Social Representations and Social Media

Exploring Facebook and Shared Meanings of Migration among Filipino Migrants in Germany

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"For Moscovici, as for Durkheim before him, the genesis of social knowledge is to be found in the social context…: when societal conditions change so does social knowledge. This assertion is crucial to the theoretical edifice of the theory of social representations and to all those traditions of thought in psychology, sociology and anthropology which, deeply influenced by phenomenological traditions, sought to establish that knowledge – any form of knowledge, from science to common sense – is bound to the social context of its production.

From this perspective, the usage of "social context" is more than an abstraction or an added variable in a research program. Indeed, the link between social knowledge and social context demands an understanding of what gives form to a social context, what makes one social context different from another and how these differences produce variety in social psychological phenomena. It poses the need to unravel theoretically and empirically how the structural features of a social context are decisive in accounting for the genesis, development, and transformation of any type of social knowledge. Thus once we accept that social knowledge is shaped by social context, we face two new requirements. The first is to inquire in depth, and conceptualize, the features of a social context, and the second is to ask what happens to knowledge when a social context undergoes change."

— Jovchelovitch, 2001, p. 166

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ABSTRACT

Globalization, unprecedented technological advancements, and the current COVID-19 pandemic have led to the widespread use of the Internet and various social media in our lives. In turn, these contemporary media have altered the ways by which we interact with each other and come to form our shared understandings of objects, relations, and events around us. As the world continues to digitalize, social media and other interactive technologies will only continue to (re)define our daily social knowledge, relations, and practices.

This PhD thesis contributes to social psychological investigations on social media by taking a more interdisciplinary, qualitative, and social constructionist approach to theoretically elaborate and empirically illustrate how social media shape collaborative meaning-making. Specifically, this dissertation focuses on a social media platform as employed by a collective unit of analysis (i.e., a social group or community) and how social media contribute to the intricacies and complexities of that community's knowledge, processes, and practices towards a social object of interest.

This dissertation employs social representations (SR) theory (Moscovici, 1961/2008, 1988, 1984/2001a) to conceptualize social media as *digital public spheres* or online (trans)formative sites of everyday social knowledge. The thesis further relates social media to the three dimensions that make a public sphere according to Jovchelovitch & Priego-Hernandez (2015)—*political*, *spatial*, and *psychosocial*. This dissertation also introduces time as a fourth dimension (*temporal*) that brings the three dimensions together, emphasizes how social media have revolutionized people's relationship with time and (virtual) space, and highlights how the interrelation among social media, time, and (virtual) space influence the way people as members of a community jointly develop meanings of social objects, interactions, or events—for instance, migrants and their collective constructions of their home and host lands anchored in space and time.

To substantiate the above conceptualizations, this dissertation presents three empirical studies conducted through an overarching digital ethnographic methodology. Facebook is employed as the principal social media platform and research base, migration (and migration-related phenomena) as focal object of social knowledge, and Filipino migrants in Germany as the partner community and sample group. Data were gathered using mainly qualitative methods, especially participant observation, online ethnographic routines and data gathering techniques (Postill and Pink, 2012), and focus group discussions. Qualitative techniques were also used to analyze the data, except for the first empirical study where text mining methods were also employed.

Overall, findings illustrate the multiple aspects of Facebook as an actively evolving and multifaceted digital site of social representations of migration in its different forms (i.e., as pragmatic-discursive content, identity and positioning dynamics, and embodied, spatio-temporal norms and artifacts) among Filipino migrants in Germany. These empirical insights in turn provide a richer, dialogical, and contextually sensitive framework by which to investigate shared meaning-making—whether as content, process, and practice—as it develops within social media, while these interactive platforms are likewise continuously transformed by the communities who use them. Findings further reaffirm existing literature that assert social media like Facebook are not just channels of communication and information dissemination, but are "socially constructed spaces" (Fernback, 1997/2002) that continuously change and reflect the vibrant diversity, fluidity, and ultra-high pace of digitalized societies today. Borrowing Long and Long's (1992) expression, this PhD thesis thus asserts that social media have become the most contemporary "battlefields of [shared] knowledge" (Long & Long, 1992) located in cyberspace, and are therefore undeniably constitutive of the development of 21st century social representations.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AoIR	Association of Internet Researchers
BAMF	Bundesamt für Migration und Flüchtlinge
BMI	Bundesministerium des Innern, für Bau und Heimat
CENOMAR	Certificate of No Marriage
CFO	Commission on Filipino Overseas
CI	Character Investigation
CMC	Computer-Mediated Communication
DE	Deutschland / Germany
DIY	Do It Yourself
DFA	Department of Foreign Affairs
DP	Discursive Psychology
ENFiD	European Network of Filipino Diaspora
EU	European Union
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FRV	Family Reunion Visa
FSAAG	Filipino Students, Alumni and Academics in Germany
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GDPR	General Data Protection Regulation
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH
ICT	Information and Communication Technologies
IOM	International Organization for Migration
OFW	Overseas Filipino Workers
PH	Philippines

PT	Positioning Theory
RQ	Research Question
SNS	Social Network Site
SR	Social Representations
TMMs	Text Mining Methods
TV	Television
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
WEIRD	Western, Educated, Industrialized, Rich, and Developed

INTRODUCTION

> *[C]yberspace is a repository for collective cultural memory—it is popular culture, it is narratives created by its inhabitants that remind us who we are, it is life as lived and reproduced in pixels and virtual texts. It is sacred and profane, it is workspace and leisure space, it is a battleground and a nirvana, it is real and it is virtual, it is ontological and phenomenological.… Cyberspace is essentially a reconceived public sphere for social, political, economic, and cultural interaction.* (Fernback, 1997/2002, p. 37)

The beginning of the 21st century marked the rise of a new global, socio-technological context—the increasing use and significance of the Internet and digital technologies in people's lives, particularly that of social or participatory media. Some examples of these digital platforms are Facebook, Youtube, Instagram, Tiktok, Reddit, and Twitter—now staple, everyday applications used by 4.33 billion people or more than half (55.1%) of the world population ranging from 16 to 64 years of age (We Are Social & Hootsuite, 2021). On average, internet users spend at least 2.5 hours daily in various platforms, with the top five reasons of social media usage being: "staying in touch with friends and family", "filling spare time", "reading news stories", "finding funny and entertaining content" and "seeing what's being talked about" (We Are Social & Hootsuite, 2021).

Apart from influencing how we spend our time as individuals, participatory platforms have altered the ways by which we interact with each other. Social media have not just transformed human communication and information dissemination; they have also influenced various fields of social, economic, and political engagement—whether in journalism and news broadcasting (Papacharissi, 2009a), politics and political movements (McLamore & Uluğ, 2020; Mina, 2019; Rambukkana, 2015), healthcare (Pousti, Urquhart, & Linger, 2014),

migration (Dekker & Engbersen, 2012; Lim, Bork-Hüffer, & Yeoh, 2016; Smets, Leurs, Georgiou, Witteborn, & Gajjala, 2020), and recently disaster and pandemic management and response (Sarrica et al., 2018; Vicari & Murru, 2020), to name some. Hence, human society may indeed be "in the midst of a *social media paradigm* – a distinctive moment in the history of media and communications shaped by the dominance of social media technologies" (Burgess, Marwick, & Poell, 2017, p. 1; emphasis mine).

The current global health pandemic only served to highlight and intensify such utility and significance of these participatory media technologies. Firstly, the Internet and social media applications have become people's major sources of information about the COVID-19 infection or the SARS-CoV-2 virus (Statista Research Department, 2021b), as people have been mostly confined in their homes. Even governments, news outlets, and medical institutions around the world have adopted the use of participatory platforms, particularly Facebook, Twitter, and Youtube, in communicating crucial legal, public health, and scientific knowledge to experts and lay public alike (see Watson, 2021; A. Wong, Ho, Olusanya, Antonini, & Lyness, 2021). Secondly and alternatively, social media platforms have also played a role in the swift development of an 'infodemic' and prevalence of potentially threatening collective ideas, such as social and political conspiracies (Stecula & Pickup, 2021), anti-vaccine myths (Mitra, Counts, & Pennebaker, 2016), or right-wing populist ideologies (McLamore & Uluğ, 2020), to name a few. Yet thirdly and more importantly, social media channels have also been key to worldwide efforts to counteract the spread of various kinds of misinformation (see Gimpel, Heger, Kasper, & Schäfer, 2020; Watson, 2021). Furthermore, interactive platforms have been crucial for collective coping in the current pandemic. Social media have become the most, if some cases the only, viable sites of entertainment, education, and social interaction as traditional, geographic public spheres—from schools, parks, or even neighborhood open spaces—have been closed or selectively

accessible (Statista Research Department, 2021b). Amidst different degrees of lockdowns, social distancing, and isolation protocols, social media have enabled us to communicate expressions of gratitude, comfort, and solidarity to each other regardless of physical and geographical locations (e.g., Cabalquinto, 2021; Saud, Mashud, & Ida, 2020).

Indeed, the rise of social media has bolstered what Fernback (1997/2002) has claimed in the chapter epigraph: that cyberspace has become our reconceived communal space of productivity and entertainment, of conflict and solace, of public life itself. As this pandemic continues to compel our world to digitalize in many social, political, and economic aspects, different social media platforms will only continue to evolve and prove useful in these same regards. Hence, it is without doubt that social media technologies will continue to (re)define contemporary life, interactions, and everyday sensemaking processes.

Project Focus and Scope

Among the social sciences, psychology prides itself for contributing to current understandings of how social media impact the ways that people (inter)act. For instance, social media have been shown to affect prosocial behavior (e.g., Klisanin, 2016; Oh & Syn, 2015), impression and identity management (Riva, Wiederhold, & Cipresso, 2016), social connections and networking (Anderson, Fagan, Woodnutt, & Chamorro-Premuzic, 2012; Oh & Syn, 2015), and political mobilization (McGarty, Thomas, Lala, Smith, & Bliuc, 2014).

The application of social psychological theories have initially dominated social media research between 2004 and 2011 (Van Osch & Coursaris, 2015). Yet this dominant use of social psychological theories and psychological investigations on social media in general have been limited to the application of a few mainstream theories, the positivistic paradigm, quantitative methodologies, and the individual level of analysis (see Kende, Ujhelyi, Joinson, & Greitemeyer, 2015; Van Osch & Coursaris, 2015; Zyoud, Sweileh, Awang, & Al-Jabi, 2018). Additionally, despite the widespread knowledge of social media as "as a tool for

supporting various group and organizational level phenomena and processes" (Van Osch & Coursaris, 2015, p. 1673), social psychological works on social media have not gained as much momentum as in other fields of psychology such as cyberpsychology, developmental psychology and personality psychology (Zyoud et al., 2018).

Such conditions behoove social psychologists to "put the social (psychology) into social media" (Kende et al., 2015), adopt more interdisciplinarity—as it is also "the nature of social media domain" (Van Osch & Coursaris, 2015, p. 1673)—and thus further explore the role and impact of social media. One way to do so is to *focus on a social media platform* as employed by a *collective unit of analysis* (i.e., of 'group' or 'community') and how social media contribute to the *intricacies and complexities* of that community's knowledge, processes, and practices towards a social object of interest. Additionally, media technologies have long been recognized as "sites of meaning production and circulation" (Langlois, 2014, p. 6). As new forms of media and as crucial—if not the major—sites of information dissemination and daily social interaction in this present digital age, it is pertinent to explore how social media shape *collaborative meaning-making*.

To contribute towards addressing these concerns, this dissertation engages the burgeoning field of digital migration and, more importantly, follows a social constructionist paradigm by employing the social representations theory pioneered by Serge Moscovici (Moscovici, 1961/2008, 1984/2001a, 1988, 2001b). In using Moscovici's theory, *meaning* and *meaning–making* in this dissertation are located within the collective subjectivity and pertain to s*ocial representations* (SR)—everyday shared understandings or, more descriptively, "the stock of common knowledge and information which people share in the form of common-sense theories about the social world, which enable members of a society to be able to construct a social reality" (Augoustinos & Walker, 1995, p. 134). Meaning as SR or "commonsense knowledge" does not only involve what people think and say (i.e., SR as

content), but also people's actions and relational dynamics (i.e., SR as *process*), and the embodied and material manifestations or 'products' of social interaction (i.e., SR as *practice*) such as symbols (e.g., flag, tattoos), institutions (e.g., family, religion, government, university), rituals (e.g., handshaking, meditation, baptism), or daily practices (i.e., eating, commuting, after-school or -work gatherings) (Moscovici, 1984/2001a).

SR theory has gained a research tradition in its own right as a "revolutionary" (Sammut, Andreouli, Gaskell, & Valsiner, 2015), "counteract[ive]" (Jovchelovitch, 1995, p. 81; addition mine), and "antipositivist" (Gjorgjioska & Tomicic, 2019) force to the reductionistic and individualistic predisposition of mainstream social psychology, including its binary treatment between individual and society or people's psyche and social phenomena among others (Gjorgjioska & Tomicic, 2019; Jovchelovitch, 1995). The theory does not reject quantitative methodologies—in fact, positivism and quantitative approaches have dominated SR works in recent years (Gjorgjioska & Tomicic, 2019). Nevertheless, the SR tradition has always embraced and flourished from a multi-method approach to scientific inquiry (U. Flick, Foster, & Caillaud, 2015). As such, this dissertation adopts a qualitative, participatory approach to social media and its relation to SR, following previous SR works that highlight the significance of culture, history, complexity, and diversity of voices involved in any social phenomena (U. Flick et al., 2015).

Furthermore, SR highlights the significance of communication in meaning-making, and hence locates media at the center of the formation, dissemination, and application of social knowledge. Many previous studies have explored SR of various social phenomena through mass media—for instance, psychoanalysis (Moscovici 1961/2008), public spaces in Brazil and mental illness on British television (Wagner et al., 1999), public understanding of science and technology (Christidou, Dimopoulos, & Koulaidis, 2004), climate conference in French and German media (Caillaud, Kalampalikis, & Flick, 2012), and recently the concept

of social distancing (Nerlich & Jaspal, 2021) and the identity positions of citizens in newspaper images vis-à-vis COVID-19 (Martikainen & Sakki, 2021).

The rise of social media in recent years together with controversial issues (e.g., migration crisis, populism, right-wing ideologies) and disruptive social phenomena (e.g., natural disasters, COVID-19 pandemic) have motivated SR scholars (e.g. Bourret & Boustany, 2019; de Rosa, Bocci, Bonito, & Salvati, 2021; Idoiaga, Berasategi, Eiguren, & Picaza, 2020; McLamore & Uluğ, 2020; Nerlich & Jaspal, 2021; Sensales, Di Cicco, & Baldner, 2021) to recognize and demonstrate that "the internet and its by-products also contribute significantly to the crafting of social representations" (de Guzman & Montiel, 2012, p. 43). Sarrica et al. (2018) demonstrate how social media are considered "reliable spaces" for narratives and self-expression (p. 341), with Twitter being seen specifically as a "quasi-real time communication resource" (p. 333) and Facebook as a crucial medium for empowerment and resistance during a disaster; while de Rosa et al. (2021) described Twitter as "a powerful communicative scenario in which to investigate social representations" (de Rosa et al., 2021, p. 3). This dissertation attempts to follow up on and further substantiate such claims on social media and their relevance to SR, with a special focus on Facebook.

Even with these recent research, however, psychology and SR literature are still at a nascent stage of exploring social media as "active contexts [that] intervene in the nature of the processes of emergency, adoption and use of the [social] representations from which they are inseparable as of their own constitution" (Rubira-García, Puebla-Martínez, & Gelado-Marcos, 2018, p. 4), despite digital communication technologies being shown to influence the development of social knowledge (Wahlström, 2012). Additionally, SR works that involve social media focus on social representational content created and re-produced through these new platforms, and not so much on shared knowledge as a process or social practice (with some exceptions like Bourret & Boustany, 2019; Sarrica et al., 2018). To take social media

for granted without exploring their unique aspects as novel social contexts and arenas of lay knowledge would be to miss an opportunity to showcase the persistent relevance and import of the SR theory and tradition.

For this dissertation, an in-depth investigation of the relation between social media and SR is especially relevant to the phenomenon of migration. Migrants have been described as sustaining a "connected presence" as early as the late 1990s (Diminescu, 2008) for being "early adopters" of media technologies (Leurs, 2021). For instance, migrants have long taken advantage of telephones, mobile phones, and computers in internet cafés for information gathering, decision–making, network–building, and sustaining homeland connections, among others (Diminescu, 2008; I'MTech, 2018; Leurs, 2021). Migrant use of media technologies have only intensified with the rise of social media, which provide diverse, easier, and faster ways for connecting, communicating, and accessing information (e.g., Dekker & Engbersen, 2012; Komito, 2011; McGregor & Siegel, 2014; Smets et al., 2020). When seen through the lens of this current pandemic, migrants and their experiences can offer a lot of insights on how to deal with 'social distancing,' which migrants have been navigating through technology and "digital intimacy" for years (Leurs, 2021).

To limit the scope of this doctoral project yet also allow more detailed and nuanced insights to emerge, I focus on the participatory platform of Facebook and on Filipino migrants as my partner community and sample group in exploring shared knowledge about migrant realities within and through social media. Facebook has become the biggest social networking website since its debut in 2004 (Statista Research Department, 2021a) and has remained most popular social media in the world (Ortiz-Ospina, 2019; Wikle & Comer, 2012), including getting coronavirus updates during the pandemic (Statista Research Department, 2021b). Hence, it is also unsurprising that Facebook has been highly used by different migrant groups for various diasporic needs and situations (e.g., Christiansen, 2015,

2017; Leurs, 2014; Lorenzana, 2016; Oiarzabal, 2012). Among non-western migrant communities, Filipino migrants and Filipinos in general have been recognized for demonstrably embracing social media at a significant rate (Universal McCann, 2008; We Are Social & Hootsuite, 2019; We Are Social & IAB Singapore, 2015). The Philippines has also ranked sixth among the leading countries with the most number of active Facebook users (Data Reportal and Facebook, 2022). Filipinos' general high affinity and early adaptation of new media technologies hence make Filipino migrants a perfect choice for exploring the development of SR of migration in Facebook.

In sum, the overall aim of this dissertation is to theoretically elaborate and empirically illustrate how social media, particularly Facebook, are dynamic, multifaceted sites and repositories of SR of migration, especially among Filipino migrants in Germany. Table 1 summarizes the research questions addressed in this dissertation.

The research questions are addressed by, first, theoretically articulating social media as a *digital (detraditionalized) public sphere* comprising the three dimensions that make a public sphere—*political, spatial, and psychosocial* (Jovchelovitch & Priego-Hernández, 2015). I also introduce time as a fourth dimension (*temporal*) to highlight how social media platforms have revolutionized people's relationship with time and (virtual) space, and how this interrelation among social media, time, and (virtual) space influence the way people as members of a community develop common understandings of the social world—for instance, migrants and their shared ideas and "re-membering" (Fortier, 1999) of their home and host lands. I assert that elaborating on these aspects of social media as a digital public sphere provides a richer, dialogical, and contextually sensitive framework on which to analyze the role and impact of social media technologies to the development of SR in its different forms (i.e., as content, process, and practice).

Table 1

Summary of Research Questions (RQs)

Main RQ:	In what ways do social media, particularly Facebook, facilitate or constrain the (trans)formation of social representations (SR) of migration?		
	RQ1	**RQ2**	**RQ3**
Specific RQs	What are the SR of migration formed within a migrant community's Facebook group interactions? <u>*On a meta-level:*</u> *How does Facebook enable the development of SR of migration as* ***content****?*	What is the role of Facebook in the way migrants discursively position themselves and their co-ethnics vis-à-vis the participants' shared understandings of their ethnic identity? *How does Facebook enable the development of SR of migration as* ***process****?*	How does Facebook enable migrants to negotiate the diverse spatio-temporal aspects of diaspora (i.e., past–homeland vis-à-vis present–hostland practices)? *How does Facebook enable the development of SR of migration as* ***practice****?*
Addressed in	Chapter 3	Chapter 4	Chapter 5
Short answers	▪ Facebook enables the capture and analysis of migration as a digitally and collectively formed network of everyday communal concerns, beliefs, values, and topics of import to the migrant community *(i.e., SR of migration as content)*. ▪ In other words, Facebook serves as online collective site and repository of SR of migration *(i.e., psychosocial dimension of social media as a public sphere)*.	▪ In this case, migration involves migrants' active (re)constructions of their ethno-cultural identity, relations, rights and duties, and, ultimately, asymmetries in legitimacy/power *(i.e., SR of migration as process)*. ▪ Facebook serves as both a dynamic social arena and discursive positioning tool for migrant ingroup negotiations, whether online or offline *(i.e., political dimension of social media as public sphere)*.	▪ In this case, migration is anchored on different spatio-temporal activities, relations, norms, and rhythms, particularly those of the past–homeland and present–hostland life *(i.e., SR of migration as social practice)*. ▪ Facebook serves as an actively employed and mutable context for digitally re-enacting the past–homeland practices while bridging the present-hostland patterns and ways of being and doing *(i.e., spatial and temporal dimensions of social media as public sphere)*.

To empirically substantiate my conceptualizations above, I conducted three empirical studies. In all three studies, I employed digital ethnography as the overarching methodological approach, Facebook as the principal social media platform and 'research base', migration (and migration-related phenomena) as focal object of social representations, and Filipino migrants in Germany as the case study group. Data were gathered using mainly qualitative methods, specifically participant observation, field notes, focus group discussions, manual data scraping and selective archiving. Qualitative techniques were also used to analyze the data, except for the first empirical study where mixed methods were employed.

For linguistic variety, I do not differentiate between *migration* and *diaspora*. In this dissertation, I thus use these terms alternately to refer to both "the process of populations spreading beyond their place of 'origin' [i.e., dispersion]" and to the "processes of making sense of this dispersion, of creating infrastructures for narration and action in transnational and translocal contexts, or of meeting of 'roots' and 'routes' as Gilroy (1993) suggests" (Tsagarousianou, 2020, p. 4). Similarly, I employ the terms *migrant/s* and *immigrant/s* interchangeably to denote individuals and groups of people who decisively move away from their homelands to live temporarily or permanently in a foreign country.

Significance of the Study

In this dissertation, I employ an exploratory, participatory, and interdisciplinary approach that draws from and, in turn, contributes to the fields of (social and cultural) psychology, migration, (Filipino) ethno-cultural studies, (digital) media and communication research, among others, to fulfill the following academic and societal relevance. In addressing calls to greater social psychological attention to social media (e.g., Kende et al., 2015), this doctoral project primarily offers an alternative, social psychological lens that pays particular attention to the role and influence of social media—particularly Facebook—in understanding the context, variety, and complexity of everyday collective knowledge,

processes, and practices. By theoretically grounding and empirically demonstrating the aspects of social media as multidimensional, dialogical sites of interaction within the SR tradition, this dissertation promotes a dialogical, critical, and contextually reflexive view of social media—e.g., not just as contemporary channels of communication and sources of massive information, including the content of shared ideas (Chapter 3). Rather, social media technologies are better understood as continuously evolving 'socially constructed spaces' (Fernback, 1997/2002) that not only speed up and expand the reach of identity and positioning dynamics (Chapter 4) but also facilitate the employment of spatio-temporal anchors and artifacts (Chapter 5)—allowing a deeper understanding of how commonsense knowledge on novel or controversial phenomena emerge and transform within a group despite members' dispersed spatio-temporal locations.

Secondly, employing a qualitative methodology that embraces participatory data collection strategies and multi-method analytical techniques promotes "ethics-of-care" (Leurs & Prabhakar, 2018) especially in the conduct of research involving people's interactions online and within new media technologies. To be able to work with Filipino communities in Germany as co-researchers—not just as 'subjects' to my dissertation—enables a more equal relationship and a richer, more natural investigation as I have been able to inquire and observe more details into their ways of thinking, doing, and living, even if some interactions were solely conducted online. With a participatory and multi-method approach, this dissertation counteracts the so-called recent tendency of "datafication of social science research" (Burgess et al., 2017, p. 1), where people's social behavior and interactions are "aggregated, analy[z]ed and monetized by social media platforms" (Burgess et al., 2017, p. 1) or, in some cases, analyzed without consideration of contexts and people's voices.

Thirdly, with the Filipino migrants in Germany as the partner community and case study group in all empirical investigations, this dissertation extends academic inquiry to an

underrepresented population, in this case from an Asian, developing country. Hence, this doctoral work further contributes to studies on racial and ethnic minority populations and migrant groups—making psychology and social media-related research less "Anglo-centric" (Burgess et al., 2017) and less focused on WEIRD populations, i.e. Western, Educated, Industrialized, Rich, and Developed nations (Henrich, Heine, & Norenzayan, 2010).

