you think the word or phrase in question is, in that instance, conciliatory, hostile or neither. Please use one of the pens provided to write “C”, “H” or “N” above the word or phrase in question (highlighted in red) to indicate your answer.

As far as possible, please code the statements as they stand, rather than trying to interpret a deeper meaning to the Presidents’ words. My research aims to answer whether public statements influence policy, not whether what is said is an accurate presentation of intentions. It is entirely consistent that a President may say “we want peace” when really they want to go to war. The question I attempt to answer is whether armed force is less likely after the President having said that they want peace.

Similarly, additional words are provided either side of the word/phrase in question. This is important in providing context and, of course a word or phrase cannot be completely removed from its context. However, please remember that it is only the word/phrase in question that you are trying to code. For example, if you think that the instance of a word or phrase you are coding is conciliatory, yet words or phrases immediately preceding or afterwards are hostile, please do no think of the latter words as “making” the conciliatory word/phrase less conciliatory. It is possible for conciliatory and hostile words/phrases to be used in the same sentence.

Throughout the course of our coding we will stop at intervals and come together to discuss the process and any particularly difficult decisions. These breaks will occur every 20 minutes or so to begin with, as you familiarise yourself with the process. Once you feel familiar enough with the task we will meet every hour or so, if necessary. It is fine to change any instance of your coding in light of meeting to discuss progress. However, this is never required. Your coding decisions should be a representation of your views on the word or statements to be coded, guided by the instructions herein.

Usage

Following our completion of the above task I will enter both of our coding decisions into NVivo 11. I will then run a coding comparison query. NVivo will produce a Kappa coefficient, an accepted means of establishing the degree of agreement between coders.

Your decisions will help me determine whether I have set my coding process up properly. High agreement between us will indicate that the phenomenon of interest (conciliatory statements) can be identified and collected systematically using my definition and coding process. Low agreement would indicate that there is more random error involved in my coding process.