Finally, this dissertation and its findings offer valuable insights for programs, (psychosocial-cultural) interventions, and even policy-making—whether aimed at specifically understanding the role of social media in the development of commonsense knowledge on controversial social phenomena in general (migration issues included), or the psychosocial needs and concerns faced by migrants, minorities, and vulnerable groups. Since all empirical studies involved Filipino migrants, I also focused more on the practical implications of the project findings on Filipino migration issues.

Outline of the Dissertation

This dissertation comprises five chapters that altogether aim to fulfill a two-fold rationale: first, to theoretically situate social media within the social representations (SR) paradigm and, secondly, to empirically illustrate how to explore the (trans)formation of SR within and through social media.

Chapter 1 presents the theoretical framework of this dissertation. I first elaborate on social representations (Moscovici, 1961/2008, 1984/2001a, 1988, 2001b,) as a social psychological theory of shared lay knowledge, its various forms (i.e., as content, process, and practice), and the processes and genetic levels involved in the development of SR. Afterwards, I elaborate on where the emergence and development of social representations can be located, i.e., in so-called *detraditionalized public spheres*. It is with this idea of detraditionalized public spheres that I theoretically locate and expand insights on the relation of social media and SR. Specifically, I conceptualize social media as among the most

contemporary, online forms of detraditionalized public spheres and, hence, digital (trans)formative sites of SR. I articulate this conceptualization of social media further by relating social media to the three dimensions that make a public sphere according to Jovchelovitch & Priego-Hernandez (2015) — political, spatial, and psychosocial. I also introduce time as a fourth dimension (temporal) that brings the previous three dimensions together and that emphasizes the relation of social media, public spheres, and SR with the development of shared knowledge, identities, and collective practices. Finally, I briefly discuss literature on Facebook, migration, and Filipinos as migrants and social media users to elaborate on my rationale of choosing these three as the focal social media platform, object of SR, and case study group, respectively, used in the empirical chapters.

In Chapter 2, I discuss the dissertation's methodological framework of digital ethnography and the reasons why I chose this approach to empirically substantiate my assertion in Chapter 1 that social media are social psychological public spheres constitutive of the (trans)formation of social representations in today's digital era. Here I elaborate on the overall research design. Furthermore, I share here the various issues encountered and decisions made in implementing my digital ethnographic design. I discuss my use of different data collection tools and analytical methods for purposes of triangulation and more in-depth and nuanced exploration of SR within and through social media.

The subsequent three chapters present separate exploratory studies, demonstrating how to investigate varied forms of migration-related SR (i.e., as content, process, or social practice) within or in relation to Facebook as the social media platform of choice by Filipinos in Germany. Simultaneously, the empirical chapters highlight certain dimensions of Facebook as a digital public sphere (i.e., political, psychosocial, spatial, or temporal aspects).

Chapter 3 highlights the psychosocial dimension of social media as digital public sphere by exploring the content of Filipinos' SR of migration within their discussion threads

in an online Facebook community. The exploratory study in this chapter not only illustrates what defines the Filipino migrants' everyday life based on the most relevant concerns discussed by members of the Filipino migrant community on Facebook. More importantly, this chapter demonstrates how SR researchers and social scientists in general can apply innovative internet and computer-mediated approaches (e.g., topic extraction analysis) to manage abundant social media data, while combining it with traditional research methods (e.g., ethnographic data collection and pragmatic-discursive analysis) to overcome automated data collection limitations and to ensure socially meaningful data analysis.

Chapter 4 emphasizes social media's political dimension as virtual public sphere through an investigation of how the study participants form their collective understandings of their Filipino ethnic identity, both as social representational content and (especially) process. Specifically, this chapter explores the ways Filipino focus group participants collaboratively assign discursive rights and duties (i.e., positions) to themselves and their co-ethnics vis-á-vis their shared ideas about 'being a Filipino' in the context of their migration in Germany and the role that Facebook plays in such meaning-making processes. Through employing focus groups and qualitative methods of analysis, this chapter highlights the tacit and offline impact of social media in social representational dynamics, especially involving negotiations of identities, positions and, ultimately, sociocultural power relations.

Chapter 5 accentuates the spatial and temporal dimensions of social media as digital public sphere and how it facilitates the digital (trans)formation of the least-investigated form of SR—that is, as social practice—online. SR are embodied and performative yet only few studies focus on these aspects of SR. Chapter 5 attempts to address this gap by emphasizing space-time relations in the formation of collective ideas; in particular, I employ the Russian philosopher Mikhail Bakhtin's (1975/1981) idea of the *chronotope*, which literally means 'timespace' or the inherent interconnectedness of space and time. Through the social

representational mechanism of anchoring, I assert that some SR (e.g., migration) emerge and are defined by specific spatio-temporal relationships, i.e., chronotopes. Applied to the context of diaspora, migrants' chronotopes of their home and host countries—or their shared constructions of their 'then-and-there', past–homeland rhythms and norms and their 'here-and-now', present–hostland life, respectively—contribute to the migrants' SR of Filipino migration in Germany. By analyzing focus group discussions, field notes, and online ethnographic data, this chapter highlights how Filipino migrants' SR of their home and host lands are embodied, performed, and thus re-enacted wherever migrant communities flourish, which includes social media, particularly the Facebook group platform.

Altogether, these three studies provide empirical insights that, apart from being channels of communication, social media are digital, dialogical sites of meaning-making, identity and positioning dynamics, and socio-cultural, spatio-temporal practices. The concluding chapter reflects on the limitations of the doctoral project, offers new perspectives and approaches into investigating the role and significance of social media and the Internet in general in increasingly digital ways of living, interacting, and co-creating common knowledge, and proposes opportunities for future research on SR in the digital era.

CHAPTER 1

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In this chapter, I present this dissertation's theoretical underpinnings and overall argumentation. First, I introduce the theory of social representations or SR (Moscovici, 1961/2008, 1984/2001a, 1988, 2001b,) and how such SR emerge from and transform in detraditionalized public spheres. Second, I discuss social media, the relation between (social) media and meaning(making), and the affordances and challenges presented by social media, including for social scientific research. Third, I synthesize the insights from the first two sections with the social psychology of public spheres (Jovchelovitch & Priego-Hernández, 2015) to present a dialogical and multidimensional framework of social media as digital sites of meaning(making), identity dynamics, and social practice. Lastly, I review literature on Facebook, migration, and Filipinos as migrants and social media users since these three are the project's focal social media platform, object of SR, and case study group, respectively.

Social Representations Theory

> *Let's start from the simple premise that a central part of our lives is devoted to making sense of what is going on. And this involves finding the meanings of things, people, and events in order to figure out what they stand for and where we stand in relation to them.* ***Finding meaning*** *is a process of orientation, of deciphering the world, and building conceptual maps to guide us. Such a process* ***never takes place in isolation****. Finding meaning, even if it leads to a radical rejection of our world and the values that sustain our lives,* ***requires acts of communication****: it is a continuous search for agreement and recognition that one's meanings are valid and therefore can be understood, perhaps shared by others.* (Langlois, 2014, p. 1; emphasis mine)

The theory of social representations was first formulated and empirically elaborated by Serge Moscovici in his French thesis "La Psychanalyse: Son image et son public," translated in English as "Psychoanalysis: Its image and its public" (Moscovici, 1961/2008). The theory is a social psychological framework that gives attention to processes by which people collaboratively form an understanding of the world and everyday phenomena. It introduces social representations (SR) as:

> *systems of values*, *ideas and practices* with a twofold function: first to establish an order which will *enable individuals to orientate themselves* in their material and social world and to master it; and secondly to *enable communication*… among the members of a community by providing them with *a code for social exchange* and a code *for naming and classifying* unambiguously the various aspects of their world and their individual and group history (Moscovici, 1973, p. xiii, emphasis mine).

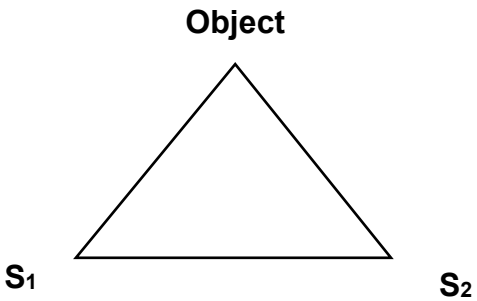
Just as meaning is both signification and sense-making (Langlois, 2014), so are SR simultaneously substance and practice. Although in terms of existing literature, SR have been investigated more specifically as *content*, *process*, and *practice*. In particular, SR denote both the *content* or a structured "stock of knowledge, images, and beliefs about social objects" (O'Dwyer, Lyons, & Cohrs, 2016, p. 166) or phenomena considered significant to a given group, as well as the *process* or the social psychological mechanisms involved as people think about, talk about, or employ these social objects in everyday life (Moscovici & Marková, 1998; Philogène & Deaux, 2001). Many studies have focused on the social representational content of various social objects, including the COVID-19 pandemic (e.g., Idoiaga et al., 2020; Nerlich & Jaspal, 2021; Páez & Pérez, 2020), and the ever-relevant issue of (im)migrants and (im)migration (e.g., de Moura & Hernandis, 2013; de Rosa et al., 2021; Rochira, Fasanelli, & Liguori, 2015). Similarly, many works have investigated social representational processes, especially in relation to the negotiation of identities (e.g., Abadia,

Cabecinhas, Macedo, & Cunha, 2018; Martikainen & Sakki, 2021; O'Dwyer et al., 2016) or to social coping functions and communication mechanisms of SR (e.g., Justo, Bousfield, Giacomozzi, & Camargo, 2020; Sarrica et al., 2018). However, SR also manifest as *practice*—"ritualized [social] action" (Echabe & Castro, 1993, p. 118, emphasis mine) or shared subjectivities constructed in and through concerted actions and interactions over time (Wagner, 2015). SR as collective practice include habitual behavior or routines, performative structures (i.e., institutions), spatio-temporal rhythms and embodied practices (e.g., Durrheim & Dixon, 2005), or even mundane activities like sexual practices (Joffe, 1995, 1998), embodied evocations of gender identities in children's play (Duveen, 1993; Lloyd & Duveen, 1990/2010), or the everyday rituals of separation and segregation practiced by foster families of asylum patients in the oft-cited SR ethnographic work on madness (Jodelet, 1989/1991).

Whichever form SR may take, they all originate from the basic unit of analysis: the representational triad of interaction (see Figure 1) among the Ego or primary subject or self (S_1), the Alter or other subject/s (S_2), and the shared representational object of concern (O), which can be social, physical, real, or imagined (Bauer & Gaskell, 2001; see also Moscovici, 1984a, as cited in Marková, 2000).

Figure 1

The Representational Triad



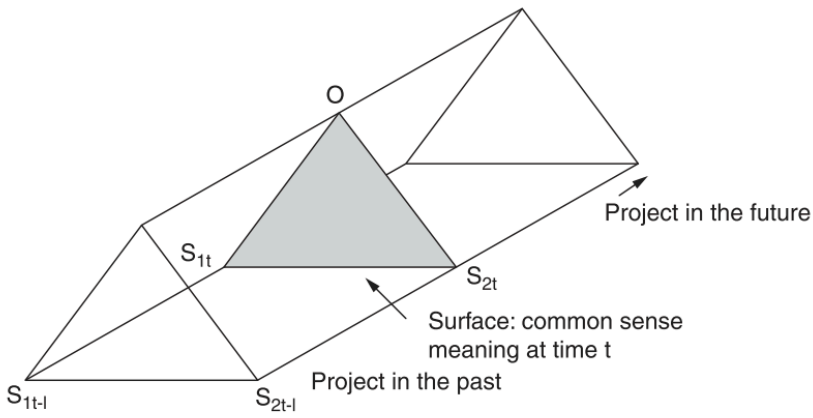
Note: Figure is originally from Bauer & Gaskell, 2001, p. 170 and is reused with permission (please see A.10 in Appendix).

This dynamic triangle of mediation emphasizes how the construction and elaboration of meanings about a social object "always implies the 'other'" (Sammut et al., 2015, p. 7), whether these 'others' (S_2) are physically present or absent in a particular interaction. For SR theory, meaning-making is thus located not inside individual minds but "across minds" (Wagner et al., 1999, p. 96), and not within private but communal spaces of engagement (i.e., in public spheres, as will be elaborated later at the end of this section). SR are thus not simply borne out of one or few social interactions; "commonsense knowledge results from countless transactions of thought dialogue" in a period of time (Moscovici, 2001b, p. 14).

This aspect of time is included in an enhancement of the SR triad: the Toblerone model (Bauer & Gaskell, 2001), as shown in Figure 2. The temporal dimension highlights how trajectories (i.e., past and future) are constitutive of the formation of any shared knowledge—denoted in the model as the 'project' that develops around the subjects and object (Sammut et al., 2015). Time can also be considered as an interactive, communicative mechanism within the project itself, i.e., as an anchor to the emergent shared meaning of the object; that will be the focus of Chapter 5. For now, I elaborate next on the communicative processes of anchoring and objectification and on the genetic levels of SR (trans)formation.

Figure 2

The 'Toblerone' Model of common sense



Note: Figure is originally from Bauer & Gaskell, 2001, p. 171 and is reused with permission (please see A.10 in Appendix).

Development of Social Representations

In many instances, the proponent of the theory, Serge Moscovici, equates social representations as contemporary forms of 'commonsense knowledge', yet qualifies it as such: reified layman ways of understanding that emerge primarily to enable the community "to make something unfamiliar, or unfamiliarity itself, familiar" (Moscovici, 1984/2001a, p. 24). Every SR serve as a community's symbolic coping (Wagner et al., 1999), when the group's life-world encounters novel social objects or phenomena that are, for the community, controversial or disruptive, "either by their very nature or because they can affect the very existence of the community" (Rubira-García et al., 2018, p. 3). The group attempts to reconcile such disruptive breaks in their cultural representational system through the two fundamental communicative mechanisms of anchoring and objectification.

On the one hand, anchoring is about how people make sense of an unfamiliar idea, object, or phenomenon by associating it to things already known. This association occurs in various ways of comparison, classification, and naming. It can also happen through the use of emotions (Höijer, 2010, 2011), thematization (Marková, 2000; Moloney, Hall, & Walker, 2005), antinomies (Bonomo, de Souza, Trindade, & Menandro, 2013; Marková, 2003), or metaphors (Christidou et al., 2004; Höijer, 2011). In the third empirical study in Chapter 5, I will also argue for and illustrate the consideration of space and time relations (i.e., chronotope) as a social representational anchor.

On the other hand, objectification involves the process of concretization, or understanding a foreign idea or object by turning it into physical reality. In this sense, objectification is a more active process as it transforms an abstract understanding of phenomenon into something materially accessible and perceptible to our senses (Moscovici, 1984/2001a). In many cases, SR are objectified "by reference to specific persons or by superimposing analogies and metaphors on to the concepts" (Wagner et al., 1999, p. 113).

For instance, science and technology have been associated to “a mystery resolution,” “learning a secret,” or “decoding messages of nature” (Christidou et al., 2004, p. 354). Media have objectified climate change through storms, floods, or polar bears stranded on small ice floe (Höijer, 2010, 2011). Nations are concretized through flags and national hymns, or the concept of race by the color of the skin (Philogène & Deaux, 2001). Similarly, foreigners and migrants may be objectified through their unique physical features or accent. More recently, ‘social distancing’ in UK media has been represented as “a threat to the continuity of normal life,”, then eventually associated to “social order,” “strength and endurance,” and the more physically felt “two-metre distance rule” (Nerlich & Jaspal, 2021, pp. 576, 578).

This making the ‘unfamiliar’ phenomenon familiar further occurs through three dialectical, development processes: *sociogenesis*, or the production and transformation of a group’s knowledge of a social object at a societal level; *ontogenesis*, or the re-construction and incorporation of SR at an individual level; and *microgenesis*, or the elaboration of SR at interpersonal and group levels of interaction (Duveen & Lloyd, 1990/2010).

Sociogenesis is the genetic process that highlights the socio-historical conditions that allow a social group to collectively co-construct a certain understanding of reality (Duveen & Lloyd, 1990/2010). It is where the ideological aspects of SR are most manifest, permeating major entities of power and legitimacy such as the media, social institutions, political discourses, and so on (Howarth, 2011). As a consequence, certain SR are slowly delegitimized and excluded, while others dominate and become reified (Howarth, 2011).

Ontogenesis concerns the relationship and influence of SR to individuals’ sociocognitive development (Duveen & Lloyd, 1990/2010). Participating in the group’s or community’s ways of living exposes individuals to existing SR. In this process, individuals adopt and appropriate these SR into their own understanding by elaborating particular identities (Duveen & Lloyd, 1990/2010). In this way, the group’s cultural knowledge

becomes “psychologically active” (Duveen & Lloyd, 1990/2010) and enable individuals to become social actors (Duveen & de Rosa, 1992).

Microgenesis refers to the production and transformation of SR as people engage in conversation. It is the moment when people come together, communicate ideas, confront contradictions, negotiate social identities, and eventually seek a mutual understanding of matters at hand (Duveen & de Rosa, 1992; Duveen & Lloyd, 1990/2010). It is also within these moments of dialogue and exchange when social influences are most active and consequential, potentially inducing structural changes in people’s understandings (Duveen & de Rosa, 1992). These changes can be both at the individual and societal level, and as such microgenesis is considered the “motor” of ontogenesis and sociogenesis (Duveen, 1993; Duveen & de Rosa, 1992; Duveen & Lloyd, 2010).

Understanding these communicative and genetic processes of SR shall guide us in exploring social psychological understandings within a certain context, including the present era of social media technologies. Firstly, these mechanisms make us aware that SR are not just about the meanings related to an object; SR also involve the positions towards that object that people can take, resist, or negotiate (Andreouli, 2010; Duveen & Lloyd, 1990/2010), and embodied, material manifestations (i.e., not just through performative acts and social practices, but also symbols and artifacts). Secondly, the genetic processes elaborate how SR theory considers the socio-cultural, historical, and political embeddedness of people’s meaning-making. Howarth (2006b) emphasizes this contextual nature of SR and asserts that “the knowledge we collaboratively produce today is embedded in our collective and competing histories and is simultaneously reworked, resisted and transformed as we find new ways of ‘mastering’ our constantly changing realities” (p. 444). SR theory enables a critical position towards ‘commonsense’ or reified and ‘taken-for-granted’ ways of understanding by exploring how social actors give meaning—or resist imposed meanings—to novel

phenomena in reference to their specific contexts, including cultural knowledge systems, socioeconomic milieus, or geopolitical histories (see also Elcheroth, Doise, & Reicher, 2011; Howarth, 2006a; Phoenix, Howarth, & Philogène, 2017).

As Jovchelovitch (2007) aptly summarizes, all representations carry with them a knowledge of the self and the other, the relations between them, and the context where they are all embedded: "[A]ll knowledge is expressive insofar as it seeks to represent subjective, intersubjective and objective worlds… To all knowledge there corresponds a relationship between people and between people and their environment that is both natural and social…" (Jovchelovitch, 2007, p. 135). In the next section, I elaborate on the transformations of SR by discussing in which specific contexts shared knowledges emerge and change: public spheres.

Public Spheres: Genetic Sites of Social Representations

We recall that central to the notion of social representations is that knowledge about the world is a collective enterprise; knowledge is located not just inside individual minds but, more importantly, "across minds," as people engage in everyday life and together construct an interpretation of reality (Wagner et al., 1999, p. 96). In this way, SR are a product of and process within public spheres or "open spaces where communal life is jointly experienced and becomes known to all" (Jovchelovitch & Priego-Hernández, 2015, p. 164).

However, there is a distinction between two kinds of public spheres and the corresponding shared representations that emerge from these two types. On the one hand, Emile Durkheim's (1895/1982; 1951/2010) *collective representations* emerge from public spheres or societies marked by tradition, stability, and centralized sources of knowledge (Jovchelovitch, 2001). While such everyday collective knowledge also serve to maintain order and organize social relations in traditional societies, the primary function of collective representations is "resisting novelty and the transformations it may entail" (Jovchelovitch, 2001, p. 170) and thus preserve long-established ways of life.

On the other hand, Moscovici's (1961/2008, 1984/2001a, 1988, 2001b) *social representations* arise and transform within *detraditionalized* public spheres. In such social arenas, difference and unfamiliarity flourish alongside elements of tradition (Jovchelovitch, 2001). Detraditionalized public spheres are characterized by the mobility and plurality of social actors, and the freedom and fluidity by which different perspectives come together and are negotiated in public assembly (Jovchelovitch, 2001). Because of this multiplicity of voices, sources of knowledge and thus centers of authority are likewise diffused.

This dynamic state — vibrant coexistence of multiple, even conflicting representational systems within a society, group, or even an individual — that thrives within detraditionalized public spheres is what Moscovici (1961/2008) describes as *cognitive polyphasia*. Naturally, it exists as well in traditional societies as "polyphasia is a basic property of sociocognitive functioning in all public spheres" (Jovchelovitch & Priego-Hernández, 2015, p. 178). However, it is more pronounced in contemporary societies.

Cognitive polyphasia serves as a rich resource for individuals and communities, empowering them as they try to explain what is unknown and to reconcile culturally varied and contesting issues in their everyday reality. For instance, bearing different representations of the city for favela dwellers in Rio de Janeiro serves as "a sense-making strategy for thinking in a divided society, an emotional tool for coping with discrimination and a pragmatic mechanism for handling exclusion" (Jovchelovitch & Priego-Hernández, 2015, p. 170). The same can be asserted in the case of migration. In the case of Latin American immigrants in Spain, their different sets of beliefs and SR of immigration (i.e. as "power", "security", and "nostalgia") aide migrants in adapting to their host societies and dealing with being far from their native lands (de Moura & Hernandis, 2013).

Born out of dynamic public life, SR are hence active, complex "ways of world making" (Moscovici, 1988); they are networks of meaning and relations continuously

(re)produced, transformed and negotiated in everyday life (Howarth, 2006a). They reflect the diverse and vibrant nature of collective ideas within the context of today's 21st century world—which is likewise characterized by heterogeneity as seen in the cultural composition of modernized societies, contemporary forms of information and mass communication, and decentralized centers of power and legitimacy (Duveen, 2001). In the next section, we will look more closely into this characteristic heterogeneity and dynamism found in today's most contemporary forms of information and communication technology: social media.

Social Media

> *Meaning is not a stable or homogeneous set of processes. Rather, the internal logics of* ***meaning are dependent on the context that makes meaning possible*** *in the first place. For instance, the possibilities for meaning differ depending on whether we are dealing with a face-to-face or phone conversation. So* ***media technologies****, along with the institutional, political, economic, and cultural dynamics within which they are developed,* ***build a specific context for meaning****. In particular, the proliferation of content on social media—where anybody can post anything—introduces a radically different communication context, which in turn affects how we approach meaning.* ***Therefore, examining the changes in meaning production, storage, and circulation introduced by social media technologies is crucial****.* (Langlois, 2014, p. 25; emphasis mine)

Globalization and unprecedented technological advancements have given rise to a new form of global society, "connecting local diasporic communities to multiple public spheres and directing representations to both local and global issues" (Jovchelovitch & Priego-Hernández, 2015, p. 166). This emergence of the 'network society' (Castells, 2000, 2009, 2010) is made possible by the widespread use and significance of Internet and the new

forms of media it makes available for everyday life. Among which are *social* or *participatory media*, which have been defined as:

> web-based services that allow individuals, communities, and organizations to collaborate, connect, interact, and build community by enabling them to create, co-create, modifies [sic], share, and engage with user-generated content that is easily accessible (McCay-Peet & Quan-Haase, 2017, p. 17).

There are at least 10 types of social media, according to McCay-Peet and Quan-Haase (2017). *Social networking sites* such as Facebook, LinkedIn, and KakaoStory (South Korea) are digital platforms that allow individuals (1) to create an online profile in order (2) to build and display their connections with other users and (3) to explore their networks and those of other users within the system (boyd & Ellison, 2008). Another popular type are *microblogs* like Twitter, Tumblr, Instagram, or Sina Weibo (China) that focus on quick posts or brief updates from account owners (e.g., news outlets or celebrities). Other people subscribed to the accounts then receive notifications on each update. Media sharing sites such as YouTube, Flickr, and Snapchat are also widely used as they allow people to upload and thus share different kinds of (usually entertaining) media like (homemade) videos and images. Although *blogs and forums* have existed before, they are also considered social media precisely for being discussion arenas—whether as a part of a webpage (i.e., comment section of blogs like Wordpress) or the whole website (i.e., online forums like Quora)—for different kinds of topics and users. *Social news websites* such as Digg or Reddit can function like web forums for everyday news yet involve an additional participatory mechanism: the platform enables people to "vote" on the different posted or linked items. Those votes eventually dictate in which order posts are displayed on the site. Similarly, *bookmarking sites*—like the current Pinterest and Flipboard and the outdated Delicious and StumbleUpon sites—allow people to socially curate various content from the web, with certain "social filtering" mechanisms like

"tags" that can "provide a mix of both direct (intentional) navigational advice as well as indirect (inferred) advice based on collective public behavior" (Millen, Yang, Whittaker, and Feinberg, 2007: 22, as cited in McCay-Peet and Quan-Haase, 2017, p. 18). As their category suggests, geolocation-based websites or applications provide services that are centered on users' physical location, such as finding or sharing recommended places in a certain locality (e.g., Foursquare) or connecting to fellow users nearby (e.g., Tinder). Recently due to the current pandemic, the last three kinds of social media have become more widely used because of their usefulness for work and education: *collaborative authoring platforms* like Wikipedia or Google Docs that allow people to access, create or revise content (a)synchronously; *scheduling platforms* (e.g., Doodle, Google Calendar, Microsoft Outlook) that make meeting plans and other "group-based event decisions" easier and more efficient especially among users located in different timezones (Reinecke et al., 2013, as cited in McCay-Peet & Quan-Haase, 2017, p. 18); and, finally, *web conferencing applications* such as Skype, Zoom, or Microsoft Teams that make possible group calls, online meetings, and web seminars within a small or big number of users.

However, social media keep on evolving, and more kinds are emerging. For instance, more Instant Messaging applications like Viber, WhatsApp, BAND by Naver (South Korea), and WeChat (China) have emerged. Additionally, other platforms can be categorized into more than one of the types. For instance, Facebook is primarily a social networking site, but now also incorporates conferencing capabilities (i.e., Messenger application). Likewise, the microblog Instagram now allows users to bookmark content into their private collections within the platform. Moreover, within other domains such as market and business research, *consumer review websites* like TripAdvisor or Zomato are a kind of their own; as their category suggests, these social media bring people together for the purposes of discovering or sharing comments and opinions about certain tourist spots, restaurants, products, and so on.

For the purposes of this dissertation—which is an in-depth investigation of social media as a (trans)formative site of SR in cyberspace—the empirical investigations concentrated on the social networking site Facebook. This choice on Facebook as the project's focal social media platform will be elaborated later. For now, we shift our attention to the relation between (social) media and meaning(making) to further emphasize the significance of investigating SR within participatory media.

(Social) Media and Meaning(Making)

Media technologies have always assisted us in our quest for meaning, "both as *signification* (the production of fixed interpretations) and *making sense* (the fluxes that move us, change us, and transform us and our relations to the world)", not just as individuals but as members of communities (Langlois, 2014, pp. 17–18; emphasis mine). Media have provided diverse ways for people to communicate, observe, and record social objects and events (i.e., as data) *and* to understand the relevance and relations of all these data in our lives and social interactions. In Wagoner's (2015) words: "as the media of communication changes in a society, so do social psychological processes" (p. 152; see also Wahlström, 2012).

Starting with print and analog technologies, media have enabled us the transformation of social realities (i.e., mediation) into various data forms (i.e., as text, image, video, sound, or a combination of these types), which in turn have impacted our daily and shared understandings (i.e., representations) of social objects and experiences (Lunt & Livingstone, 2001). In many instances, however, mass media facilitate a one-way stream of mass communication—from (few or elite) producers to audience/consumers—that leads to a "centralised production of meaning" (Wahlström, 2012, p. 31). History presents countless illustrations of how, for instance, television, radio, and newspapers have been used by a few producers (e.g., state, legislative bodies, media conglomerates, and other authoritarian groups) to spread certain narratives, ideologies, or discursive representations (see for example

Adorno, 2001, as cited in Langlois, 2014; Montiel, Umel, & de Leon, 2016) and, unfortunately, market-centric and biased portrayals (see Bleich, Bloemraad, & de Graauw, 2015 for a special issue on Migrants, Minorities, and the Media).

In contrast, social media and other digital technologies have enabled multi-modal, de-centralized data creation and propagation. For instance, Wahlström (2012) illustrates how the Internet's provision of access to diverse kinds of information can reduce ignorance about a public issue (i.e., automation of a local metro system), and how the combined use of analog and digital communication devices enables more flexible information dissemination and emergency response in a rallying center. Using these findings, Wahlström (2012) further concludes that Internet and digital communication technologies influence the speed of anchoring and objectifying process of shared ideas. More on social media's multi-modal and decentralized affordances and challenges in the following section.

In general, however, just having internet access now means people can create and disseminate their own messages; people have become both consumers and producers (Bleich et al., 2015). Social media have further transformed external realities into binary data, which in turn facilitate the creation of more diverse data types and communicative processes with which people are able to describe the world, express themselves, or interact with others (Manovich, 2008, as cited in Langlois, 2014). Just think of recent social media affordances of conducting zoom meetings with virtual backgrounds or taking video calls and simultaneously applying real-time "filters" or artificial effects. Additionally, the past decade has witnessed the popular use of novel social media data forms such as memes and #hashtags and their influential relevance to emotionally and politically charged social behaviors and movements (see Mina, 2019 on memes; Rambukkana, 2015 on #hashtags). Such instances illustrate how data and symbolic representations via social media have become embedded in and emerge from collective, everyday concerns and, within the right conditions, become performative

utterances (see Mina, 2019 on memes; Rambukkana, 2015 on #hashtags).

Both the old and new media's capabilities to impact aspects and processes of meaning-making reminds us of how "[t]echnology, understood as material culture, is a fundamental dimension of social structure and social change" (Fischer, 1992: 1–32, as cited in Castells, 2004, p. 8) and, more importantly, of the general relation of media technologies with power and, ultimately, shared identities and practices. Because meanings are important for how we define both our understandings of the world and ourselves, mass media have been utilized by those in power as a "tool for manipulation… [and for] social and political control" (Adorno, 2001, as cited in Langlois, 2014, p. 3) and, more recently with social media, for digital surveillance and censorship (Heins, 2013-2014). Social media have paved way to what Langlois (2014) has termed "politics and governance of meaning on participatory platforms" (p. 27). Participatory media have become profit-driven products with concealed algorithms that contribute to capitalistic and automated processes of meaning-making (Langlois, 2014).

Nevertheless, media technologies have also been considered tools of collective empowerment and emancipation with which people can collaboratively contest representations (Castells, 2008). Additionally, as contemporary media theorists assert, we are in a "meaning-making trend"—or an era where people are far from being passive consumers of meaning; rather, people have become an "active audience that uses media content to create meaningful experiences" (Baran & Davis, 2015, p. 25)

Either way, what is clear is that media technologies will always be experiential sites of meaning (Gitelman, 2006), whether as substance or practice. Social media are embedded parts of cyberspace and considered "computer-mediated communication (CMC)" that is:

> not just a tool: it is at once technology, medium, and engine of social relations... CMC not only structures social relations, it is the space within which the relations occur and the tool that individuals use to enter that space. It is more than the context within

> which social relations occur (although it is that, too) for it is commented on and imaginatively constructed by symbolic processes initiated and maintained by individuals and groups (Jones, 1998, pp. 11–12).

As our world increasingly digitalizes, social media will only continue to proliferate and to transform together with the relational dynamics and everyday collective meanings that these participatory media facilitate. The next section elaborates more on this, i.e., how social media can continuously change shared meanings and meaning-making: through the diverse affordances and challenges presented by social media (vis-à-vis traditional and mass media) in terms of data production, consumption, and eventually social science research.

Social Media Affordances and Challenges

Social media and their generated data present distinctive affordances and challenges that have been summarized into 6Vs: volume, variety, veracity, velocity, virtue, and value (Quan-Haase & Sloan, 2017; Williams, Burnap, & Sloan, 2016). Each is discussed below.

Volume is the most immediate affordance *and* challenge related to social media, and it refers to the unprecedented amount of data created within these platforms. It is said that 90% of the world's data in 2013 was generated within just two years prior, i.e., from 2011 and 2012 (SINTEF, 2013). This is not so surprising anymore; for instance in 2015, in just two of the most popular interactive platforms in the world—Twitter and Facebook—users send around 350,000 tweets and 'like' an estimated 4 million posts *every minute*, respectively (Carey–Simos, 2015). Such statistics have only increased in the past years, especially as online activity shot up due to the current pandemic (Statista Research Department, 2021b).

Variety pertains to the plurality of data types enabled by social media: from texts, images, audios, or videos, to a combination of these conventional data types such as memes, gifs, emoticons, (hash)tags, geospatial check-ins, among others (Quan-Haase & Sloan, 2017; see also the Sage handbook edited by Sloan et al., 2017 for scholarly works involving various

data types; Mina 2019 for research on memes; Rambukkana 2015 for hashtags). Such diversity in modes of interaction makes it even more interesting for social scientists to study, yet also challenging as this heterogeneity also goes hand-in-hand with a lack of structure and a greater amount of noise or irrelevant data (Williams et al., 2016).

Veracity relates to the quality, authenticity, reliability, and credibility of the abundant, diverse, yet unstructured data generated within social media platforms (Quan-Haase & Sloan, 2017; Williams et al., 2016). Fake news, conspiracies, and other kinds of deceptive and fabricated content have proliferated in social media (see Mitra et al., 2016; Watson, 2021), especially with the presence and even deliberate employment of 'social bots' or artificial user accounts that "rely on computer algorithms to imitate humans by automatically producing content and interacting with other users" (Rubin, 2017, p. 358). As such, systems and approaches for assessing veracity have been increasingly studied and applied, although there remains a lot of work to be done (see Lozano et al., 2020).

Velocity concerns "both the speed at which social media data is generated and how quickly users respond to real world events" (Quan-Haase & Sloan, 2017, p. 6). On the one hand, the real-time, instantaneous data communication made possible by social media is highly useful and beneficial especially for disseminating critical information and responding to critical events like emergencies, calamities, or the current pandemic (e.g., Sarrica et al., 2018; A. Wong et al., 2021). On the other hand, this rapid data flow also means speedy reactions not just from relevant parties, but anyone who gets access to the information. People can easily engage wherever or whenever, and thus can express opinions or act immediately, including further spreading information, whether it be vital and credible news or false and malicious content (refer to Veracity affordance/challenge).

Virtue refers to the ethics involved in the collection, use, or analysis of social media data, whether for academic, economic, political, or social purposes. As concerns on breaches

of privacy and misuse of online data have become increasingly evident (e.g., the Cambridge Analytica scandal, see Isaak & Hanna, 2018; J. C. Wong, 2019), ethical and legal guidelines regarding privacy issues and proper use of online data for various purposes have been created and implemented in different parts of the globe. For instance, the Association of Internet Researchers [AoIR] has released their recommendations and guidelines for internet research ethics (Franzke, Bechmann, Zimmer, & Ess, 2020; Markham & Buchanan, 2012) and the General Data Protection Regulation or GDPR has been established not long ago by the European Parliament and Council of the European Union (General Data Protection Regulation (EU Regulation 2016/679), 2018). Such ethical frameworks will only continue to be embedded in societies as interactions and transactions become increasingly digitalized.

Value brings the previous 5V's together and pertains to "an assessment of how social media data increases our understanding of the social world by opening hitherto unavailable avenues of research and/or augmenting existing work through access to new data" (Quan-Haase & Sloan, 2017, p. 6). Just like any technology, the most fundamental concern remains to be how social media and all the data they make available can be "meaningful" and so enrich human knowledge and relations.

In the next section, I synthesize all previous points of argumentation and present this dissertation's core conceptualization of social media as multidimensional, dialogical, and virtual sites of social representations.

Social Media as Digital, (Trans)formative Sites of Social Representations

> *[A]* ***new global civil society is emerging****… New flows of public opinion, new time-space combinations and new social actors make public spheres polyphonic and polyglot,* ***altering top-down vectors of social influence, the content and structure of social representations and*** *thus* ***public life itself****.* (Jovchelovitch & Priego-Hernández, 2015, p. 166; emphasis mine)

In a world of multiple, transnational public spheres, it becomes vital to develop new ways to investigate social interactions and the formation of shared knowledge. As Jovchelovitch (2007) contends:

> Understanding the transformations of knowledge in relation to social contexts is one of the avatars of the [social representations] theory. Indeed, social representations themselves are forms of knowledge that rely on a specific kind of public sphere, which in turn they help to form and consolidate (p. 78).

As such, if the social representations (SR) theory truly lends itself to the enquiry of the contemporary world and common-sense knowledge, then SR research must expand its theoretical and methodological reach to social media and digital technologies. As a step towards such theoretical and methodological expansion, I assert social media as *digital* (detraditionalized) *public spheres*—virtual sites of meaning-making, practice, and identity negotiations, and hence SR. I expound on this conceptualization by utilizing previously discussed literature and elaborating on social media vis-á-vis the three dimensions of public spheres according to Jovchelovitch and Priego-Hernández (2015)—*political*, *spatial*, and *psychosocial*—plus, time as a fourth dimension (*temporal*). Subsequently, by exploring social media through these public sphere dimensions via empirical investigations focusing on Facebook, we can extend understanding on how certain interactive platforms facilitate and constrain the development and communication of shared ideas, resulting to the "digitalisation of social representations" (Wahlström, 2012) and of social life itself.

Political Dimension

Politically and consistent to the Habermasian sense (Habermas, 1962/1992, 1964/1974) of a democratic assembly, public spheres grant individuals and groups public arenas to express ideas and to participate as equals in rational and critical dialogue

(Jovchelovitch & Priego-Hernández, 2015). With social media, people can examine and criticize not only each other but even the representations and actions of states, organizations, and traditional media.

Although paradoxically, Habermas (1962/1992) considers media (particularly television) as consumerizing the quality of social-political discourse and hence are rather detrimental to public spheres (Örnebring, 2003). Other scholars also elaborated on this negative influence and commodification of media elsewhere. Among the strongest critiques include Fuchs (2014) who asserts the Habermasian public sphere as not just about political communication but also political economy, specifically in terms of command of resources. To be a true public sphere, social media have to be free and independent from any power, intervention, and exploitation of the state and market corporations (Fuchs, 2014).

A more substantive response to such social media critiques cannot be covered here. Nevertheless, this dissertation contends that public spheres and social media need not be conceptualized as a zero-sum game. Despite their capitalistic provision, social media still afford new avenues and creative means for people to uphold communal, anti-capitalist values and to execute participatory democracy. Media (particularly social media) bear great potential as a platform for critical deliberation of competing representations and politically consequential actions (Grbeša, 2003; Shirky, 2011). To deny conceiving such arenas as public spheres because they do not fully conform to the Habermasian conceptualization would be rather "incorrect" (Jovchelovitch, 2001) and "elitist" (Fraser, 1990; Susen, 2011). Alternatively, public spheres and social media are better conceived not as a space that is automatically free from corporate and state control, but one that witnesses and allows for the public to claim command to such space, power, and resources. Borrowing Castells' (2008) definition of the "new public sphere", social media should thus also be considered as "a space

of communication of ideas and projects that emerge from society and are addressed to the decision makers in the institutions of society" (Castells, 2008, p. 1).

Consider how social media such as Facebook, Twitter and Youtube have been recognized to play a vital role in citizen engagement (Skoric, Zhu, Goh, & Pang, 2016), especially socio-political mobilizations such as the Arab Spring revolts (McGarty et al., 2014), public protests against former president Estrada in the Philippines and former prime minister Aznar in Spain (Shirky, 2011), and online collective action in South Korea (Choi & Park, 2013) to name a few. Social media have also contributed to changes on news production and journalism practice, including how migrants and minorities are able to promote their own interests and to (counter)position their identities (Bleich et al., 2015).

The Internet and various social media have afforded opportunities to overcome usual costs or constraints to organizing and participation (e.g., "time, size, knowledge and access," Street, 2011, p. 270; see also Earl & Kimport, 2011), to bridge multiple, fragmented social groups and overlapping public spheres (Earl & Kimport, 2011) within and across nations, and to facilitate socio-political engagement and resistance (e.g., Callison & Hermida, 2015; McGarty et al., 2014; Mina, 2019; Skoric et al., 2016). Such affordances are said to be especially beneficial to minorities, vulnerable groups, and younger generations in their quests to scrutinize and contest mainstream meanings and practices with their own representational systems and visions for society (Luttig & Cohen, 2016; see also Mina, 2019; Rambukkana, 2015). Hence, social media can enhance not only communicative freedom but political freedom to strengthen civil society (Shirky, 2011), pursue social change, and ultimately command greater accountability from those positioned in power (Earl & Kimport, 2011).

In these ways, the political dimension of social media as public sphere centers not only on social media's ability to foster "mutuality in communication and the use of reasons that provide the normative and practical requirements for settling differences and finding

ways of acting in concert" (Jovchelovitch & Priego-Hernández, 2015, p. 165). More importantly, this political aspect highlights social media's accessibility to everyone, not only to elites (Fernback, 1997/2002). Social media allow for the rise of other public spheres or "counterpublics" (Fraser, 1990), e.g., feminists, gays, minorities, even anarchists, and so on. A political space is opened to the plurality of voices and to the ability of these voices to resist and negotiate meanings, positions, and practices. Thus, social media can influence agenda setting, or the way media raises public awareness and concern on issues, and ultimately the way politics in a community or society is practiced (Boynton & Richardson Jr., 2016).

Spatial Dimension

Spatially, public spheres are environments that enable the meeting and movement of bodies and representations (Jovchelovitch & Priego-Hernández, 2015). Social media's spatial dimension can be understood in two ways. On the one hand, it involves the *offline* versus *online* demarcation of space. This demarcation, however, is not too distinct in terms of flow of knowledge, since ideas are seamlessly transmitted and transformed within and between both spaces. *Offline* public spheres — like cafés, parks, streets, beaches, festivals, cities, and so on — are located in natural or manmade geographic structures. However, social media are in the online, virtual space or "cyberspace", which can be accessed through the Internet or "Web 2.0" using gadgets such as computers, tablets and smartphones. Precisely for this virtual nature, social media enable people to transcend geographical and national boundaries of connection. For instance, migrants from different sides of the world can communicate with their loved ones back in the home country, and exchange information with other migrants in the host country without having seen or met each other in person.

Another way of seeing the offline-online spatial dichotomy is through Castells' (Castells, 2009) concepts of *space of places* and *space of flows*. Offline public spheres are a *space of place*s, which is "based on contiguity of practice, [and hence] meaning, function,

and locality are closely inter-related" (p. 34). In contrast, online public spheres are a *space of flows,* which is "made of nodes and networks; that is, of places connected by electronically powered communication networks through which flows of information that ensure the time-sharing of practices processed in such a space circulate and interact" (p. 34).

Alternatively, social media also organize social relations (Jones, 1995) and the elaboration of ideas through their particular "information structures" (Dekker & Engbersen, 2012). As Papacharissi (2009b) states: "The architecture of virtual spaces, much like the architecture of physical spaces, simultaneously suggests and enables particular modes of interaction" (p. 200). For instance, social network sites provide an environment for establishing and maintaining ties (boyd & Ellison, 2008). Facebook, as an example, is characterized by profile pages, groups pages, news feed, comment boxes, features such as 'like', 'comment', 'share', and so on. Microblogs provide a different environment and hence interactive capabilities, like Twitter with its retweeting, hash tagging, and so on. Given such structural attributes, people can generally share more content (longer posts or commentaries, pictures and videos, links, event invites, etc.) in Facebook than they can with Twitter.

Yet such "virtual geographies" (Gunkel & Gunkel, 1997) and their influence on iterations of communication, community, and identity can also differ within the same kind of social media. For instance, among different social networking sites Facebook can be likened to a glasshouse, with an open structure and variety of features that allow for flexible behavioral norms and thus freer interaction (Papacharissi, 2009b). In contrast, LinkedIn has a tighter structure, given the professional nature of the network (Papacharissi, 2009b).

Psychosocial Dimension

Psychosocially, public spheres are "spaces of mediation and communication where self and the other come together in a variety of forms to create identity, representations and imaginations" (Jovchelovitch & Priego-Hernández, 2015, p. 164). Unlike offline public

spheres, there is no actual movement of physical bodies within the virtual realm—yet this is accomplished by social media in a social psychological sense. Clearly, social media is a rich manifestation of *cognitive polyphasia*, or the distinctive psychosocial character of public spheres where different representational systems come together as people communicate and negotiate shared understandings of reality. As people congregate online, they make available a tremendous amount of information. Their expressions and interactions put into motion the meeting, synthesis, and conflict of a vast multitude of representations (see de Rosa et al., 2021; Sensales et al., 2021). In this way, social media afford us a "freedom" that "produces a new reflexivity which allows social representations to clash, to compete, to intermingle, and to appropriate new sense" (Jovchelovitch, 2001, p. 181).

Yet as mentioned earlier, the shared representations that people hold not only bear meanings related to a social object. More importantly, these SR make available positions that people can take in relation to the object (Duveen & Lloyd, 1990/2010). In other words, people also project their "identities, values and ways of life" (Jovchelovitch, 2007) as they interact and exchange ideas. Social media manifests this considerably, since it enables not only interpersonal or mass communication, but also *mass self-communication* (Castells, 2009). This is the novel form of interactive communication that is both far-reaching (hence, mass communication) and self-oriented—content production is "self-generated," message transmission is "self-directed," and content reception and re-mixing from various electronic communication networks is "self-selected" (Castells, 2009, p. 55, see also pp. 63-71).

The self, however, is not only limited to individual identities but also social identities. Groups and communities that have been established first offline find an innovative, material support to connect their local experience to global affairs (Castells, 2010). Now they can make themselves more visible, expand their reach, and acknowledge other groups and communities through social media (e.g., Smets et al., 2020 for examples involving migrant

groups). In enabling networked relations, social media facilitate a certain "politics of recognition—seeing one's community from the standpoint of other communities and a recognition of (constructed and evolving difference)…—[which] ultimately rest on the tensions inherent in social re-presentation[s]" (Howarth, Cornish, & Gillespie, 2015, p. 190).

Temporal Dimension

This dissertation argues for a fourth facet of public spheres that social media manifest quite profoundly: the time dimension. *Temporally*, public spheres are spaces that make salient the existence and passage of time, and with it the development of representations and identities. Consider museums, monuments, or festivals that are rife with narratives, traditions, and collective memories and identities. Think of streets and plazas that have witnessed and continue to witness rallies, campaigns, and revolutions. These spaces are where histories and practices are made, reminisced, and re-presented; these public spheres manifest how knowledge is fundamentally historical just as it is social and cultural (Jovchelovitch, 2001).

Some public spheres (e.g., museums, parks, monuments) are created to allow and even invite people to gather time and again to commemorate what their group or society has gone through in the past. In such assemblies, people collaboratively reconstruct the past in a way that enables them to make sense of the group's present (i.e., concept of SR of history by Liu & Hilton, 2005). The same symbolic activities further inspire a sense of togetherness and collective movement towards a shared future. Jovchelovitch (1995) sums it up well by saying: "It is the arena of public life which provides the conditions not only for discovering the common concerns of the present but also for identifying what the present owes to the past and what hopes it has for the future" (p. 84).

Other public spheres (e.g., streets, plazas, city halls, or town squares) allow people to come together to raise their voices and be heard or to simply celebrate community life. For instance, public spaces are often transformed by migrants into spheres that allow them to

socialize, share daily concerns and reasons for migrating, enact cultural or religious practices, assert belongingness and political recognition, and resist social exclusion (e.g., Becerra, 2014; Cancellieri & Ostanel, 2015; Moya, 2015). As such, public spheres are not only witness to the development of migrant identities and community life; they are reflections and artifacts of the historical and future trends of immigration in cities and nations.

In contemporary times, the Internet and social media redefine the development of the lifeworld of individuals and communities in relation with virtual space and time. Jones (1997/2002, 1998) and Castells (2009) note that the Internet has become a staple part of modern life and exhibits a differentiation of people's sense of time. Time is no longer just lived as the "sequencing of practices" (Castells, 2009); time is now experienced in two ways: as lived time and social time. *Lived time* (Jones, 1997/2002) or biological time (Castells, 2009) is the actual experience and natural passing of time. *Social* or *functional time* is time experienced as a "form of obligation" (Jones, 1997/2002) or in relation to accomplished tasks or productivity (Castells, 2009). In this sense, time can be described as an artifact of human history and progress, especially in terms of industrial capitalism (Castells, 2009).

Social media reflects this separation between people's sense of lived time and social time as participatory platforms make possible multiple tasks and "asynchronous interaction(s) in chosen time, at a distance" (Castells, 2009, p. 34). For instance, people are not only able to converse with several others (e.g., chat with friends back in the home country through Facebook messenger) at the same time, but they can also read news on the Internet and comment on the articles while keeping up with the group exchange. Through social media, people can also take part in discussions or events (e.g. in a Facebook post or group thread) even when all participants are located in different parts of the country or world (e.g., Christiansen, 2017). Another example would be a member of an online community posting a question; for instance, a migrant member can ask for tips on searching for a flat in a

Facebook migrant community page, and s/he gets immediate answers from other migrants without meeting them face-to-face. Others can also come late into an exchange (e.g., days or months after the topic is introduced in the discussion threads) and continue it. The exchange can thus feel like it is just happening again at that very moment.

These extended interactive capabilities provide people digital means to be "in" time (Jones, 1997/2002). By being a space to create and share thoughts, feelings, and stories, cyberspace (and social media) enable people to actively and imaginatively mark and fill the passing of time (Jones, 1997/2002):

> The Internet… is *an imagined and imaginary space*, and thus is *a narrative* both because it is *an area of discursive interaction and* because *it contends*, often very successfully, *for our imagination*. Narratives do not just occupy our time as we read, write, and imagine them, they determine the passage of time ("first this happened, then that happened…") and let us know that in fact time was not empty, it was abundant with activities and experiences we assigned to it. *Such assignation is a political act*, for it *not only establishes what happened* (according to the writer/thinker) *but fixes an identity in time* for those who are part of the narrative (p. 15; emphasis mine).

Perhaps the most manifest way that social media enable us to mark how we spend time is their capability to provide a record of our online interactions. They present us a trail of presence and activity that we can retrace not just to 'go back in time,' but even to delete (as if they never happened) and to follow the trajectories of our expressions and interactions. Facebook and Twitter, for instance, offer 'timelines' of our shared thoughts and feelings, exchanges with friends and networks, pages read and shared, events attended, or people and groups followed. We are likewise 'notified' when we have touched others, as they like, share or comment on what we have posted.

On the one hand, it may also be true that frequent conversations and intertwining narratives through time (whether online or offline) do not automatically make communities in the traditional sense (Jones, 1997/2002). As much as social media enables people to connect and share, they also make it easy to detach themselves and to deny social responsibility and commitment with one click of a button (Jones, 1997/2002). Instead of extending sociability and interconnectedness, people's use of social media may only lead to consumption and isolation (Fernback, 1997/2002).

On the other hand, "the public arena of cyberspace allows us to break our public silence" (Fernback, 1997/2002, p. 37), and hence opens up possibilities for interactions to become more relevant and meaningful. As Stone (1991) explains, virtual communities and virtual space are "passage points for collections of common beliefs and practices that united people who were physically separated" (p. 85). Social media allow the convergence of conscious selves, that though are physically distant, navigate through individual and social histories. Slowly, people can develop a "ritual" of communication (Carey, 2009), achieve similar goals, and ultimately allow the rise of "communities of practice" (Howarth et al., 2015) through "multiple and varied [cultural and contextual] realizations of the social technical potentialities of social media" (Costa, 2018, p. 3653; additions mine). More importantly, such processes are not constrained within local interactions, given the Internet's various levels of reach, i.e., at the societal (local, national, global), intergroup, interpersonal, and individual levels. Hence, social media capture and are constitutive of the transformation of SR at different genetic levels (socio-, micro- and onto-genesis).

In these ways, the aspect of time and its redefined relation with space in the virtual sphere (Castells, 2009) bring together the three previous dimensions—political, spatial, psychosocial—and hence allows us to consider social media as a "co-constructed common ground that is created and at the same time creates collective and social representations"

(Jovchelovitch & Priego-Hernández, 2015, p. 165). In turn, these online SR enable people to negotiate identities, to create and strengthen supportive practices, and to work towards envisioned projects and futures that extend to the offline world.

In the next section and chapters, I substantiate my conceptualization of social media as digital (detraditionalized) public spheres by looking into today's most popular social media platform (i.e., Facebook) in relation to one of the ever–relevant and often controversial topics in human history (i.e., migration and migration-related phenomena) and to the most "social" people in the world (i.e., Filipinos, Kemp, 2021).

Facebook, Migration, and Filipino Migrants

In this section, I briefly discuss literature on Facebook, migration (and migration-related phenomena), and Filipinos (as migrants and social media users). I focus on what makes these three good and viable choices as focal social media platform, object(s) of social representations (SR), and partner community/case study group, respectively, in my subsequent empirical illustrations of social media as digital (trans)formative sites of SR.

Facebook as a Participatory Medium and Digital Public Sphere

When talking about social media, social network sites (SNSs) often come to mind first because of their primary function of connecting people and ideas (boyd & Ellison, 2008). As briefly discussed in the previous section "Social Media," SNSs are defined as Internet applications that allow people to (1) create a web profile, (2) display who they are connected with, and (3) access these connections and the network of others (boyd & Ellison, 2008, p. 211). Also, SNSs are (4) mainly utilized for interpersonal communication (Thelwall, 2009) and (5) have broader, more diverse capabilities than other digital technologies favoring user-generated content like microblogs, photosharing sites, etc. (Rains & Brunner, 2015).

Among existing SNS brands, Facebook has become the biggest SNS in the world since its foundation in 2004 (Statista Research Department, 2021a; Wikle & Comer, 2012).

In 2012, Facebook is the first SNS to reach 1 billion active users; in early 2021, Facebook boasts of around 3 billion monthly active users (Statista Research Department, 2021a). With such active usage, it is not surprising that social scientists see Facebook as an unprecedented 'treasure trove' of data. As Quan-Haase & Sloan (2017) aptly put: "The sheer amount of digitized user-generated content is a potentially rich source of information about the social world including interactions, attitudes, opinions and virtual reactions to real-world events." (p. 4). In one meta-analysis, more than 400 social science studies involving Facebook have been published in peer-reviewed journals between 2005 and 2011 alone (Wilson, Gosling, & Graham, 2012). In another study, more than two-thirds of 327 SNS studies published across six interdisciplinary journals have examined Facebook (Rains & Brunner, 2015).

Within SR research, scholars have begun to pay attention to Facebook only recently (e.g., Bourret & Boustany, 2019; Sarrica et al., 2018; Sensales et al., 2021); this is the case despite Facebook being the consistently most used platform for the past decade (Kemp, 2021) and being among the most visited interactive media in the world (Ortiz-Ospina, 2019; We Are Social & Hootsuite, 2021), even during the current health pandemic (Statista Research Department, 2021b). Furthermore, as stated in the platform's company website, "[p]eople are using Facebook *to connect and strengthen their communities*" (Facebook, n.d.). Connection and communal change are themselves processes and involve collective meanings and practices which are integral to the formation of SR. This dissertation thus contributes to SR literature by exploring Facebook group platform and its various aspects as a digital (detraditionalized) public sphere (as conceptualized in the previous section) that opens a new and rich context where lay meanings, identity negotiations, positions, and collective practices are intermingled (Domínguez et al., 2007) and emerge as a community's symbolic coping.

A burgeoning field that acknowledges Facebook's impact and importance as an interactive platform—and thus where SR research can increasingly delve into—is digital

migration studies. Migrants readily adopt information and communication technologies or ICTs, which support migrants in their everyday diasporic concerns, especially sustaining a "connected presence" both to homeland and host country ties (Diminescu, 2008; I'MTech, 2018). Precisely for their capabilities to establish and nurture social ties, new ICTs such as Facebook have been shown to initiate and facilitate migration processes, assist migrants in their integration within host societies, encourage diaspora engagement, and in the conduct of migration research as a whole (see Dekker & Engbersen, 2012; Dekker, Engbersen, & Faber, 2016; Dekker, Engbersen, Klaver, & Vonk, 2018; Komito, 2011; Komito & Bates, 2011; McGregor & Siegel, 2014; Smets et al., 2020). Apart from these reasons, I discuss in the next section what makes migration (and migration-related phenomena) a perfect choice as the social object of concern for investigating the development of SR in Facebook.

Migration as an Object of Social Representations

We recall how SR emerge within a group in their everyday talk and interaction, and particularly when the community encounters novel social phenomena (Moscovici, 1961/2008, 1988, 1984/2001a). One such SR object is (im)migration or diaspora, which exemplifies an everyday social phenomenon where meanings, identities, or practices are constantly navigated, (re)constructed, and negotiated.

Migration is encountered as an unfamiliar and oftentimes disruptive entity in dispersed people's lifeworld. More often than not, migration happens with culture shock, which can be considered a psycho-emotional manifestation of "cleavages of meaning" (Duveen, 2001, p. 8) in the social psyche of migrant individuals and communities, and for which SR emerge as a community's symbolic coping (Wagner et al., 1999). For instance, new migrants are bombarded by new sets of information, language, social norms, rules, processes, and institutions–in short, new clusters of meanings and ways of being that migrants try to navigate and reconcile with everyday vis-à-vis their existing socio-cultural

know-hows. For instance, in the study of de Moura & Hernandis (2013) Latin American immigrants in Spain developed different sets of beliefs and SR of immigration (i.e., as “power,” “security,” and “nostalgia,” to name a few) that aided the immigrants in adapting to life in their host societies and away from their native lands.

Being a natural part of human life and history, migration is additionally an ever-salient academic and socio-political topic. A rich literature on migration exists in various fields of discussion, research, or intervention (see Deaux & Wiley, 2007; O’Reilly, 2016; Smets et al., 2020; Triandafyllidou, 2016; Tsagarousianou, 2020), yet more studies and discussions on the topic are continuously produced everyday (O’Reilly, 2012). Alternatively, when debates and discourses over migration and migration-related issues erupt within media or public sphere, migration manifests itself as a contentious and even deeper, perturbing collective experience. For example, in the research by Abadia, Cabecinhas, Macedo and Cunha (2018) migrants in the Portuguese-speaking world actively construct and negotiate their sense of identity in relation to prevailing, politically-debated SR of "Lusophony,” or "the idea that the Portuguese-speaking countries share a common past and are consequently tied together by shared cultural values and language" (p. 340). The phenomena of migration and the identity of being a migrant hence become further attached to diverse and sometimes conflicting, politically charged beliefs, with which migrants must deal and reconcile.

Lastly, migration and migration-related phenomena are embodied and performative acts, as the experience of migration is primarily mediated through the human body. In another sense, migration is an example of “representation in action” (Wagner, 2015); migration as an object of SR acquires meaning through multiple, dynamic forms and patterns of mobility and collective interactions through time. As Maller & Strerngers’s (2013) study illustrates, even everyday rituals or activities (e.g., gardening, bathing) travel and transform across space and time (e.g., from one context or country to another or from one generation to

another). Thus, migration is also a practice—a "structured and structuring process" (O'Reilly, 2016, p. 30) that engenders change (O'Reilly, 2012). This dissertation focuses on the (trans)formations of SR of migration in various forms in Facebook among Filipinos who are well-known as migrants and avid social media users—which is tackled in the next subsection.

Filipinos as Migrants and Avid Social Media Users

According to Mendoza (2015), the Philippines "exports more labor emigrants than any other country in the world, and in the most organized way" (2015, p. 2). This claim is supported by statistics showing that the Philippines is consistently among the top 10 migrant-sending countries in the world (United Nations – Department of Economic and Social Affairs Population Division, 2019). The country also boasts of being the top global source for healthcare professionals, especially nurses (Choy, 2003; Ladrido, 2020) and for 25 to 30 percent of the world's maritime and seafaring workers since the 1970s (Asis, 2017; United Nations Conference on Trade and Development [UNCTAD], 2021).

Despite the Philippines being a significant labor-sending country, detailed and consistent yearly statistics are not always available. The Commission on Filipinos Overseas (CFO) approximate that 10.2 million Filipinos lived permanently, temporarily, or irregularly outside the Philippines in 2013 (CFO, 2013). This huge number of Filipinos abroad constitute around 10 percent of the total Philippine population at that time—a statistic that most likely holds until today, if not only slightly decreased because of the pandemic.

Current statistics focus on registered overseas Filipino workers (OFWs), numbering to around 2.2 million in 2019; approximately 7.7% of which were located in Europe (Philippine Statistics Authority, 2019). More than half (56%) of the OFWs in 2019 were female and a majority (76%) were aged between 25 and 44 years old (PSA, 2019). The total remittances sent by these OFWs to the Philippines in 2019 amounted to 35.1 billion US dollars at year's end. This value accounted for slightly more than 9% of the country's gross domestic product

(GDP), making the Philippines the fourth-largest recipient of remittance flows worldwide (World Bank's Global Knowledge Partnership on Migration and Development, as cited in Ochave, 2020). This number might be higher when considering other Filipinos permanently or illegally residing abroad yet still send money to their families in the Philippines.

Clearly, Filipinos working abroad brings huge economic benefits for the Philippine economy. Hence, the Philippine government has encouraged and even institutionalized practices of migration since the 1970s (Asis, 2017). However, for Filipinos the choice to go abroad is motivated by several reasons—whether it be for "the acquisition of skills, pursuit of a career, … the opportunity to reunite with families abroad, experience other cultures, encounter other people and societies, and live a more developed standard of living migrants" (International Organization for Migration [IOM], 2013, p. 5). Nevertheless, the core motivation for many Filipinos' venturing abroad remains to be the desire to provide a better life and future for their families (IOM, 2013; Yeung & Bacani, 2020). Regardless of the known social costs of migration—including separation from the family, estrangement from their own kids, cultural adjustments, and vulnerabilities to exploitation—OFWs take these risks and exhibit resilience and persistence abroad (IOM, 2013; Yeung & Bacani, 2020).

Since Filipino "migration is often motivated by family reasons" (IOM, 2013, p. 6), it is therefore unsurprising that social media have become vital tools for Filipino migrants, their families, and networks (see for example Cabalquinto, 2020; Cabalquinto & Wood-Bradley, 2020; Lorenzana, 2016; Madianou & Miller, 2012). In general, Filipinos have been consistently recognized as the most socially engaged people in the world due to their high amount of time spent online (e.g., see statistics by We Are Social & Hootsuite, 2019, 2021; We Are Social & IAB Singapore, 2015). The Philippines has even been called the "social networking capital of the world" (Universal McCann, 2008) and the "social media capital of the world" (Kemp, 2012, 2021). In his recent review of 10 years of internet and digital media

use statistics published by Data Reportal together with We Are Social, Hootsuite, and other partners, Simon Kemp (2021) confirms the aforementioned titles and states that:

> Filipinos spend more time using the internet than people in any other country around the world. The typical internet user in the Philippines now spends more than 11 hours per day online, compared to a global average of just under 7 hours per day. …[I]t's clear that – once Filipinos do come online – the internet becomes very important to them. …[And] a significant share of the country's online time [i.e., > 4 hours/day] is dedicated to social media activities…("The Philippines: almost always online" and "The Philippines is still the most 'social' country on Earth" sections).

Recently, the Philippines ranked 6th among the top countries with active Facebook users, specifically the third largest Asian Facebook market following India and Indonesia (Data Reportal and Facebook, 2022). Facebook is especially popular and highly used among Filipino migrants and their networks (Kemp, 2012). Facebook provides Filipino migrants multiple ways not only to maintain social ties, but to remain updated of activities and changes back home (Komito, 2011) and to sustain familial roles and duties at a distance (Madianou and Miller, 2012). Additionally, Facebook enables Filipinos to nurture social recognition (Lorenzana, 2016), to resist vestiges of colonialism and renegotiate their cultural identity as Filipino diasporics (Aguila, 2015), and to creatively appropriate mobile photography practices to "perform, experience and negotiate family life" (Cabalquinto, 2020, p. 1619). For the purposes of this dissertation, I will focus on Filipino migrants in Germany, who have not been featured much in social psychology, (digital) media, or (digital) migration literature (exceptions include Hardillo-Werning, 2007; Mosuela, 2018). I will elaborate further on my sample group's background and selection in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 2

METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

> *I do not see the world simply in color and shape but also as a world with sense and meaning. I do not merely see something round and black with two hands; I see a clock and I can distinguish one hand from the other.* (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 33)

This dissertation pursues a detail-rich and contextually sensitive exploration of the role of social media in the (trans)formation of social representations (SR), specifically in the case of the Facebook group platform and everyday migration-related social knowledge. In this chapter, I describe how I accomplished this goal through conducting three exploratory empirical works that follow an overarching qualitative, digital ethnographic methodology. Specifically in the following sections, I first discuss how digital ethnography provided the most appropriate methodological framework, yet also how I adapted it to be critically reflexive and applicable to my chosen platform and 'research base' (Facebook), objects of SR (migration and related phenomena), and partner community/sample group (Filipino migrants in Germany) for all empirical studies. Secondly, I describe my fieldwork and data collection, beginning with a brief background about Filipinos in Germany. I then elaborate on my sampling strategy for identifying my Filipino participants based in Germany in both online and offline spaces. Afterwards, I describe my entry and exit into the 'field' and the various data gathering activities I conducted, particularly my two main data collection strategies—online data gathering and face-to-face focus group discussions—which have two subsections of their own. Thirdly, I focus on the data processing and analytical methods that I employed to answer the specific research questions for each empirical study. Lastly, I share the ethical considerations I faced and my personal reflections on topics of reflexivity, power, and "ethics-of-care" (Leurs & Prabhakar, 2018).

Digital Ethnographic Approach to Social Representations and Social Media

> *On a theoretical level, the ethnographer has to deal with the fact that* ***social media*** *tend to structure online interactions across very fluid, ephemeral and dispersed social forms—a condition that pushes toward* ***radically rethinking the classical ethnographic categories*** *such as field, community, identity, participant, ethics, etc. (Postill, 2008). On a methodological level, social media configure themselves as environments that* ***provide the ethnographer with an array of preset tools that*** *actually* ***organize the space and flow of interaction*** *(think about Twitter's retweets and hashtags) (Marres and Gerlitz 2015), which in some ways* ***channel and constrain the scope of action of the ethnographer and challenge the approach itself****.*
> (Caliandro, 2018, p. 557; emphasis mine)

In this dissertation, I elaborate on social media as a dynamic, digital public sphere that facilitates collective meaning-making by embracing an interpretive epistemological position, particularly a social constructionist paradigm. Social constructionism locates the creation of both knowledge and reality not just inside people's minds and cognitive processes, but primarily within people's exchanges, whether through discursive or non-discursive means (Burr, 2015; Gergen, 1985). Thus, social constructionism pays attention to the significance and diversity of contexts and the "taken-for-granted ways of understanding the world and ourselves" involved within interactions (Burr, 2015, p. 2). In this project, I accordingly note the importance of the social, ethnocultural, and historical milieus and dynamics among my participants and their exchanges, including with me as the researcher. Recognizing my position as a co-constructor of the data, I have made efforts to consistently uphold reflexivity (Finlay & Gough, 2003) and ethics-of-care (Leurs & Prabhakar, 2018), which I describe in the next sections, especially under "Ethical Considerations" and "Personal Reflections".

To answer my research questions, I adopted a qualitative methodology, specifically a contemporary ethnographic research design which allows in-depth investigations of social phenomena. Its historical and anthropological roots enable ethnography to capture the "everyday" and the process of symbolic coping (Flick & Foster, 2008). Its openness to a multitude of methods allows for a rich examination of how people construct their understanding of the world. Moreover, ethnography is a recognized strategy to studying SR (de Rosa & Arhiri, 2020; Duveen & Lloyd, 1993; U. Flick et al., 2015), since ethnography itself is usually described as a process of "making the strange familiar and the familiar strange" (Griffin & Bengry-Howell, 2016, p. 25). Some examples include the ethnographic SR investigations about mental illness (Jodelet, 1989/1991), adult rules as understood by children (Corsaro, 1990), gendered identities (Duveen, 1993), HIV/AIDS and sexual practices (Joffe, 1995, 1998), and stability and change as experienced and constructed by religious communities (Sartawi, 2015).

Ethnography on the Internet – or digital ethnography, virtual ethnography, cyberethnography, social media ethnography, etc. – maintains these fundamental aspects but also formulates its own principles in relation to classic ethnography. Specifically, Pink and colleagues describe digital ethnography as follows:

> [E]thnography generates embedded descriptions and understandings of how people use digital technologies and content in the contexts of everyday places, practices, relationships and routine.[—]...the notion of "digital rhythms"... Digital ethnography draws attention to the mundane and "hidden" dimensions of how and why digital media and content matter (Horst et al., 2012; Pink and Leder Mackley, 2012, 2013, as cited in Pink et al., 2016, p. 70)

This research follows the principles proposed by Pink et al.'s (2016) digital ethnography: multiplicity of media and ways to study the digital life; *non-digital-centric-ness*

of inquiry or the relevance of studying both online and offline lives; *openness and collaborative nature* of the design and process; *unorthodoxy* or attention to alternative forms of communication; and most importantly, *reflexivity* of the researcher and the whole research work. For the specific ways of conducting the study, however, this project mainly utilized an adapted and combined version of two virtual ethnographic approaches. On the one hand, I employed routine and mobile practices presented by Postill and Pink (2012) that are particularly relevant to data collection in social media (to be further elaborated under the subsection on "Online Data Gathering"). On the other hand, how I conducted my fieldwork and how I related with my participants were guided by Aguila's (2014) *virtual endography*—her version of online ethnography that she developed by adapting indigenous methods based on Filipino psychology—given that my partner community consisted of Filipinos.

Aguila's (2014) virtual endography emphasized being in tune with the partner community's cultural ways and beliefs and employing their endogenous or emic ways of engagement and data gathering—like Pink et al.'s (2016) principle of unorthodoxy. As Aguila's (2014) approach was also based on a Filipino sample, it is about conducting research with sensitivity and adaptability to Filipino communication practices, which are rather "indirect, playful and profoundly non-verbal" (Aguila, 2014, p. 60; see also Maggay, 2002). It is also navigating Filipino relational dynamics, which are grounded in the Filipino idea of the self as *kapwa* or oneness between the self and other (Aguila, 2014; Enriquez, 1978). Yet even if research were to engage with a different group of people, Aguila's (2014) approach remains valuable for any ethnographic work online because of its central principle of "focusing on people". For Aguila (2014), "focusing on people" means embracing the Filipino practice of "*pakikipagkapwa tao*, a behaviour dictated by a deep concern for others as *hindi ibang tao* (one-of-us/not alien from me) or empathy. It involves *relationship building* through the *development of mutual trust*" (Aguila, 2014, p. 99; emphasis mine).

Overall, I designed my digital ethnographic approach such that I am able to strategically collect psychosocial data available within the Facebook group platform together with data from offline encounters and engagements; more importantly, my conduct of research is ruled by a disposition of openness, versatility, reflexivity, cultural sensitivity, genuine care, and sincerity towards all people involved in the study, whether they be student assistants, collaborators, informants or co-researcher-participants.

Fieldwork: Sampling and Data Collection

This doctoral project is based on my digital ethnographic fieldwork and collaboration with Filipino migrants in Germany from May 2016 to June 2017. My field activities included pilot fieldwork, informal interviews, (online and offline) participant-observation, online data gathering, and six in-person focus group discussions (FGDs) in various German cities.

Within this section, I first present a brief background of my chosen sample group: Filipino migrants in Germany. Afterwards, I describe how I conducted my fieldwork, beginning with describing my sampling strategy to identify my target online community. Next, I elaborate on my entry and exit into the 'field' or my partner community's Facebook group. Afterwards, I discuss the two main data collection techniques (online data gathering and offline FGDs) and how I processed and analyzed the resulting main datasets for three empirical studies. In the end, I describe some ethical considerations I went through and my personal reflections on my overall conduct of the research.

Sample Background: Filipino Migrants in Germany

This doctoral project focuses on Filipino migrants, particularly an online community of Filipinos based in Germany. Filipino migrants in Germany have not been featured much in social psychology, (digital) media, or (digital or Filipino) migration literature (notable exceptions include Hardillo-Werning, 2007; Mosuela, 2018) despite the following reasons.

Germany has been accepting a rising number of Filipinos in the recent years due to its increasing need for highly skilled migrants, particularly in the healthcare sector and at the height of the current pandemic (Odchimar-Gerlach, 2020; Oltermann, 2020; Patinio, 2021). Particularly in 2015, which was the starting period of this research, Filipinos were among the top foreign nationalities granted with the most approval for employment and international personnel exchanges in Germany (Bundesamt für Migration und Flüchtlinge [BAMF], 2016).

Yet the Philippines and Germany have always had pleasant bilateral relations (German Embassy Manila, 2021). Filipino workers have consistently played a significant role in the German and worldwide maritime industry (German Embassy Manila, 2021; UNCTAD, 2021) and health and care sectors (German Embassy Manila, 2021; Mosuela, 2018; Oltermann, 2020). Additionally, Germany has been ranked eighth top country of destination worldwide and third country of destination in Europe for Filipino emigrants, following only the United Kingdom and Italy based on data gathered from 1981 to 2019 (CFO, 2021).

The earliest wave (1970s) of Filipino migration to Germany comprised mostly of Filipinos working for health and elderly care (i.e., as nurses and midwives) and marine-based sectors such as seafaring and merchant shipping (German Embassy Manila, 2021; Hardillo-Werning, 2007). Another wave of Filipino migrants in the 1980s was defined by many Filipino women who married Germans (Hardillo-Werning, 2007).

Although many overseas Filipinos are now permanently or temporarily in Germany for other reasons (i.e., as students, scientists, engineers, information technology professionals, and so on), the defining trends from the two earliest waves of Filipino migration to Germany have lingered as Filipinos continue to be recognized in these employment sectors. In 2017, for instance, German was the top 4 foreign nationality with whom Filipino women are married (Philippine Statistics Authority, 2017). Additionally, since 2013 the Philippines and Germany governments have nurtured their “Triple Win Project” agreement, which aimed at

"sustainable recruitment of nurses" from the Philippines in response to Germany's rising health and elderly care needs (Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit [GIZ] GmbH, 2022), including at the height of the current COVID-19 pandemic (Odchimar-Gerlach, 2020; Oltermann, 2020; Patinio, 2021).

In 2013, there were around 47,214 Filipinos in total who were permanently, temporarily or irregularly living in Germany (CFO, 2013). Based on recent statistics available, there were at least a total of 28,985 Filipino nationals registered in 2019 and reflected in the official migration report of the German Federal Government (Bundesministerium des Innern, für Bau und Heimat [BMI] & Bundesamt für Migration und Flüchtlinge [BAMF], 2022). However, these 2019 data do not reflect the number of Filipinos who have gained German citizenship by naturalization.

Based on recent German government migration reports (i.e., BAMF, 2016; BMI & BAMF, 2019, 2020a, 2020b, 2022), a consistent majority of Filipinos that arrive in Germany each year are female—a statistic consistent with older works stating that most Filipinos in Germany and Europe in general are women (e.g., Bagasao, 2007; Hardillo-Werning, 2007). Unfortunately, current and more detailed data on other basic demographics such as highest level of education or various occupations or professions held by Filipinos in Germany are not available. Nevertheless, Filipinos in Germany are known to be highly socially engaged, both in terms of participating in civic organizations and holding community activities (Hardillo-Werning, 2007)—something that will also be exhibited in this dissertation's findings.

Sampling Strategy and Identifying the Partner Community

To identify which among the Filipino migrant communities in Germany to specifically collaborate with, I employed an overall purposive (non-probability) sampling approach, which enables a selection of sample group "for a purpose, in order to access people, times, and settings that are representative of given criteria" (Ritchie and Lewis, 2003,

as cited in O'Reilly, 2009, p. 196), particularly that of being "information rich" relevant to my research questions (Schreier, 2016, p. 88). I also applied criterion sampling (Schreier, 2016) and the insights by Kaur-Gill and Dutta (2017) in identifying a digital ethnographic field site, especially a consideration of how a specific digital platform or technology (in this case, Facebook group platform) manifests among members of a target community, "the interface of the medium,… what economies that technology serves. …[and] how the media are used in diverse ways that may/may not reproduce elements of power and its institutions" (p. 4). For the focus group discussions (FGDs), I also relied on virtual snowball sampling (Baltar & Brunet, 2012), where members of the partner community were encouraged to extend the invitation to participate in the focus groups to fellow Filipinos in Germany whom they know within or without the Facebook group.

My sample group was an online community of Filipinos based in Germany formed within the Facebook group platform. With the term *online community*, I applied the definition and the following conditions set by Quentin Jones (1997, as cited in Caliandro, 2018, p. 561): a collective formed within cyberspace that (1) is located within a particular virtual platform or "common-public-place" of interaction, (2) comprises at least two interlocutors, and (3) exhibits "interactivity" and (4) "sustained membership over time" (Gruzd, Wellman, & Takhteyev, 2011, p. 1298). The online community's active engagement and sustained membership should also be motivated by a "commitment in social organization" (Fernback, 2007, p. 64), not just out of common interests (e.g. fandom, buying-and-selling) but primarily with the intention to nurture a sustained communal sense of belonging and support (Gruzd et al., 2011 also reflective of the "imagined community" by Anderson, 2006).

With these criteria, I identified my target partner community by doing the following. One, I conducted a manual search of Facebook groups that contained variations of combinations of the keywords "Filipinos", "Pilipino", "Pinoys", "Pinays", "Philippinen",

"Germany", "DE", "Deutschland". I took note of at least five of the biggest groups at that time that fit my selection criteria of a Facebook community of Filipinos based in Germany established for at least 4 to 5 years by the start of the study and focuses on the Filipino everyday migrant life (i.e., daily concerns, language learning, Filipino-German relations to name a few). Hence, I excluded Facebook groups that featured commercial interests (e.g., buy-and-sell Filipino migrant groups) or that focused on religious affiliations or regional ethnic memberships in the Philippines. I also did a preliminary fieldwork by joining these Facebook groups and observing interactions to see if the Facebook group indeed fulfilled my selection criteria. Two, I made various networking endeavors to several Filipino communities in Germany, to be able to gather contacts and map out key informants and collaborators. In the process, I was able to gain the support from and to conduct informal interviews online and offline with contacts from the Philippine Embassy in Berlin and the European Network of Filipino Diaspora (ENFiD). I asked contacts about Facebook groups that first came to mind or that they heard of as active online Filipino communities. Three, I joined the Facebook group "Filipino Students, Alumni and Academics in Germany (FSAAG)" which was another place where I could ask around, as suggested by one of my key informants.

In all three steps above, one Facebook group page of Filipinos living temporarily or permanently in Germany was repeatedly mentioned. It was the largest Facebook group focusing on the Filipino members' everyday life in Germany during the time of the study, with around 3,500 members at the start of the official data collection period (December 2016) to more than 4,000 members by exit from the field (June 2017). This Facebook group became my main partner community and research 'base' or 'field' in my doctoral project.

Data Collection

I started an active online presence in the partner Facebook community around June 2016. I conducted minimal participant-observation, such as thanking the community for

accepting my ‘join’ request and introducing myself as new in Germany as a PhD student. I also already hinted on the possibility of asking the support of the community for my project. The active yet minimal participation I did during this period included ‘liking’ some posts, commenting ‘thank you for sharing this information’, and asking for a few tips, such as good German language schools in Bremen or the most affordable way to deal with garden algae.

Entry into and Exit from the ‘Field’

To gain official ‘entry into the field’ or introduction as a researcher into the Filipino migrant community in Facebook, I first messaged and gained the permission and support of the group creator and main administrator (henceforth, ‘admin’) through Facebook’s Messenger application in November 2016. Thereafter, we had a face-to-face meeting, so that I might establish greater rapport and I could clearly share to her my planned research activities. After that, she also introduced me online to the other administrator of the group (hereafter, ‘co-admin’), and so I gained the co-admin’s help and consent. Together, the admin and co-admin became my ‘gatekeepers’ to the Facebook group.

Afterwards, the administrators introduced me to the community as a researcher, and openly asked on my behalf for the members' support and participation in my research activities. Several members gave their positive responses and the number of visitors in the project's Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) page in my blog site spiked during this time. I also tried to send out personal letters of invitation through Facebook's private messaging system. Some responded with their willingness to help, some asked questions or clarified details of the activities, but many unfortunately simply read my messages without any reply. At some point, I had to stop the private messaging because the number of members consistently increased every day and some members began to treat me simply as a fellow migrant (e.g., exchanging intimate stories, calling me up at night, and inviting me to social affairs).

As a final effort to officially reach many of the members, the co-admin and I scheduled, advertised in the group, and eventually conducted from his own home a 1.5 hour 'Facebook Live' Video that all members of the community could access and watch. The live video enabled me to introduce myself personally (albeit online) to the members and, in turn, the video allowed them to see how I looked, to ask questions, and to give comments prior to the conduct of different research gathering activities. This Facebook Live Video was made into a 'pinned post' for at least two weeks on the Facebook group page so that members who were not present during the actual live feed could still watch it, write comments, or send me private messages for any questions that they might have.

Afterwards, I continued to do various efforts to maintain interaction and rapport with the online community, including (but not limited to) face-to-face meetings with the administrators, participant-observations in some of the group's offline gatherings, and posting of public announcements (whether text or video reminders) on the Facebook group page throughout the research process. Schedule of research activities and invitations to participate were always made 'pinned posts', which remained the first thing that members read on the group page for at least a week.

At the end of June 2017, I formally 'exited' the field by conducting final offline meetings with the administrators and posting a 'thank you' message to the whole community. I also temporarily deactivated my Facebook account for several months to create an actual sense of 'exit from the field' and to lose in the process any administrator privileges that were offered to me by the administrators. Nevertheless, I kept my personal/professional blogsite accessible on the internet for several months, and I assured my partner community that they could still reach me through my professional contact details if they ever have questions or concerns about the project. I also promised to re-connect once I have finished my analyses, so that I may be able to share with them and think with them how to apply my findings.

Online Data Gathering

My online ethnography and Facebook group 'immersion period' followed the five overlapping sub-practices or routines of catching up, sharing, exploring, interacting, and archiving proposed by Postill and Pink (2012). *Catching up* included going through all the previous activities within the community, observing, and being updated with latest interactions or events, and so on. *Sharing* comprised a form of active participation in the community by sharing links, news, and information, including the researcher's own administration of her ata gathering activities, invites to an event, and updates of her project. *Exploring* usually meant the practice of catching up and sharing, where the researcher followed shared links, glances or reads on the content, but rarely ventured too far and immediately returned to the 'base' or Facebook group. *Interacting* was a step higher in the researcher's active participation which involved (but was not limited to) commenting, posting, 'liking', and adding fellow members to her friends' list if she was sent a friend request. This, however, was limited to the group administrators and key informants. Interacting also included some long series of face-to-face, mobile and online encounters, just like in classic ethnographic practice where the researcher goes where the community goes. This practice subsumed the focus group discussions detailed in the next subsection. Finally, *archiving* primarily consisted of documenting (i.e., saving a copy of) posts and discussions, processes, and activities at a scheduled period.

A mixture of purposive, random sampling procedure was employed under the *archiving* practice. Within the 3-month period from January to March 2017, I manually collected posts from the migrant community's Facebook group page every Monday through screenshot captures saved as PDF documents. The Facebook group's search function was also utilized to identify any discussion threads where members or administrators themselves specifically asked and talked about Filipino migrant life. The data from the PDF screenshots were then

processed manually (i.e., transferred into Excel sheets). Details on the data processing will be discussed later in the Data Processing and Analysis section.

Originally incorporated in this project's Facebook group immersion period were two other data gathering methods. One, a brief online survey that was first sent out in the community page to gather the members' demographic information, members' use of Facebook in general and the community page specifically, and use of other social media. Second, members were invited to join a photovoice activity, where migrants were asked to send in three pictures representing the first three things that came to mind describing a series of topics, such as "New Year's Eve", "The Philippines", and "Germany". The participants were also asked to write a short caption of two to three sentences describing each photo. This technique was intended to be a creative and highly participatory, digital alternative to the usual word-task association activities employed in SR studies. Unfortunately, only a total of 57 members and 8 members participated in the online survey and photovoice activities, respectively. Hence, I decided to concentrate on the online ethnography and focus group data instead. I did, however, also ask focus group participants to answer the survey (on paper) at the start of the focus group session so I could gain their demographic profile.

Focus Group Discussions

Focus groups or focus group discussions (FGDs) are a widely used data collection technique in social science research; they are "situated communication activities in which we can examine language, thinking and knowledge in action and so they provide manifold research opportunities for taking a dynamic research perspective (Marková, Linell, Grossen, & Salazar-Orvig, 2007, p. 2). FGDs usually involve a small group of participants, from 4 to to 12 people invited by researchers for a particular scientific purpose (Marková et al., 2007). FGDs are usually conducted instead of interviews when researchers not only aim to access people's individual narratives about everyday life or certain issues, but also to observe and

note the social dynamics within the group, such as processes of consensus, contestation, and negotiation (Frisina, 2018), non-verbal discursive cues, and "dynamic interdependencies [that] co-exist among participants and their ideas" (Marková et al., 2007, p. 3). FGDs are meant to be like every day, spontaneous conversations, and are thus conducted in a way that allows people to freely express their ideas. When done right, FGDs are able to be "a 'safe space' for generating counter–hegemonic discourses" (Frisina, 2018, p. 190). As such, FGDs are commonly used within migration studies that usually involve participants from minority or vulnerable populations (Frisina, 2018). Similarly, given its focus on the collective unit, interactivity, and dialogical process of knowledge creation, FGDs are employed by SR researchers (U. Flick & Foster, 2008; U. Flick et al., 2015). For the same reasons, I employed FGDs in examining the shared ideas of migration (and migration-related phenomena) among Filipino migrants in Germany belonging to my partner community on Facebook.

Although this project's 'research base' is the Facebook group platform, interactions of the members *outside* Facebook—with each other and the rest of the Filipino community in Germany, the Philippines, or elsewhere—remain significant to what happens within the online community. As reiterated at the start of this methodology chapter, this dissertation aimed to be non-mediacentric, to "follow the people", and thus to connect the offline and online fields. I accomplished this by conducting my FGDs *offline* or face-to-face in or nearby six different German cities, namely Bremen, Cologne, Dusseldorf, Essen, Frankfurt, and Munich. The FGDs were conducted from April to May 2017. Participants were recruited through snowballing: invitations to the FGDs were posted within the partner migrant community on Facebook.

Before the FGD proper, the participants were asked to accomplish a printed copy of the online survey that was initially sent out in the online community's Facebook page. This survey similarly inquired about the basic information of the participants and their use of Facebook, the community page (if they were members), and other social media platforms in their everyday

migrant life. However, the only survey data considered in this dissertation, particularly in Chapters 4 and 5, were the participants' demographic information.

Table 2 summarizes the demographic profile of the 33 FGD participants. All were first-generation immigrants or Philippine-born individuals who relocated to Germany temporarily or permanently as adults. Their ages ranged from 23 to 71 years old ($\mu_{age} = 43$). There was a greater proportion of Filipino women who participated in the FGDs, (79% or 26 out of 33 individuals), which could be a result of the snowballing, yet might also reflect the dominantly female demographic of Filipinos in Germany (Hardillo-Werning, 2007). Majority of the participants (60%) migrated to Germany due to marriage, partnership, or family reasons.

Table 2

Basic Profile of Focus Group Discussions[*]

Focus Group	**Number of Participants**	**Age Range**	**Female** Frequency (%)	**Original main reason for migrating to Germany** Frequency (%)		
				Study	**Work/ Work of spouse**	**Marriage/ Partnership/ Family**
1	8	23–57	8 (100%)	1	3	4
2	5	27–58	3 (60%)	–	1	4
3	6	27–38	5 (83%)	–	3	3
4	4	27–66	3 (75%)	–	1	3
5	5	30–71	2 (40%)	–	4	1
6	5	49–66	5 (100%)	–	–	5
Total	**33**	**23–71 ($\mu_{age} = 43$)**	**26 (79%)**	**1 (3%)**	**12 (36%)**	**20 (61%)**

[*] See A6. of the Appendix for a more detailed table on descriptive information of FGD participants.

Out of the 33 participants, five were not members of the partner community on Facebook but were friends by those members who attended the FGDs and invited these non-members to join. Most of these non-members belonged to a younger adult age group (e.g., aged 20 to 35 years old) of first-generation migrants. These non-members are significant to note; although they were not originally members of the Facebook group at the time of the FGDs, these non-members contributed to the way members negotiated their shared ideas on everyday migrant life and interactions within the Facebook community (in Chapter 4 and 5) *and* the role that Facebook plays in members' contestations of certain co-ethnic SR and positionings of overseas Filipinos (in Chapter 4).

FGDs were conducted in mixed Filipino and English, although participants sometimes used German terms. Participants gave their written and oral consent (see A3. in Appendix for copy of consent form) to be in the focus groups and for the discussions to be audio-recorded, transcribed, and analyzed for publication. They were also informed of their right to withdraw participation during any phase of the study.

Data Processing and Analysis

Two main datasets were processed and analyzed in this project. One was the online data consisting of the manually scraped Facebook group posts. Two was the offline data comprising the transcripts from the six focus group discussions.

The *online* dataset originally in PDF files were transferred to Excel sheets. Specifically, the textual content of top 50 posts from each weekly collection were encoded into spreadsheets. Any identifying information such as usernames and links were omitted. Posts that only contained stickers, images, emoticons, videos, or hyperlinks were excluded. Total number of cases or analytical units were 12,039 posts by 1329 members. Names, pictures, and any information that might identify the participants were redacted or changed to pseudonyms when used in the analysis.

The dataset reflected the Filipino migrants' multilingualism, and thus comprised texts from multiple national languages, namely Filipino, English, German, and two regional languages from the Philippines: Bisaya and Ilocano. However, multiple scans of the data, including during the encoding phase, revealed that most of the posts were written in mixed combinations of the three main languages (Filipino, English, and German). The considerably small percentage of posts in the regional languages were not included in the analysis, and no translation was done with the remaining corpus.

The *offline* dataset comprising the FGDs were transcribed with the help of three student assistants, who were native Filipino and English speakers. Two of the student assistants had working knowledge (Level B2) of German and they transcribed five out of the six audio recordings. I reviewed each transcription and corrected any misunderstood portions. In excerpts, pseudonyms were used in place of the participants' real names, unless the participant explicitly wished to be cited. All excerpts were translated by me, unless otherwise stated. I retained and italicized some original terms used by the participants for emphasis.

Table 3 shows a summary of the three empirical chapters, particularly the dataset and analytical methods used for which study. The research questions were formulated to illustrate the different dimensions of social media as a public sphere, although these dimensions naturally overlap. The first research question (covered in Study 1, Chapter Three) emphasizes the social psychological dimension (e.g., in terms of cognitive polyphasia) of social media as a public sphere by showing the various meanings that Filipinos hold in their everyday Facebook group interactions and when they talk explicitly about migration in the online community. The second research question (Study 2, Chapter Four) accentuates the political dimension (e.g., in terms of active recognition or resistance) by highlighting the migrants' positionings or discursive negotiations of rights and duties. The third research question (Study 3, Chapter Five) highlights the spatial and temporal dimensions by analyzing

Table 3

Summary of Empirical Chapters

	Study 1 (featured in **Chapter 3**)	**Study 2** (featured in **Chapter 4**)	**Study 3** (featured in **Chapter 5**)
RQs	What are the social representations (SR) of migration formed within a migrant community's Facebook group interactions? Specifically in the chapter: a) What are the most salient topics that define the everyday Filipino migrant life in Germany as they are constructed within the migrants' Facebook group? b) Which shared meanings of migration are communicated through these dominant topics? c) How do these SR of migration reflect Filipino socio-cultural values, norms, and practices?	What is the role of Facebook in the way migrants discursively position themselves and their co-ethnics vis-à-vis the migrants' shared understandings of their ethnic identity? In the chapter: a) What are the major storylines that outline the participants' collective ideas of "being a Filipino" in their discussions about migrant life in Germany? b) How do the participants discursively position themselves and co-ethnics vis-à-vis their constructions of Filipino identity? c) What is the role of Facebook in these Filipino identity constructions and positionings?	How does Facebook enable migrants to negotiate the diverse spatio-temporal aspects of diaspora (i.e., past–homeland vis-à-vis present–hostland practices)? In in the chapter: a) How do Filipinos make sense of their overlapping ideas about the Philippine homeland and German hostland? b) How do they navigate this interplay between the home and host spatio-temporal relations in the digital context of Facebook group platform? c) What other spatio-temporal constructions arise from these migrant community interactions on Facebook and for what diasporic ends?
Main Data Source	Online data a) Posts from January to March 2017 b) Select past discussion threads that explicitly talk about migration	Offline data: Six focus group transcripts	Online data Offline data
Analysis	Mixed methods a) Quantitative: Text mining (adapted from Chartier & Meunier, 2011) b) Qualitative: Pragmatic-discursive analysis (based on Moscovici, 1994 and Slocum–Bradley, 2010)	Qualitative method Integrated SR–Positioning analysis (based on Andreouli, 2010 and Slocum–Bradley, 2010)	Qualitative methods a) Online ethnographic analysis (adapted from Christiansen, 2019) b) Chronotopic discursive psychology (based on Cresswell & Sullivan, 2020)

participants' shared meanings of their home and host lands as they are anchored in space and time (i.e., concept of timespace or chronotope to be discussed in Chapter Five); how Facebook's architecture and affordances enabled the participants to re-enact such shared spatio-temporal constructions online; and how such Facebook re-enactment in turn allows a researcher a 'hermeneutic gaze' of irony (Cresswell & Sullivan, 2020) into the flow of meanings and identity negotiations (in relation to migration) within the online community.

Ethical Considerations

As for any ethnographic research, many ethical concerns arise, including the ways that the researcher enters the field, how data is obtained, preserved, and analyzed, and how to protect the privacy and anonymity of the participants. These issues become more significant and varied throughout the research process when ethnography is conducted on the internet, which is a vast network of connections and information. By consistently consulting the research supervisors, other researchers, and existing ethical guidelines for Internet studies (Franzke et al., 2020; General Data Protection Regulation (EU Regulation 2016/679), 2018; Markham & Buchanan, 2012; Pink et al., 2016), the researcher endeavored a persistent adherence to the fundamental tenets of research ethics throughout the conduct of the project.

The following considerations also guided this dissertation. Given the controversies on Facebook privacy and data use (C. Flick, 2016; Isaak & Hanna, 2018), the researcher anticipated the members of the partner migrant community in Facebook to be wary of providing access to their data. Even if Facebook's data policy defined posts on 'Closed Groups' in 2015 (changed into 'private' yet 'visible' groups in 2019, Davis, 2019) as public information to the active members, I still created a letter detailing the project, its objectives, its commitment to the members' rights and privacy, and the actual request of consent. I also met with the admin and co-admin face-to-face several times and attended some offline

gatherings throughout the research process. I also neither ventured to nor gathered data from individual Facebook member profiles.

I also made various efforts to establish rapport, credibility, and transparency with the community. I created a blog website in addition to my BIGSSS profile website to establish online reputation and to assist in rapport building during fieldwork. In addition to my own Facebook profile, the blog enabled me to provide a site where the community members could know more of my work, research background, details of the project and each data gathering activity, and subsequent updates on the progress of the project. The 'Facebook Live' Video that I did together with the co-admin was also crucial for gaining the trust and support of the whole Facebook group. The interactive video gave a 'face' to me as the researcher and provided a real-time and audio-visual way to show the online community that I was real and am indeed in contact with the administrators. The Facebook life was also crucial for me to exude an open and warm presence, albeit online, as I talked with the co-admin; shared more about my person, the core details of her project and, the decision of focusing on Filipinos living in Germany; and answered some questions and clarifications from the members of the online community.

During the data gathering activities, informed consent was obtained in the following ways. The data gathering activities were advertised ahead of time and placed on a 'pinned post' on the Facebook group's page during the period that the activities were held. A statement and a link referring to the project's FAQ page on my blogsite were always included, especially during FGD advertisements. People who took part in the FGDs were required to completely read, understand, and sign printed consent forms before the actual exchanges. The FGD consent forms clearly requested the participants' approval for data from the discussions to be audio-recorded, transcribed, and analyzed.

Additionally, student assistants who transcribed the FGDs were required to sign contracts indicating an obligation to uphold anonymity and confidentiality of all the data that they would handle even after the period of their services. They were also required to delete every copy of the files that they had on the project after their contract period. Hence, only I have copies of all datasets, including the audio recordings from the FGDs. Currently, I am preparing to securely store the data long-term in a research archive.

Personal reflections: On reflexivity, power relations, and ethics-of-care

In this section, I share some of my "theoretical confession[s]" or reflections about my "history, subjectivity[,] and social positioning as [a researcher—which are] a vital resource for the understanding of, and respect for, those under study (Willis, 2000, p. 113, additions mine) throughout my research. I have endeavored a consistent, critical awareness of my positionalities—both as a researcher with social constructionist leanings and as an 'insider' for being a Filipino and migrant in Germany myself during the conduct of this project—and the advantages, disadvantages, rights, and responsibilities that these identities entail.

Deciding on partnering with my fellow Filipinos in Germany required a strong sense of reflexivity (Finlay & Gough, 2003) and responsibility in me, as I was aware of Filipinos' openness and willingness to help, especially towards co-ethnics. This 'insider' advantage indeed made it easy for me to obtain the trust and acceptance of my target community and their participation in my data gathering activities. Later, I also discovered that the community supported me even without seeing me in person because they held me in high regard for having graduated from Ateneo de Manila University, one of the prestigious schools in the Philippines, and for reaching Germany on scholarship as a PhD researcher. Just by my three statuses as a Filipino co-ethnic, Ateneo graduate, and doctoral researcher, my partner community regarded me with authority and credibility and accorded me with access into their online community life.

Yet regardless of the benefits that my social positioning entails, informants, gatekeepers, and participants also have their own power that they could exercise throughout the research process. Participants knew that they could turn down any of my invitations; message me personally if they would want any of their data to be removed in my data corpus; or disengage and decide not to participate at any point in the study, even if they previously agreed to be involved. There was even a point when I was accorded with more power and authority than was necessary. For instance, after several offline interactions and meetings, the main admin of the Facebook group offered me administrator privileges. I expressed my utmost gratitude *and* apologies, making it clear that I could not receive such administrator privileges. I declined, knowing that such administrator privileges would give me, the researcher, great power over the Facebook group, such as a the right to accept members, delete member posts, determine 'pinned posts', and so on. Additionally, I was already almost at the end of my data collection period, and the co-admin had been very helpful and conscientious with keeping my research announcements as a 'pinned post'. Yet the main admin insisted on these privileges, making me a co-admin despite my refusal. Her reasoning being so that I might be able to make my posts the 'pinned post' on the group, since she might not always be able to do so whenever I made a request. Eventually, it came to light that the main admin had hoped to make me a permanent member and co-admin in the group, thinking that my role as a researcher would end once my data collection was done.

Indeed, if not "for the grace, patience, and interests of the people involved, there would be little research" (Wekker, 2006, p. 4, as cited in Leurs, 2015, p. 81)—or social science, for that matter. Consistently acknowledging how I was seen and the extent of power and trust accorded to me by my partner community, I thus persevered to always practice an ethics-of-care (Leurs & Prabhakar, 2018)—responding to the community members' support, openness, and trust towards me both as co-ethnic and researcher by also engaging with them

with genuine care and sincere interest. I entertained personal inquiries and welcomed conversations or calls even when they were not related to my study. Yet I was also honest whenever I felt uncomfortable revealing more intimate concerns. Whenever FGD participants started sharing personal details and experiences, I would also gently inquire whether they would prefer that I stop the recording first before resuming their stories. Additionally, I always made it a point to introduce myself and to remind participants about my role as a researcher partnering with the community, including in my posts on the Facebook group. Most importantly, whenever I was given more power than necessary (i.e., being given Facebook admin rights or access to personal information), I made sure to express my appreciation, yet also politely declined such privileges. Later, the administrators and participants also shared to me that it was this authenticity and honesty on my part that also made their involvement in my research enjoyable and meaningful.

The knowledge and help of the gatekeepers or Facebook group administrators were also crucial for the success and smooth conduct of my research. When I was having difficulty trying to contact every member of the Facebook group through private messaging, it was the co-admin's idea to conduct a Facebook Live Video with him so that I may be able to gain the attention of active members in the online community. It was also the admins' idea for me to design my focus group invitations like advertisements, i.e., using a photo of the city where the discussion will be held and only putting the most necessary textual details, i.e., short description of focus group, date, time, location, and my contact details.

Even if my survey or photovoice activities in the community did not generate high turnout, the members of the community were all generally supportive. In fact, some members repeatedly asked and requested for more focus group discussions to be held. This could imply that members in the community still preferred the more collective and personal nature of the focus groups. Perhaps, if the online survey and photovoice activities were done in-person or

solely among the focus group participants for an extended amount of time, these two other data collection tools may have had greater turnout rates.

I also made different networking endeavors to various Filipino communities in Germany. One of the biggest networking attended a conference by the European Network of Filipino Diaspora (ENFiD) last 16–19, September 2016. The organization has opened great networking opportunities for me, not just to the Philippine Embassy and Filipino migrants here in Germany but also in 16 more countries in the European Union. The chairperson of ENFiD-Germany has already assured me her support for conducting my focus group discussions (FGDs) in the Philippine Consulate in Essen. She and another contact from the Philippine Embassy in Berlin will also connect me further to the Philippine Ambassador to Germany for the rest of my target cities/locations for FGDs.

As I analyzed my data, I kept in mind the abundant generosity and trust of all the people who supported and assisted me throughout my research work, especially my partner community. Hence, I made sure that I kept my translations and analysis as close as possible to the meaning conveyed in participant utterances. Also, I maintained an iterative approach by systematically and reflexively conducting several alternating cycles of immersion and prudent distancing from the material and from writing the chapters.

After exiting the field, the choice of temporarily deactivating my Facebook account for several months was a decision for ‘self-care’ on my part as a researcher. Being exposed to social media and immersed in the digital rhythms and practices of the community demanded a lot of energy physically, mentally, and emotionally. Hence, I felt the need for a strong, online hiatus. In turn, this online hiatus and distancing from my research helped me to re-engage with my notes and data with “fresh eyes” and renewed energy.

CHAPTER 3

FACEBOOK AND SR OF FILIPINO MIGRANT LIFE IN GERMANY

A combined text mining and pragmatic-discursive approach

'When I use a word,' Humpty Dumpty said in rather a scornful tone, 'it means just what I choose it to mean–neither more nor less.'

'The question is,' said Alice, 'whether you can make words mean different things–that's all.'

'The question is,' said Humpty Dumpty, 'which is to be master–that's all'

— Lewis Caroll, *Through the Looking-Glass*

The excerpt above shares a simple yet sometimes taken-for-granted insight about language and meaning that I interpret as follows: the value of words or utterances is not only based on their conventional, denotative sense or their definition in a dictionary (i.e., semantics), but also based on their meaning in context or as words are deployed in discourse (i.e., pragmatics). In this chapter, I relate this insight to how we may be able to explore social representations (SR) within social media using computational methods (e.g., text mining) without compromising both aspects of linguistic communication.

In this chapter, I focus on SR as *content*—or as a diverse set of shared discursive meanings of a social object or phenomenon—among members of a collective formed *within* a specific digital platform. More specifically, I illustrate how migration (as the SR object) can be studied as a digitally and collectively formed network of everyday communal topics of concern and import among members of a Facebook group of Filipino migrants in Germany. In doing so, this chapter also demonstrates the psychosocial dimension of social media as a digital (detraditionalized) public sphere.

To achieve the aforementioned purposes, I first situate the chapter's empirical investigation within the emergent field of digital migration and how the field's scholars provide a critical, caring, and reflexive template for employing mixed methods in migration research. I then present SR theory as a compatible framework that digital migration scholars can peruse to social psychologically ground the use of text mining methods (TMMs) to analyze migrant issues and experiences captured within abundant, naturally occurring social media data. Afterwards, I discuss the use of TMMs in SR literature. Finally, I present an empirical analysis of digital ethnographic data using a mixed methods approach adapted from Chartier and Meunier's (2011) text mining method for SR combined with a pragmatic-discursive analysis (Moscovici, 1994; Slocum-Bradley, 2010).

Digital Migration and Text (Mining) Analytics

Digital migration or digital diaspora is a burgeoning area of scholarship that spans multiple disciplines—especially media and communication, anthropology, refugee studies, and information and communication technologies (see Candidatu, Leurs, & Ponzanesi, 2019; Leurs & Prabhakar, 2018; Smets et al., 2020). The field's focus is on understanding "the expanding and intensifying roles digital technologies play in migration processes, ranging from top-down governmentality and bottom-up practices of everyday meaning-making" (Leurs & Ponzanesi, 2018, p. 13). The recent surge in digital migration literature is said to be influenced by the European refugee crisis (Leurs & Ponzanesi, 2018; Leurs & Smets, 2018a) that peaked in 2015 and 2016 yet continues up to this day (Amaro, 2021). Images of refugees with smartphones has drawn much attention to the relation between migrant mobilities and digital technology (Leurs & Smets, 2018a); yet such migrant–digital connectivity relation has long existed prior to the recent migration crises.

Migrants are "early adopters" of media (Leurs, 2021), particularly information and communication technologies or ICT (Diminescu, 2008). ICT as old as telephones and mobile

phones have enabled migrants a “connected presence” (Diminescu, 2008) to address daily diasporic concerns, such as to sustain homeland ties, develop networks, and better integrate in the host society (Diminescu, 2008; I’MTech, 2018). In the context of recent migration crises and rise of digital technologies, newer ICT in the form of social media have proven useful to migrants’ daily navigation of bureaucracy, surveillance, sexuality, ethnicity, resilience, and representational issues (e.g., Leurs & Ponzanesi, 2018; Udwan, Leurs, & Alencar, 2020). Accordingly, buzzwords have emerged to highlight migrants’ digital connectivity, such as “connected migrants” (Diminescu, 2008), digital diasporas” (Everett, 2009), “polymedia” (Madianou & Miller, 2012), and “smart refugees” (Dekker et al., 2018).

Digital migration studies will only continue to grow as digital technologies, particularly social media platforms, further develop and diversify. The SAGE Handbook of Media and Migration (Smets et al., 2020) can attest to this, providing a rich collection of recent digital migration literature involving the use of social media and traversing various disciplines and migrant groups. Yet the handbook also acknowledges the nascency of the digital migration field, where scholarship remains rather Western-centric and focused on mass media and host society representations—perhaps also influenced by the continuous refugee influx in western, developed nations. One of the contributions of this chapter is thus to add an empirical investigation involving a migrant community from the Philippines—a Southeast Asian population and developing nation—and the ingroup members’ shared knowledge about diasporic life in Germany.

Additionally, digital migration scholars have endeavored to propagate an “ethics of care” (Leurs & Prabhakar, 2018; see also Sandberg, Rossi, Galis, & Jørgensen, 2022) research stance that emphasizes relationality (Candidatu et al., 2019), critical human-centeredness and social justice orientation (Leurs & Ponzanesi, 2018) throughout the conduct of studies. One way that such ethics of care has been applied is through the use of qualitative

and ethnographic methods that enable an equal attention to not just online but also offline realms of interaction (i.e., "non-digital-centric-ness," Pink et al., 2016), since both are constitutive of migrant realities. Principles of ethics, reflexivity, and situatedness from feminist studies (Leurs, 2017) and qualitative and critical research traditions in general are also increasingly employed together with (big) data analytics to promote a "caring" and viably sustainable management of migrants' digital traces and data (Sandberg et al., 2022). Overall, such ethics of care practices within digital migration are meant to underscore that many migrants belong to minority and vulnerable groups and to prevent the pitfalls of migrants and their realities being "datafied" (Leurs & Shepherd, 2017) or oversimplified, especially because of "big data positivism" (Fuchs, 2017).

Another way to extend and sustain such "ethics-of-care" approach to migration is the grounding of research methodologies and analysis in critical or social theories (Fuchs, 2017), which in turn encourages "interdisciplinary dialogue" (Leurs, 2022, p. 231) in digital migration research. I do so in this chapter by adapting the social representations (SR) theory—a contextually sensitive and critically reflexive social psychological framework and that enables exploration of migrants' shared meanings and realities through combined computational and qualitative methods.

Social Representations, Communication, and Context

We recall from Chapter One that SR theory (Moscovici, 1961/2008, 1988, 1984/2001a) is a social psychological framework about the formation of commonsense knowledge within contemporary groups or societies—like our current globalized and digitalized world—characterized by mobility, fluidity, and plurality of voices and knowledge sources (Jovchelovitch, 2001; Moscovici, 1984/2001a). SR emerge as a system of collective everyday meanings, symbols, associations, emotions, and practices that enable people to make sense of and relate to particular social objects or events considered novel and relevant

to their community (Moscovici, 1961/2008, 1973, 1988, 1984/2001a). In this perspective, migration is an exemplar of an unfamiliar, rather disruptive yet significant phenomenon experienced by mobile or dispersed groups and around which SR develop. Especially in the 21st century, migration involves "an entire network, [sic] [of] representations, dreams, desires, needs, ambitions and projects of life for the human beings in their individual-collective experience" (de Moura & Hernandis, 2013, p. 133) of mobility, belongingness, and uprootedness that are tightly intertwined with digital technologies.

Shared knowledge is primarily a product of human relationality and dialogicality; thus, SR theory locates the development of SR within everyday talk and interaction (Marková, 2003; Moscovici & Marková, 2000). In this chapter, I investigate SR particularly as "a set of concepts, statements and explanations originating in daily life in the course of inter-individual communications" (Moscovici, 1981, p. 181). Applied to digital migration, an SR approach hence enables an investigation of a migrant community's collective understanding of the diasporic life through members' daily exchanges, especially within digital platforms where many social communication and interactions now take place.

Nevertheless, SR do not simply arise from a set of words or utterances and their denotative value. As the theory's proponent, Serge Moscovici, elucidates:

> [W]hat we effectively transmit in a statement is underdetermined by the implemented semantic content… In many respects, representations are only very partially conveyed by the meanings of a sentence. This is because of the presence of a context that deflects our interpretations as we, the speakers, try to understand them… [T]ake more interest in pragmatic communication (Moscovici, 1994, p. 165).

What Moscovici (1994) refers to as the pragmatic dimension of communication in the development of SR involves how people *deploy* language to imply or transform certain meanings; this is seen through various factors influencing the communicative value of

utterances, such as interlocutors' choice of words or phrases, (explicit or implicit) intentions, inferences, affective tones, (cultural) connotations, and implications (Moscovici, 1994).

Pragmatic communication enables another layer of analysis of discursive data and, eventually, SR in at least two ways. One, pragmatic features provide additional information (e.g., affective and latent meanings or meaning potentials) embedded in utterances and throughout exchanges; pragmatic communication thus elucidates how context impacts the way social knowledge about a phenomenon/object are constructed and negotiated in discourse and dialogue (Marková, 2008). Two, pragmatic communication relates to how SR have the essential character of presuppositions—or assumptions external to the linguistic structure of utterances—that are taken for granted yet carried by participants with them and applied into conversations (Kalampalikis & Moscovici, 2005; Moscovici, 1994).

Moscovici (1994) provides a perfect example through the statement "The Bororo are arara" (p. 163). Its literal meaning—identifying and equating male members of the Bororo ethnic group with a local group of birds, the arara—rather defies scientific, logical thinking. Yet once understood within the Bororo people's socio-cultural beliefs and practices, together with the imagery and sounds that the utterance creates (Moscovici, 1994), this sentence of "being both human and a bird makes perfect sense" and elucidates an emotional and mystical richness of Bororo people's understanding of oneness among humans, animals, and nature (Jovchelovitch, 2011, p. 138)

As the example above also illustrates, context as it relates to pragmatic communication and SR is not limited to the linguistic level. We recall how SR are said to originate and transform within three interrelated processes of development and analysis (i.e., sociogenesis, ontogenesis, microgenesis, as discussed in Chapter 1). Hence, the SR approach also concerns itself with other levels of context, such as the individual and relational histories of subjects and the social-cultural-political backdrop in which actors and interactions are

situated (Howarth, 2006a). By doing so, the SR approach not only embraces the complexity of social phenomena; rather, it also acknowledges the possibilities of negotiation and resistance in different levels of meaning-making, and thus the generation of multiple even contradictory shared understandings (see Howarth, 2011; Jovchelovitch, 2002; Meade & O'Connell, 2008; Nerlich & Jaspal, 2021; Panagiotou & Kadianaki, 2019).

Accordingly, SR scholars have endeavored to sustain a tradition of "methodological pluralism" (Elcheroth et al., 2011) and triangulation to analyze and reflect in SR investigations the diversity of relevant contexts and the dynamicity of meaning–making (see also U. Flick et al., 2015). This openness to multiple methods and triangulation is further anchored on a critically reflexive view of scholarship and knowledge construction where there is no single, absolute way to capture the complete extent of social knowledge (U. Flick et al., 2015) as "SR are multimodal" (Lahlou, 2012, p. 38.4). SR are also "always in the making" (Moscovici, 1988, p. 219) and are in reality "only partially distributed, just as part of the meaning of words is known to some people and unknown to others. Therefore everyone lacks some item of the knowledge that other speakers possess" (Moscovici, 1994, p. 168). SR scholars are thus urged to select appropriate techniques and analyze with critical reflexivity as different methods shed light on different aspects of a social representation (U. Flick et al., 2015). Furthermore, the SR researcher should always be considered an additional limiting factor who also "intervenes in the analytic process" (Lahlou, 2012, p. 38.4).

Overall, SR theory provides a contextually sensitive and critically reflexive approach to studying social objects and realities in everyday interactions. Research within the SR tradition have always embraced various methods and the practice of triangulation in investigating shared meaning-making. In the next section, I elaborate on a set of methods that have become popular in the recent decade or so yet have been in fact applied with the SR framework prior to the rise of big data and social media platforms: text mining methods.

Text Mining as Computational Means for Mapping SR in Text Corpora

Text mining methods (TMMs) refer to computer-assisted methods such as natural language processing and machine learning for statistical data analysis of large collections (i.e., corpus) of text (Chartier & Meunier, 2011). TMMs and computational analytics in general have become popular in the past two decades together with the rise of social media use (Fuchs, 2017).

Yet in fact, TMMs have already been used in SR research as early as the mid-1990s, spearheaded by Saadi Lahlou. In his doctoral thesis about the SR of EATING from a dictionary (Lahlou, 1995) and subsequent works (e.g., Lahlou, 1996, 1998, 2003), Lahlou demonstrated a coherent way of detecting the "basic nuclei of social representation" (Lahlou, 1996, p. 3) in a text corpus using Alceste, a lexical analysis software based on a descendant hierarchical cluster analysis (U. Flick et al., 2015). Alceste was created by Max Reinert (1983, 1990, 2003) grounded on his idea and approach (i.e., Reinert method) of identifying 'lexical worlds,' which are classifications of parts of discourse (i.e., textual units of analysis such as words, phrases, statements, etc.) sharing similar lexical traits based on collocation or co-occurrence patterns. In this sense, parts of discourse are the "language use instantiations of the SR" (Chartier & Meunier, 2011, p. 37.11), and each class or 'lexical world' is considered a basic nucleus of SR (Lahlou, 1996).

This attention to lexical contexts (e.g., collocation, equivalence relations, or distribution patterns) makes the Reinert method—and similar computational methods based on TMMs—useful for studying the pragmatic dimensions of SR (see Caillaud et al., 2012; U. Flick et al., 2015; Kalampalikis & Moscovici, 2005). TMMs serve as "a family of empirical solutions to the question of meaning" (Lahlou, 1996a, p. 63, as cited in Chartier & Meunier, 2011, p. 37.4), particularly the meaning and relevance of words or parts of discourse as they are grouped into classes based on comparable lexical contexts (e.g., co-occurence).

Unfortunately, Lahlou's works, the classic literature on which Lahlou based his data analysis (i.e., Jean-Paul Benzécri's works and the French school of text analysis, Benzécri, 1973, 1981, as cited in Lahlou, 2012), and SR studies following Lahlou's works have been mostly published in French (Chartier & Meunier, 2011; Lahlou, 2012). Additionally, SR studies that employed TMMs prior to the rise of social media have mainly used Alceste (or Reinert method) with small deviations from Lahlou's application of the software (Chartier & Meunier, 2011). Although recent works have started to publish in English and to employ other softwares and TMMs to take advantage of social media data (e.g. Bourret & Boustany, 2019; de Rosa et al., 2021; McLamore & Uluğ, 2020; Sarrica et al., 2018; Sensales et al., 2021), there remains an underutilization and "general lack of creativity" (Lahlou, 2012, p. 38.6) in the application of TMMs in SR research.

The existing preferential use of Alceste or Reinert method and the limited adaptation of TMMs in SR scholarship may also have been caused by a confusion between the software and method and by a persistent wariness over computational methods in the humanities and social sciences, respectively (Chartier & Meunier, 2011). To address such concerns, Chartier and Meunier (2011) have presented an easily understandable theoretical elaboration behind the use of TMMs and their corresponding three-phase text mining approach for SR. Their work also forms the basis of this chapter's methodology, to be elaborated in the next section.

However, Lahlou (2012) emphasizes that TMMs are to be treated as initial, exploratory techniques in understanding SR of a social object. Text mining results need to be further interpretated by the researcher using their knowledge external to the corpus, and that TMMs should be employed with additional analytical techniques or non-discursive data sources, among many approaches for triangulation (Lahlou, 2012). As such, the present study's complete methodological approach is mixed methods: firstly, adapting Chartier and Meunier's (2011) text mining strategy and, secondly, applying pragmatic-discursive analysis.

Methodology

The present study employed text mining combined with pragmatic and discursive analytical techniques to explore shared understandings of diasporic life in Germany among members of a Filipino migrant community in Facebook's group platform. This mixed methods approach was chosen to provide a quantitatively precise yet also contextually sensitive way to answer the following research questions: (1) What are the most salient topics that define the everyday Filipino migrant life in Germany as they are constructed within the migrants' Facebook group?, (2) Which shared meanings of migration are communicated through these dominant topics?, and (3) How do these SR of migration reflect Filipino socio-cultural values, norms, and practices?

The dataset consisted of naturally occurring textual data gathered from the partner Facebook community comprising Filipino migrants temporarily or permanently living in Germany. Specifically, the data corpus comprised posts written in mixed Filipino, English, and German from the group's Facebook page that were saved as PDF files once a week during the researcher's fieldwork from January to March 2017. The top 50 posts from each weekly collection were then encoded into spreadsheets. Only the textual content of the posts was included for analysis. Any identifying information such as usernames and links were omitted. Posts that only contained stickers, images, emoticons, videos, or hyperlinks were excluded. Total number of cases or analytical units were 12,039 posts by 1329 members.

The core of the present study's mixed methods analysis was adapted from Chartier and Meunier's (2011) three-phase approach to text mining based on the Vector Space Model. The first phase of *data collection* focuses on "good practice guidelines" (i.e., homogeneity and relevance criteria) that a researcher should consider to identify documents that will form a study's corpus, and on the selection of relevant parts of discourse or text segments (i.e. unit of analysis, can be words, phrases, or sentences, depending on researcher's aims) that are

thematically relevant to the SR under study (Chartier & Meunier, 2011, pp. 37.12 – 37.17). The second phase *data modeling* refers to "formalizing the semantic space formed by the parts of discourse into a vector space" (Chartier & Meunier, 2011, p. 37.17) through vectorization (e.g. includes steps such as filtering of 'empty' or common words like articles, pronouns, and prepositions, and assigning weighting values to words) and similarity calculation (i.e., two text segments or parts of discourse are semantically close to one another when they appear in the text together with similar sets of words) using a text mining software (Chartier & Meunier, 2011, pp. 37.17 – 37.24). The third phase refers to *data analysis* and comprises three steps. First step is *automatic classification* which involves a text clustering algorithm to group together parts of discourse that share similar lexical features while splitting up those that differ. This step enables "an extensional description of the semantic classes of the discourses in which the SR is embodied" (Chartier & Meunier, 2011, p. 37.30). Second step involves *salient content extraction* where the researcher identifies for each class the words or multiwords that best exemplify the core semantic meaning expressed within the class (Chartier & Meunier, 2011). The third step entails *categorization* in which the researcher interprets and makes sense of the lexical classes through an "abductive inference process" and deliberately define them (Chartier & Meunier, 2011, pp. 37.33 – 37.36).

Lahlou (2012) points out that the last phase in Chartier and Meunier's (2011) text mining model—actually, in any similar text mining approach—is "part of the first step of the SR analysis *per se*, as described by Abric (2003): (1) SR content and category identification, (2) SR structure identification, and (3) SR core identification" (Lahlou, 2012, p. 38.2). In other words, analysis does not stop with the software results, which still need further interpretation from the researcher. Additionally, Lahlou (2012) emphasized the application of other software, data sources, or analytical techniques for triangulation.

As such, the present study applies a modified third phase of data analysis. First, topic modeling is employed as an alternative to the text clustering algorithms in the automatic classification step and to the clustering analysis used by previous SR literature applying TMMs based on the Reinert method. Secondly, as mentioned at the beginning of this section, this study conducts an additional pragmatic and discursive analysis for a more meaningful and in-depth examination and clustering of topics. Details on these adaptations for the third phase of analysis will be discussed later in the subsection of "Data Analysis".

Data Processing and Modeling

For the computer-assisted analysis, this study employs WordStat, a powerful and user-friendly text-mining tool. WordStat provides various content analysis and data-mining features such as text processing, correspondence analysis, keywords-in-context analysis, clustering, and topic extraction (Peladeau & Davoodi, 2018; Provalis Research, 2015).

To filter commonly used words such as articles (a, the) and linking verbs (is, was), a customized stop word list was created based initially on WordStat's default exclusions lists for English, Filipino, and German languages. Other stop words (e.g., months, greeting words like "good morning" or "good day", words indicating time like "hours" or "minutes", words expressing respect like "po" or "opo", and so on) in the various languages were then added to this customized list as they were found in the top frequency list. Additionally, a custom-built substitutions list was created so that, as much as possible, WordStat recognized and counted at least the top 300 most frequent words and their equivalents in English, Filipino, and German languages as one. Plural forms, other tenses, and gerund forms were also considered. Common words in the regional languages were also added in the tailored exclusions list (A9 in the Appendix) whenever they appeared in the top frequency list.

Some most-frequently-used words such as "pass", "kaya", "mahal" had similar forms but different meanings in different languages (e.g., "pass" which could either mean "passing

an exam" in English or "passport" in German) or in the same language (e.g., "mahal" in Filipino could either mean "expensive" or "love"; "German" could either refer to the nationality, the language, or as an adjective). Such words were identified from the frequency list and manually changed (e.g., "pass" used as "Reisepass" or "passport" in German were searched and changed to "passport" instead; "German" used to refer to the language was changed to "Deutsch) to reduce noise and increase homogeneity in the data. A copy of the customized substitution and exclusion lists can be found in A8 and A9 of the Appendix.

Raw texts were then separated into single words or tokens. Any word with frequency count less than 25 was excluded in the analysis. The output of the data pre-processing comprised a "bag-of-words" composed of nouns, adverbs, adjectives, and verbs. From this bag-sf-words, a total number of 234,345 words or tokens were analyzed to produce a list of the most frequently used terms. The words were ranked using the *tf·idf* (term frequency × inverted document frequency), which is "a classical weighting technique combining both representativity and discrimination principle" (Chartier & Meunier, 2011). Specifically, *tf·idf* can be interpreted as:

> if a word has a high frequency in a given part of discourse and occurs in a limited number of parts of discourse within the rest of the corpus, this word has a high weight value for this particular part of discourse. Inversely, if this word is not frequent in a given part of discourse and is present in many parts of discourse of the corpus, this word hence has a low weight value (Chartier & Meunier, 2011, p. 37.22).

Data Analysis

After data processing and modeling, the first step of the analysis focused on which key terms and phrases co-occur most often and form the most significant topics in the lives of Filipino migrants in Germany. Topic modeling was done to the Facebook corpus to gain insightful information, based on keywords co-occurrences and association patterns, as to

which among the themes or categories of migrant concerns are more important (i.e., coherence of keywords within each topic) than others, which keywords and key phrases are more indicative of these themes, and which words differentiate certain topics from the others.

Topic modeling is a powerful text mining technique that can assist in organizing a collection of unstructured texts, like social media data, and in uncovering which "underlying latent semantic concepts" a text corpus contains (Peladeau & Davoodi, 2018, p. 617). Specifically, topic modeling is:

> an automated unsupervised factor analysis to deduce patterns of co-occurrences of words in designated segments of texts in order to determine their relative weight in constructing a specific topic. The result is therefore supposed not only to reflect which words are mentioned, but also to take into consideration their relative role in constructing each topic (Mitrani, 2017, p. 11).

In comparison to clustering analysis where a part of discourse may only be classified into one cluster, topic modeling allows a part of discourse "to be associated with more than one factor, a characteristic that more realistically represents the polysemous nature of some words as well as the multiplicity of context of word usages" (Provalis Research, 2015, p. 45). For instance, some Facebook posts can be about several issues in different proportions, or the word "birth" can be associated to marriage requirements topic (i.e., birth certificate), citizenship topic (i.e., birthright or nationality at birth), or parental and child benefit topic.

Using WordStat's topic extraction by factor analysis, a principal component analysis (PCA) with varimax rotation (e.g., Peladeau & Navoodi, 2018) was performed on the dataset. Unit of segmentation was each post or 'document'; minimum loading criterion was set at .20 to maintain a level of coherence among extracted words for each topic; *pruning* option was used to remove poorly correlated words; and *topic enrichment* was applied to benefit from the software's advanced capabilities to detect and suggest spelling corrections, exceptions,

and other terms for inclusion. A balance between comprehensive coverage of topics and specificity across themes was aimed for. After comparing several iterations and despite a few topics having just two to four words of significant loadings, a final topic model using factor analysis comprising 25 topics was chosen for analysis.

For this study's pragmatic-discursive approach, "words are the signs of ideas; to deal with the order of words is to deal with the order of ideas" Weil (1844, p. 1). Hence, the second step was a pragmatic analysis of the topics. Specifically, topics were analyzed and labeled first through a careful reading of the keywords and key phrases, taking also in consideration the keywords' factor or topic loadings and the researcher's fieldwork and familiarity of the socio-cultural contexts involving the participant community and the gathered data (virtual ethnography). WordStat's cluster analysis was used for an initial survey of the topics' natural groupings based on how closely words co-occur and are relatively significant across topics. However, some topics seemed to belong better to other clusters.

As such, discursive analysis was conducted as a third step for a deeper examination of each topic and to cluster the topics into more meaningful categories (and sub-categories, where appropriate), and elaborate on the coherent discursive meanings of the topics. WordStat's Keyword Retrieval function was used to identify the top 30 "matching hits" or most representative posts for each topic. For the 25 topics, a total of 750 representative sample posts were thus collected and used in search of coherent "storylines" that would tie up and better contextualize the meanings of the keywords and key phrases for each topic and the discursive relations among the topics.

Storylines are "subjectively constructed narratives that provide coherence for distinct utterances enunciated in a social episode" (Slocum-Bradley, 2010, as cited in Montiel et al., 2016, p. 860). One identifies a storyline through repeated reading of relevant texts. Here, a storyline is treated as a narrative that binds together the salient words and phrases belonging

to each topic and that captures the essence of the top 30 matching hits for each topic. Analyzing the storylines of each topic further enabled this research to group the 25 topics into overarching and more meaningful categories.

Findings

Table 4 summarizes the five major topic categories that define the everyday Filipino migrant life in Germany as they are constructed in the Facebook group interactions. The main clusters are arranged based on percentage of cases covered. Total percentage of cases covered by the five topic categories is approximately 28% or around one-third of the corpus.

The following subsections elaborate on each main category and subcategory, where applicable. Key words or phrases are cited in quotation marks throughout the analysis. Some key terms have been sustained in their original language forms in the excerpts for emphasis or if they appeared as such in the results. In this case, the original term (i.e., in Filipino or German) is italicized, followed by the English translation in parentheses or brackets.

Table 4

Summary of Five Major Topic Categories of The Facebook Corpus

	Main Category		Subcategories	% Of Cases
1	Legal Processes and Requirements for Living in Germany	1.1) 1.2) 1.3)	Marriage processing and concerns Residency and citizenship German Visa Types, and Application	17.16%
2	Learning the German Language			3.35%
3	"*Balikbayan*": Sending Gifts and Traveling Back Home	3.1) 3.2)	Bookings and fees for traveling to and from the Philippines "*Padala*" to the Philippines	2.75%
4	Facebook Group and "*Kapwa*" Filipino Social Relations and Expectations			2.55%
5	Everyday matters and online interactions			2.12%
			Total % of Cases Covered	**27.78%**

Category 1: Legal Concerns Associated with Living in Germany

The first major category revolved around legal requirements, processes, and challenges Filipino migrants must deal with to secure their residency in Germany. These matters were subdivided into three subcategories: marriage processing and concerns, residency and citizenship, and German visa types and applications.

Subcategory 1.1: Marriage Processing and Concerns

Table 5 presents the first subcategory, which deals with information, experience, and problems encountered and shared by the Filipino migrants concerning requirements and procedures for conducting and registering their marriage with a German national. Much of the discourse centered on experiences and tips in obtaining official Philippine papers

Table 5

Subcategory 1.1 – Marriage Processing and Concerns

	Topic	Keywords and Keyphrases	Coherence
1	Marriage Registration and Requirements	Certificate; Birth; NSO [National Statistics Office]; Register; Copy; Marry; Record; PSA [Philippine Statistics Authority]; Late; Original; DFA [Department of Foreign Affairs]; CENOMAR [Certificate of No Marriage]; Civil; Redribbon; Document Birth Certificate; Marriage Certificate; City Hall; Civil Registry; Late Registration	0.442
2	Annulment and Divorce	Annul; Divorce; Marry; Court; Process; Denmark; Philippines; Report; Document; Lawyer	0.351
3	Legal Capacity to Contract Marriage	Capacity; Legal; Partner; *Rathaus* [city hall]; Redribbon; Office; Embassy Legal Capacity; Legal Capacity Of Marriage;	0.316
4	Problems concerning Legal Matters and Documents	Father; Mother; Parent; Child; Court; Lawyer; Problem; Advice; Birth; Head; Record Birth Certificate	0.293
5	Church and Civil Wedding Matters	Wedding; Church; Civil; Date; Fiancé; Stay	0.285

(i.e., birth certificates, certificate of no marriage [CENOMAR], and marriage certificate) and having them authenticated ("red ribbon") through the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) in the Philippines. Both the Filipino migrant and the German national also need to obtain certificates of Legal Capacity to Contract Marriage from local civil registries or embassies.

The discussions further involved the Filipinos' experiences with obtaining and processing these legal documents. Participants highlighted problems with their birth certificates, such as errors in their birthdates and dates of their parents' marriage, or lack of any official record of their parents' marriage. Some of these cases required legal advice, hence the presence of "lawyer' in the discourse, and some had to be taken up to the "court".

A part of the topic "Problems concerning Legal Matters and Documents" pertained to the migrant's "child". Some posts revolved around parenthood and dealing with one's child, such as when children have grown bigger and no longer listen to their parents. Most of the sample cases involved seeking or giving advice about the right to ask for child support from the German father, legal steps for adopting a child, or how to bring one's child from the Philippines. It was in these situations that the keywords "court" and "lawyer" were relevant.

Both the keywords "lawyer" and "court" also loaded high in the topic on annulment and divorce, which involved ways on how to navigate the costs and complexities of legalizing one's divorce (from Germany) in the Philippines and reporting a second marriage after such divorce. This topic is quite sensitive and private but emerged prominent in the corpus probably because Philippine law does not allow for divorce, only annulment of marriage. Hence, the Facebook group serves as a source of social knowledge on a sensitive topic that does not usually appear in public or popular migration discourse.

Lastly, the topic on wedding matters delved into experiences and tips on fulfilling steps and conditions for preparing a Filipino and German couple's civil or church wedding. For instance, couples are required by Philippine law to attend a pre-marriage seminar that

covers marriage counseling, family planning, and responsible parenthood. For conducting a church wedding, the Catholic Church in the Philippines has its own set of requirements such as a couple interview by a priest before the wedding. Hence, discussions also involved whether the German fiancé would need to stay for several weeks in the Philippines. Despite these additional processes, the careful reading of the posts indicates a practice of performing not just civil marriages but also church weddings among Filipinos to be married with German nationals. This interest in conducting a church wedding even after a civil marital engagement is indicative of the Roman Catholic or Christian religious affinity of Filipinos.

Subcategory 1.2: Residency and Citizenship

Table 6 illustrates the second subcategory which consisted of topics dealing with different government-issued documents that would allow a Filipino migrant residence or citizenship especially in Germany. Key terms from the first topic within this subcategory hints at discussion on permits, with special interest on the EU (European Union) Blue Card, which

Table 6

Subcategory 1.2 – Residency and Citizenship

	Topic	Keywords & Key Phrases	Coherence
1	Residency Cards or Permits	Residence; European; Permit; Card; Blue; Union; Permanent; Switzerland; Country; ID Residence Permit; Blue Card; EU Blue Card;	0.408
2	German and Philippine Passports and Citizenships	Citizen; German; Dual; Passport; Philippine; Child; Filipino; Automatic; Born; Country; Germany German Passport; Philippine Passport; German Citizen; Philippine Embassy; Dual Citizen; Passport Holder; Dual Citizenship; German Citizenship; Automatic German; Dual Passport; German Passport Holder	0.357
3	Renewal of Passport (even with permanent residence permit)	Passport; Renew; Philippine; Expire; *Unbefristet* [unlimited/indefinite]; Berlin; Residence; Permit; Embassy; Valid German Passport; Philippine Passport; Philippine Embassy; Renew Ng Passport; Philippine Embassy Sa Berlin; Bagong Passport	0.331

is a special kind of work and residence title that allows non-EU nationals to work and live in Germany and EU countries, and eventually apply for permanent residence in Germany. A closer look into the sample posts showed inquiries on whether having a valid German residence permit would allow a Filipino migrant to travel to Switzerland, since Switzerland is within Europe but is not a member-state of the EU.

The second topic's keywords and key phrases indicate an interest on German and Philippine passports and citizenship. On the one hand, an interesting aspect of this topic included the migrants' ideas on which passport or citizenship –- either German or Filipino – the members found better or more beneficial. The members justified their preferences by citing the advantages and disadvantages of having one citizenship over the other. However, one participant, Ania, shared her experience and gave the following advice:

> Follow what you want. Me, I have been here [in Germany] for 29 years yet I remain a Philippine citizen. I have an *unbefristete Aufenthaltserlaubnis* [permanent residence permit], a job, a *Wohnung* [apartment]… I enjoy everything here… Only that I need to renew my [Philippine] passport every 5 yrs. The cost is high but I just think it's my form of help to the Philippines… […] I never experienced anything unpleasant. but do what you want. We have different destinies.

On the other hand, most of the sample posts pointed to the Filipino migrants' curiosity on how to gain German citizenship. A part of these focused on whether a migrant's child becomes an automatic German citizen when born on German soil regardless of parents' nationalities, or if the child obtains dual passport and citizenship if born to a Filipino parent and a German parent, or how the child can apply for a Philippine passport, if the child is already a German citizen. Overall, the statements point to Filipina migrants who are mothers and are concerned about their children's passports or citizenships.

Subcategory 1.3: German Visa Types, Application Procedures, and Requirements

Table 7 shows the last subcategory which revolves on the various kinds of German visas and the processes and requirements for application. The first and third topics within this subcategory point the types of visa that Filipino nationals can apply for and the corresponding processes that they have to go through to tour around or visit family and friends in Germany and EU countries temporarily (i.e., "Schengen visa", "tourist visa"), to pursue studies in Germany (i.e., "student visa"), or to subsequently immigrate by following a family member who first gained the right to reside in Germany (i.e., "FRV [family reunion visa]"). The representative posts focused on participants' sharing of experiences and advice on which specific visa suits the needs of their fellow members, most of whom seemed concerned with visiting or being permanently reunited with their German spouse. Some members especially shared what they had to go through as Filipinos applying for family reunion. They highlighted

Table 7

Subcategory 1.3 – German Visa Types and Application

	Topic	Keywords & Key Phrases	Coherence
1	Visas for Permanent or Temporary Stays in Germany	Visa; Reunion; Family; Visit; Tourist; Schengen; Apply; Application; FRV [Family Reunion Visa]; Student Family Reunion; Tourist Visa; Family Reunion Visa; Visit Visa; Schengen Visa; Student Visa; Visa Application	0.367
2	Formal Obligation Requirement for (Family) Visits to Germany	Formal; Obligation; Invite; Show; Income; Money; Letter Formal Obligation; Show Money	0.337
3	Embassy Visa Application Processes and Requirements	Document; Embassy; Interview; Require; Submit; Apply; Complete; Form; *Standesamt* [registry office]*;* Application; Appointment; Process; Letter; CI [Character Investigation]; Email; Site; Visa; Experience German Embassy; Application Form; German Embassy Manila;	0.304

the requirements and procedures, like completed “application form”, the fiance’s invitation “letter”, setting an “appointment” with the “embassy” for an “interview”, and dealings with the “*Standesamt*” (registry office) in Germany. Patience was advised for the whole process, particularly about the “CI” (character investigation), which takes the longest time.

The second topic focused more on the Filipino migrants’ efforts to support family members in the Philippines whom the participants wish to invite to visit Germany. Specifically, the exchanges highlight the importance of proving financial means on the side of the family members entering Germany (i.e., proof of income, savings, or “show money”), or financial support on the side of the Filipino migrant host in Germany (i.e., through submission of the *Verpflichtungserklärung* or “Formal Obligation [Letter]” and evidence of income or savings).

A noteworthy trend within the representative posts is that the participants primarily want to invite their parents to visit the participants in Germany. This practice points to the Filipino value of *utang na loob*, translated as “debt of gratitude” by Kaut (1961, as cited in Pe-Pua & Protacio-Marcelino, 2000, p. 55); *utang na loob* is described as a “Filipino cultural law of reciprocity” (Jocano, 1998 as cited by Macapagal, Ofreneo, Montiel, & Nolasco, 2013, p. 43) or of returning a favor, good will, or especially in the case of parents, “debt of obligation”. According to Macapagal, et al. (2013):

> This norm of reciprocity is most evident in the Filipino family as seen in the belief that all children should recognize their debts of gratitude toward their parents (*marunong tumanaw ng utang na loob*) (p. 43).

In the case of the participants, inviting their parents to see a foreign land does not only serve as a form of reciprocity or payment to a “debt of gratitude”. Rather, the gesture may be primarily a display of love to their parents and of the desire to show the kind of life that they

now have away from the homeland. In other words, the efforts to invite and financially support family visits may be more of a reflection of the family being central to the Filipino:

> The family is basic to the life of Filipinos. It is the center of their universe. Most of what they do, what they think, and what they idealize, among others, are first learned within the narrow confines of the family (Jocano, 1998, p. 11).

Category 2: Learning the German Language

Table 8 summarizes the second major category, which centers on the Filipino migrants' experiences of and efforts in learning the German language. The first topic under this category focused on the various ways that the members employed in learning the "difficult" German language. Among these strategies included watching German shows in "TV" (television) or Youtube, even if the "words" were "difficult" to "understand". Participants further encouraged "reading" German books, newspapers, or magazines, not speaking "English" with one's spouse and instead "speaking"' strictly in German at "home" despite having "wrong" or imperfect grammar or lacking vocabulary.

Table 8

Category 2 – Learning the German Language

	Topic	Keywords & Key Phrases	Coherence
1	Difficulties and Strategies in Learning the German Language	English; Speak; Learn; Deutsch; Language; *Salita* [speech/words*]*; TV; Understand; Word; Read; German; Wrong; Home; Talk; Difficult; *Marunong* [knowledgeable]; Study; Tagalog Deutsch Language; German Words; Learn The Language; Speak German; *Aral Ng Deutsch* [study German]	0.420
2	(Self) Studying German for Training and Work Opportunities	Study; School; *Ausbildung* [apprenticeship/training]; Language; Exam; *Deutsch* [German]; Self; Work; Goethe; Practicum; *Kaya* [capable/can be done]; High; Experience; Nurse *Deutsch* [German] Language; Self Study	0.320

The other topic emphasizes an additional motivation to learn the language: German is useful, if not necessary to study in the German "schools" or universities, to apply for "*Ausbildung*" (apprenticeship or training) or "Practicum," and to get decent "work". Most training and work opportunities require passing a German language "exam" usually conducted by the "Goethe" Institute that corresponds to a required level of German "language" knowledge and comprehension. For instance, Filipinos wanting to work as a nurse in Germany are required to pass a B2 language level exam. The members though assured their fellow migrants through their own experiences that it is possible to pass the German language exams even with "self-study".

Within both topic and apart from giving tips and advice, the participants cheered on their fellow members, saying that the fellow migrants are capable ("*kaya*") of overcoming the difficulties of learning German:

> "*Kaya mo yan[,] sis[.] [T]iwala l[a]ng talaga[.]*" [You can do it, sis. Just trust (that things work out)].
>
> "[G]oodluck[,] sis... Kaya mo yan..." [Good luck, sis... You can do it…]

The members generously encouraged their fellow Filipinos that, as long as these co-ethnics persevere, they will successfully learn the language. As a participant, Lyanne, shared:

> It is difficult but if you are willing to study, you can do it. Study, concentrate, and practice, that's my advice. Always speak German so that you get used to it even if you make mistakes, tell your husband to correct you! Read German, watch German! … [L]earn [the] language with all your heart and you will succeed. God bless.

Such discursive displays of social support can be seen as a practice of *pakikiramay* (to sympathize with) as Filipino migrants share the experience of having to learn a new language. The underlying hope is that such encouragements fortify the fellow migrants' *lakas ng loob* or inner strength and resolve to survive and thrive in a foreign land.

Category 3: "Balikbayan" – Sending Gifts and Traveling Back Home

The third major category involves concerns related to the Filipino migrants' visits to the Philippines and their practice of sending gifts back home. Two subcategories (3.1 and 3.2) within this third category are as follows.

Subcategory 3.1: Bookings and fees for traveling to and from the Philippines

Table 9 shows Subcategory 3.1 that deals, on the one hand, with information exchanges on "travel taxes" when returning from the Philippines for a visit or vacation. Many participants agreed that Filipinos holding *unbefristet* or permanent residency in Germany do not need to pay "terminal fees" when flying out of the Philippine "airports". On the other hand, the Facebook group members also shared their experiences and recommendations on "airlines" and "travel agencies" or "companies" that they have tried and would recommend for "booking" "flights" or "tickets" when traveling to and from the Philippines.

Table 9

Subcategory 3.1 – Bookings and Fees for Traveling to and from the Philippines

	Topic	Keywords & Key Phrases	Coherence
1	Travel Tax or Airport Fees	Terminal; Fee; Peso; Tax; Pay; Cebu; Travel; Airport; *Unbefristet* [unlimited/indefinite]; Return; Permanent Terminal Fee; Travel Tax	0.440
2	Flight Bookings	Airline; Booking; Service; Ticket; Book; Travel; Company; Flight;	0.300

Subcategory 3.2. "Padala" to the Philippines

Table 10 displays Subcategory 3.2 pertaining to topics involving the Filipino concept of "*padala*" or anything that a Filipino migrant sends back home. Under this subcategory, the padala can come in the form of money or packages ("*balikbayan* boxes"). The first topic pertained to "money transfers" done by the members through the "direct" "bank to bank" transfers, "online banking", or money transfer sites such as "Azimo". Members further

Table 10

Subcategory 3.2 – "Padala" to the Philippines

	Topic	Keywords & Key Phrases	Coherence
1	Bank and Online Money Transfers	Account; Bank; BDO [Banco de Oro]; Transfer; Azimo; Charge; Money; *Padala* [package/money sent from abroad to homeland]; Credit; Online; Send; Direct; Card; Email Bank Account; Credit Card; Bank To Bank; BDO (Banco de Oro) Account; Online Banking	0.401
2	Sending "Balikbayan" boxes to the Philippines	Box; *Balikbayan* [Filipino returnee]; Office; Post; Door; Small; *Padala* [package/money sent from abroad to homeland]; Experience; Arrive *Balikbayan Box* [package from a Filipino migrant/brought by a Filipino returnee]; Post Office; Door To Door;	0.297

swapped information regarding transfer "charges" and thus compared the most affordable ways to send money back to the Philippines. The second topic referred to the practice of sending "balikbayan boxes," literally translated as "repatriate boxes" which are packages sent by Filipino migrants back home to the Philippines. Such packages may contain anything that the Filipino migrants deem that their families and relatives back home would like. Examples would be sweets, toiletries, canned goods, toys, clothes, shoes, electronics, and so on.

The representative posts covered information and experiences on available international package delivery services in Germany, particularly companies that are familiar with the Filipino practice of sending "balikbayan boxes" or packages and that provide "door-to-door" deliveries. A notable shared experience and sentiment involved the slow, sometimes frustrating processing of packages by the Philippine Post Office in the homeland.

Overall, what stands out in this main category is the Filipino migrants' sustained connection to home. The Filipino concept of *balikbayan* captures this practice beautifully as it can refer either (1) to the Filipino migrant as a permanent or temporary "returnee", or (2) to

the packages alone filled with various items sent back home. Nevertheless, both instances carry and connote the tradition and spirit of a "gift" or of "giving" something back to one's loved ones, whether in monetary or material ways or in the form of one's physical presence. These *doing* (sending money or packages) and *being* (visits) *balikbayan* also articulate the value of *utang na loob* (debt of gratitude), which Pe-Pua & Protacio-Marcelino (2000) describe as:

> a beautiful element of Filipino interpersonal relationships that binds a person to his or her home community or home country. In fact, this is expressed in a popular Filipino saying, "*Ang hindi lumingon sa pinanggalingan ay hindi makakarating sa paroroonan.* (Those who do not look back to where they came from will not reach their destination)". *Utang na loob* is a calling heard by many Filipinos who go to other lands but who still retain strong ties with their homeland (p. 56; emphasis mine).

Category 4: Facebook Group and Filipino Social Relations and Expectations

As shown in Table 11, the first topic in this fourth main category contains keywords that point to the Facebook group's entities (i.e., "admin," "member"), activities (i.e., "post," "add," "comment," "message") and purpose (i.e., "help"). A thorough reading of relevant

Table 11

Category 4 – Facebook Group and Filipino Social Relations and Expectations

	Topic	Keywords and Keyphrases	Coherence
1	The Facebook Group's Rules, Purposes, and Member Expectations	Group; Facebook; Admin; Member; Post; Add; Comment; Page; Help; Message; Fb (*Facebook*) Group	0.315
2	Attitudes of Fellow	Filipina; Attitude; Kapwa *(shared identity/fellow human being)*; Life; Ayaw *(don't want/don't like)*; Kilala *(recognize/know a person)*; Person; Male; Filipino; Abroad; Friend; Female	0.306
3	*God Bless	Bless; God; God Bless	0.304

posts revealed interactions between the administrators (admins) and members when it comes to what the admins had intended the group for (i.e., rules and goals of the Facebook group) and how they expect the members to treat each other (i.e., social courtesies and expectations).

The admins would remind the members that they should be welcoming and respectful to each other, especially to new migrant-members who might repeat inquiries already asked before. The admins would emphasize that the online group was created to assist their *kababayan* (fellowmen) and that the group continues to thrive because of the *pagmamalasakit* (concern) and willingness of members to answer questions and share experiences, knowledge, or advice regarding legal matters and everyday life in Germany. One of the admins, Alex, went so far as to acknowledge members' helping behavior as *kabayanihan* (heroism) and as something vital to the group, as seen in this excerpt:

> This group has become successful not because of us admins but because of all of us that show concern (*nagmamalasakit*) to our fellowmen who need help. Because of members that give time to comment and assist our brothers/sisters who do not know what to do. It is everyone's heroism (*kabayanihan*) that's keeping this group alive.

Some members also expressed agreement and appreciation towards the efforts of the admins and fellow members in upholding the aims of the group, as exhibited in this post:

> Ever since I was added to this group, I never posted or asked anything even though I had many questions.. But because I was really confused at times [on what to do], I met some [members] and added them as friends and would just message privately to ask questions.. And in other way.. I learn a lot from reading the posted questions and information here and also for reading the comments.. [S]o I thank this group for the steps that were taken especially Mr. Admin…

The second topic's keywords imply discussions regarding the migrants' experiences on the attitude of fellow Filipinos. A deeper examination of the most representative posts

showed disappointment among the migrants for having encountered unpleasant attitudes especially among their fellow female migrants or Filipinas. The participants shared experiences on how some Filipinas would intentionally avoid speaking or dealing with their fellow Filipinas, or how some Filipina acquaintances or former friends would display a certain sense of superiority.

The last topic contained only two words, “God” and “Bless” and the key phrase “God Bless”. If based on the statistics alone, this topic should be removed as the co-occurrence of just these two words does not qualify it as a “theme”. However, a majority of Filipinos are Roman Catholic and Christians, and the prevalent use of these two words and the resulting key phrase may actually signify the religiosity of the group. In Filipino Psychology (*Sikolohiyang Pilipino*), wishing someone well or giving them your blessings by saying “God Bless” can be interpreted as a way of *pagmamalasakit* (concern) or a practice of *kagandahang-loob* (shared humanity) to express the value of *pagkamakatao* (valuing people).

In comparison to all previous main clusters, this main category seems to highlight the role and significance that the migrants’ place on upholding Filipino cultural values and social practice. Despite living abroad and in a different socio-cultural context, and whether in online or offline interactions, Filipino migrants expect their fellowmen to espouse the meaning and spirit of *kapwa* (shared identity) and the practice and commitment of it, which is *pakikipagkapwa* (respecting the other person as a human being).

Category 5: Everyday Matters and Online Interactions

The fifth and last category encompasses daily life concerns for the Filipino migrants in Germany (Table 12). One topic included the migrants’ candid commentaries on Germany’s tap water, which is safe to drink and even “delicious” (*sarap*) as compared to the non-potable tap water in the Philippines. The next topic deals with exchanges about eligibility and steps to claim parental allowance (*Elterngeld*), child benefits (*Kindergeld*), and pension (*Rente*).

Based on the representative posts, these social benefits go together as they are dependent on whether the parents have been employed (i.e., "work") and on the parents' income. A third topic involved the various random online recommendations that the participants share with each other, for instance which "app" or "Facebook page" they can "download" or visit to watch the "live" streaming of the Miss Universe Beauty Pageant. Another example would be suggested "apps" to "download" and use to better learn the German language. The fourth topic concerned the migrants' opinions on housing and rental "prices", for instance, what conditions to consider when "buying" a "house" or "renting'" an apartment (e.g., number of "rooms", how "big" or "small" the migrant needs or wants it to be), or in which areas are housing and rental prices low/affordable ("cheap") or high/expensive (e.g., "Frankfurt"). The last topic centered on the mandatory health insurance here in Germany or on acquiring travel health insurance. Most discussions centered on the Filipinos' experiences with private health insurances and their comments regarding the need to avail health insurance, in general.

This last main category reflected how the participants utilized the Facebook group for their daily surveying of details, personal judgments, and experiences from fellow Filipinos,

Table 12

Category 5 – Everyday Matters and Online Interactions

	Topic	Keywords and Key Phrases	Coherence
1	Tap Water	Water; Tap; Safe; Sarap *(delicious)*; Normal Tap Water	0.302
2	Social Benefits	Elterngeld *(parental allowance)*; Kindergeld *(child benefit)*; Income; Work; Big; Rente *(pension)*;	0.291
3	Online Recommendations	App; Download; Facebook; Page; Live	0.290
4	Expensive Accommodation Prices	Expensive; Mura *(cheap/affordable)*; House; Rent; Room; Big; Small; Price; Buy; Euro; Frankfurt	0.289
5	Health Insurance	Insurance; Health; Private Health Insurance; Private Insurance	0.283

even if the internet or local authorities could provide information. In this way, the members saw each other as informal authorities of the everyday migrant life knowledge; they referred to the Facebook group members' opinions and experiences as a form of validation or as "filters" (Justo et al., 2020) to the information that the members acquire from formal sources.

Summary

In this chapter, I aimed to demonstrate the psychosocial dimension of social media, particularly of Facebook as a virtual repository of social representations (SR) of diasporic life. I did so by contextualizing the chapter's empirical investigation within digital migration studies and applying SR theory through a combined text mining and pragmatic-discursive approach to analyze a data corpus of posts from a Facebook community of Filipinos living in Germany. Specifically, I explored the main topic categories that form the basic nuclei of SR about migration found within the participant Filipino community's online interactions.

The analysis showed that the Filipino participants' shared understandings of migrant life in Germany can be described by the following core categories: *legal processes and requirements for living in Germany*, *learning the German language*, *balikbayan: sending gifts and traveling back home, Facebook group and kapwa Filipino social relations and expectations,* and *everyday matters and online interactions.* Within each topic category, certain Filipino social and psychological values, beliefs, and practices have been identified as well—all of which are contextual factors that have contributed to a more nuanced understanding of the Filipino migrants' shared ideas of their everyday diasporic life.

These findings illustrate how applying text mining methods (TMMs) on non-reactive, naturally occurring data offers a reliable, quantifiable way to understand the shared meanings of migration among diasporic communities established in social media platforms *without compromising* the relevance of contexts, including cultural connotations and relational inferences. In this way, the current study supports research traditions that embrace both

computational analysis and qualitative analytical techniques in exploring social and political phenomena as they play out in discourse (see Sensales et al., 2021). By grounding the use of TMMs within the SR framework, the present study further contributes a social psychological perspective and methodological reflection to the emerging digital migration scholarship.

A limitation for the present research is the existence of different languages used by the members of the partner Filipino migrant community in Facebook. The presence of multiple languages in the data lowers homogeneity, which is important to reduce noise in the text mining calculations (Chartier & Meunier, 2011). This data characteristic could thus be the main reason that WordStat could only confidently categorize one-third of the data corpus into 25 topics.

Translation of multilingual data into English is a possible alternative considered for the present study. Yet identifying and translating massive amounts of text from various languages creates monumental difficulty for any researcher, even with the use of an automatic translating engine like Google Translate. Nuances of meaning are also lost in translation. As such, the present study's data have not been translated, yet extensive, careful efforts have been applied to process the dataset while maintaining the integrity of the texts for the data modeling and analytical purposes of this research.

Additionally, present text mining techniques and programs accessible to social scientists are generally still incapable in dealing with texts written in various languages. Many social media data, especially those from social networking sites like Facebook, also have less than ideal text characteristics such as the presence of misspellings, acronyms, and colloquial terms, apart from the usage of different languages. While top key terms may be identified reliably despite spelling errors (Smith, Adolphs, Harvey, & Mullany, 2014), more work is still needed to establish a similar accuracy for determining and clustering keywords in the case of multilingual data where spelling variation is higher.

Nevertheless, future studies will only benefit from TMMs as computational methods continue to advance together with increasing digitalization and online social interactions. Echoing critical research traditions from SR (Lahlou, 2012), social media (Fuchs, 2017), and digital research migration (Candidatu et al., 2019; Leurs, 2017; Leurs & Prabhakar, 2018), the most important point is for studies to uphold critical awareness, situatedness, and reflexivity, especially in terms of the theoretical grounding of approaches, the affordances and limitations of the chosen software and methods, and the researcher's influence in the interpretation of findings.

CHAPTER 4

FACEBOOK AND MIGRANTS' SR OF ETHNIC IDENTITY AND POSITIONINGS

> *Representations… sometimes call our very identities into question. We struggle over them because they matter – and these are contests from which serious consequences can flow. They define what is "normal", who belongs – and therefore, who is excluded. They are deeply inscribed in relations of power.* (Hall, 1997/2003, p.10).

In this chapter, I highlight the political dimension of social media as a digital public sphere through an empirical study featuring the role of Facebook in the social representations (SR) of ethnic identity and discursive positionings among migrants. In contrast to the previous chapter, I focus here on shared knowledge as *process* and its development *through* social media. Specifically, unlike Chapter 3 where I explored the plurality of shared ideas made possible by Facebook, I 'go out' of the platform and focus on migrants' *offline* interactions. Through a qualitative analysis of focus group transcripts, I explore Facebook's role in the way Filipino migrant-participants collaboratively situate each other and assign discursive rights and duties (i.e., positions) among themselves and their co-ethnics vis-á-vis their shared ideas about 'being a Filipino' in the context of their migration in Germany. In doing so, this chapter also exemplifies "non-digital-centric-ness" (Pink et al., 2016) in digital ethnography and social media research, and thus allow the significance of the digital and the dynamism between online and offline spheres of life to emerge naturally from the data.

I first contextualize this chapter within recent literature on diasporic media use and migrant identity dynamics. I then elaborate the study's framework, particularly the relation of SR, positions, positioning, and moral orders. I also refer to Filipino Social Psychology and Virtue Ethics to acknowledge existing Filipino cultural definitions of identity and systems of rights and duties. Afterward, I discuss the study's methodology, findings, and conclusions.

Diasporic Media Use and Identity Dynamics

Media technologies have always played a significant role in the life and experiences of migrants, and the rise of social or participatory media has only intensified this fact (e.g., Alonso & Oiarzabal, 2010; Lim et al., 2016; McGregor & Siegel, 2014; Oiarzabal & Reips, 2012; Smets et al., 2020). By maximizing the variety of digital platforms and affordances (i.e., "polymedia," Madianou and Miller, 2012) available to them, diasporic individuals and groups have been able to nurture a "connected presence" or "to be here and there at the same time" (Diminescu, 2008, p. 572); in many cases, this means maintaining homeland connections while adapting to new cultures and relations with co-ethnics and other migrant groups across the host society. Such mediated co-presence, in turn, enables migrants to sustain, negotiate, or navigate changes and challenges to their cultural or ethnic identities (see Leurs & Ponzanesi, 2018 and their edited issue on Connected Migrants).

Many studies at the intersection of digital media use and migrant identity dynamics have focused on migrants' use of Facebook—the most popular social networking site and social media platform for many years since its inception. Apart from allowing migrants to maintain old and new networks (Komito, 2011; Komito & Bates, 2011), Facebook has enabled diasporic communities' to promote and reinforce their shared culture and sense of collective identity (Oiarzabal, 2012). In another study, Facebook has assisted young migrants in London in navigating the "micro-politics" of their everyday urban and transnational identities and associations (Leurs, 2014). In separate studies on Filipino migrants, Facebook has provided the "social space" (Jones, 1997/2002) and symbolic resources for [ethnic and cultural] recognition to take place" (Lorenzana, 2016, p. 15; additions mine) and for these dispersed Filipinos to reaffirm and renegotiate their "Filipinoness" vis-à-vis modern-day diaspora and remnants of colonialism in the digital age (Aguila, 2014, 2015).

Following the Filipino studies above, this chapter focuses on overseas Filipinos'

negotiations of their ethnic identity and the role of Facebook therein, *while* taking inspiration from Christiansen's (2015) online and offline ethnographic study. In Christiansen's (2015) research with a social network of multigenerational Mexican transnationals, the members negotiate their ethnic identity based on certain emic criteria (i.e., language, transnationality, color, and display of Mexican culture) that not only originate from their shared culture but are created within and transformed through the community's interactions (Christiansen, 2015). Facebook serves as "a catalyst for change"—providing the members much flexibility and freedom to employ those normative, emic criteria to define and "challenge each other's degree of Mexicanness," and thus impose—both explicitly and implicitly—a specific social order of "centrality" within the network (Christiansen, 2015, p. 8).

Christiansen's (2015) work reminds us that ethnic identities (and social identities in general) are tightly intertwined with distinct "(implicit and explicit) 'scripts', or recognized norms of behaviour, which stipulate forms of behaviour and adherence to values" (Verkuyten, 2005, p. 46). However, this chapter avoids treating norms as "a non-problematic given" influencing the way members of an ethnic group think, act, and thus define their group identity (Verkuyten, 2001, p. 258). Instead, this chapter employs the idea of *moral normativity* (Harré & Van Langenhove, 1999; Van Langenhove, 2017) that not only refer to "judgments about what is right or wrong" but especially to "rights and duties" (Van Langenhove, 2017, p. 2) that are actively negotiated in interaction and can vary even among members of a group depending on the discursive context.

This chapter thus employs both the *social representations* (SR) *theory* on Filipino migrants' ethnic identity constructions and the *positioning* lens on corresponding discursive negotiation of rights and duties. The next section elaborates these two approaches by discussing the connections between SR and the concept of position in self-other relations, followed by the ideas of positioning and moral orders.

Social Representations and the (Moral) Dynamics of Self-Other Relations

Within SR theory (Moscovici, 1961/2008, 1984/2001a, 1988, 2001b), social knowledge is "formed in and through dialogues" (Marková, 2007, p. 219) among members of a community. As such, SR naturally involve identities; SR not only carry the meanings of a social object but also a knowledge of the self (an Ego, individual or collective), the other (an Alter, individual or collective, real or imagined), the relations between the self and the other, and the surrounding contexts in which they are all embedded (Duveen, 1993; Duveen & Lloyd, 1990/2010; Jovchelovitch, 2007; Marková, 2003). We recall how these aspects were simplified and visualized in Chapter 1, particularly through the triad of mediation (S_1–O–S_2), involving the self (i.e., primary subject, S_1), the other/s (i.e., secondary subject/s, S_2), and the SR object of concern (O). In this chapter, we give more attention to the dynamics among these elements through the ideas of *position*, *positioning,* and *moral orders*.

Social Representations and Positions

According to Andreouli (2010), the concept of position should be treated as both a social and discursive location and an array of moral rights and duties associated with a SR. On the one hand, the initial conception of position in SR literature is based on the elaboration by Duveen and colleagues: *positions* involve the 'locations' by which people can situate themselves and others relevant to a SR object (Duveen, 1993; Duveen & Lloyd, 1990/2010; Lloyd & Duveen, 1990/2010). Position is closely associated with the role of (mis)recognition and legitimacy in the processes of identity construction, knowledge creation, and communication (Andreouli, 2010). For instance, in Duveen and Psaltis's works on gender (e.g., Duveen & Psaltis, 2008; Psaltis & Duveen, 2006), boys are recognized (i.e., positioned) as experts and thus bearing knowledge and legitimacy to assert how they think the group can accomplish given tasks. Alternatively, girls are unexpected or even opposed to taking lead or assertive roles, i.e., positioned as lacking know-how and legitimacy (Andreouli, 2010).

On the other hand, another idea of position comes from the Positioning Theory (PT) by Harré and colleagues that foregrounds power asymmetries and 'moral' dynamics (Davies & Harré, 1990, 1999; Harré & Moghaddam, 2003; Harré & Van Langenhove, 1999). In PT, *position* refers to a specific set of rights and duties that interlocutors (i.e., the self and the other/s) have and that constrain what they can and cannot accomplish within a discursive episode (Davies & Harré, 1990, 1999; Harré & Moghaddam, 2003; Harré & Van Langenhove, 1999). Taking the previous example and applying PT's definition of positions, the boys in the Duveen gender studies who have been positioned as knowledgeable are thus more entitled to contribute in the activity; they have both the right to share their ideas and the duty to lead and provide solutions (Andreouli, 2010). In contrast, the girls who have been positioned as less knowledgeable are therefore less entitled to participate in knowledge construction and have greater duty to listen and follow the boys (Andreouli, 2010).

In Andreouli's (2010) case study on British identity, she illustrates further how an attention to rights and duties and their discursive assignment captures the dynamics of resistance and change in self-other relations and SR. For instance, a case study participant initially acknowledges how existing SR of British identity and immigration in the United Kingdom relegate her with the position of an "outsider with limited rights towards Britishness" for having a migrant background (Andreouli, 2010, p. 14.10). However, the participant contests such positioning by adopting the alternative position of an "assimilated new British citizen" (Andreouli, 2010, p. 14.10). This counter–positioning taps on another relevant moral order or network of rights and duties accorded by institutionalized rules and practices of British naturalization and integration. Such counter–positioning consequently gives her a more legitimate claim to Britishness over other migrants (Andreouli, 2010).

I follow Andreouli's (2010) integrated approach to positions vis-à-vis SR yet give greater emphasis on positions as rights and duties. Instead of the usual focus on intergroup

constructions and relations, this study concentrates on *ingroup* meanings and dynamics in migration (i.e., SR of Filipino identity and corresponding positionings among Filipino migrants in Germany). Moreover, I expand Andreouli's work and respond to recent calls to exemplify the connection of SR and PT theories (i.e., Harré & Moghaddam, 2015; Van Langenhove & Wise, 2019). I do so by highlighting two more concepts from PT—positioning and moral orders—in exploring SR (i.e., of Filipino identity) as process.

Positioning and Moral Orders

Positioning refers to the way rights and duties are locally appropriated by interlocutors within a social episode (Davies & Harré, 1990, 1999; Harré & Moghaddam, 2003; Harré & Van Langenhove, 1999). PT describes this discursive process through its own "positioning triad" of elements, namely the allocation of rights and duties (i.e., positions) occurring within narrative flows and structures (i.e., storylines) and having the "effective, then and there social significance of what is said and done" (i.e., illocutionary force of speech acts as conceptualized by Austin, 1961, as cited in Harré & Moghaddam, 2015, p. 229).

In PT, every speech act in a social episode includes the position of the self (i.e., self–positioning) and of others (i.e., other–positioning). Positioning also occurs in several orders of interaction, namely: how certain assignments of rights and duties are created and left unchallenged (*first–order positionings*); when certain rights and duties are contested, altered, or negotiated (*second–order positionings or counter–positionings*); or when a social actor (whether present or absent in the ongoing episode) is positioned in reference to a different episode or interaction (*third–order positioning*) (Harré & Van Langenhove, 1991, 1999).

Positioning further involves how moral orders are taken up, implied, or negotiated from moment to moment by actors engaged in interaction (Davies & Harré, 1990, 1999; Harré & Moghaddam, 2003; Harré & Van Langenhove, 1999). A *moral order* or moral field forms the basis and range of proper or acceptable acts (i.e., the whole constellation of rights

and duties) available in a particular discursive episode and context (Harré, 1987; Van Langenhove, 2017). Moral orders can be explicit, such as country laws or institutional rules. Yet they are more often implicit, "cultural canons indexed through the evocation of particular identities and storylines" (Slocum-Bradley, 2010, p. 95).

Different moral orders come into play at any point in time (Harré, 1987), from the general (i.e., cultural, legal, institutional) to the more specific (i.e., conversational, personal) levels (Van Langenhove, 2017). The present study focuses on cultural moral fields, which are assumed relevant in negotiating SR of ethnic identity. *Cultural moral orders* are "civilizational or cultural aspects of the society in which people live" that often comprise "meta-values about loyalty to the group and respect toward the hierarchy in the group… [and] sanctions mentioned against those who break the rules" (Van Langenhove, 2017, p. 5). These include religious (e.g. Bible, Koran, Talmud) and secular (e.g. universal declaration of human rights) canons (Van Langenhove, 2017), but also unwritten prescribes like forms of greeting, etiquette, forbidden gestures, and so on.

Overall, an exploration of the moral normative aspect of SR would be more complete by integrating the concepts of positioning and moral orders. Positioning underscores how sets of rights and duties associated with a SR occur within storylines, involve certain illocutionary forces, and dynamically go through different levels of allocation and contestation. Moral orders further elaborate how positionings (and naturally SR) are embedded within different, overarching systems of moral normativity. As this study explores the SR of Filipino identity and corresponding positionings among Filipino migrants in Germany, the next section discusses some relevant concepts from Filipino Psychology and Virtue Ethics to serve as insightful canonical references of Filipino identity, positionings, and moral orders.

Identity and Moral Orders in Filipino Social Psychology and Virtue Ethics

Sikolohiyang Pilipino or Filipino Psychology, is the "the scientific study of

psychology derived from the experience, ideas, and cultural orientation of the Filipinos" (Yacat, 2013, p. 1). The following subsections will focus on *kapwa* at the heart of Filipino social psychology, value system and identity, and on selected concepts of *pakikipagkapwa, kagandahang-loób*, and *utang-na-loób* that characterize Filipino relational norms.

Kapwa

Unlike western conceptions of personhood, Sikolohiyang Pilipino asserts that the Filipino idea of the self is one of *kapwa*—a "shared identity, an inner self shared with others" (Enriquez, 1992, p. 43) or "mutuality of being" (Mendoza & Perkinson, 2003, p. 289). One way to understand this Filipino self as kapwa is through the analogy or representation of the self, or ego, as a hard-boiled egg employed by the Filipino Psychologist Jaime Bulatao (1964/1998). Unlike in western psychology where persons have distinct identities like individual hard-boiled eggs, Filipino psychology sees Filipinos as more like fried eggs with separate and intact yolks yet connected through the egg whites (Macapagal et al., 2013). In this sense, kapwa is like the autonomous-relational (Kagitçibasi, 1996) or interdependent (Markus and Kitayama, 1991) conceptions of the self within cross-cultural research and usually applied to Asian or collectivist societies.

However, kapwa—as essentially interpersonal and embedded in the group—does not simply refer to the value of maintaining harmonious relationships, which is a surface interpretation of the Filipino interdependent or relational self. Kapwa corresponds to what the Filipinos are most concerned about: *pakikipagkapwa*, described as "human concern and interaction as one with others" (Enriquez, 1977, p. 4) or "treat[ing] one another as fellow human beings (*kapwa tao*)" (Enriquez, 1977, p. 7). More than just a value, pakikipagkapwa is a Filipino *paninindigan* or conviction and commitment (Enriquez, 1977); it bears an inherent social obligation to regard others with respect, dignity, and good will. Thus, pakikipagkapwa holds a "moral and normative aspect as a value and *paninindigan*" (Enriquez, 1977, p. 7).

Unjust, manipulative, or exploitative actions that devalue the other thus contradict pakikipagkapwa (Enriquez, 1977). To commit such acts is "to violate the principle of mutuality, and by implication, reciprocity in one's relationship with one's fellow human being" (Mendoza & Perkinson, 2003, p. 289), and thus risk being labeled "*walang kapwa tao*" (no sense of kapwa) (Enriquez, 1992, p. 61).

Filipino Good Will and Reciprocity

Two concepts that govern Filipino relational norms and spring from kapwa and pakikipagkapwa are *kagandahang-loób* and *utang-na-loób*. Here I add insights from Filipino Virtue Ethics by Reyes (2015) that elaborates on both concepts more equitably than Sikolohiyang Pilipino, which has given more attention to utang-na-loób. Also, Reyes' (2015) ideation of both as virtues engages the religious dimension in Filipino identity and relations.

Kagandahang-loób or "beauty-of-will" relates to the Filipino sense of generosity that "spring[s] spontaneously from the person's goodness of heart or *kabaitan*" (Enriquez, 1992, p. 57). As such, kagandahang-loób can be considered equivalent to "goodness-of-will" or *kabutihang-loób* (Reyes, 2015). Kagandahang-loób can easily be equated to the Western concept of kindness but Reyes (2015) asserts that kagandahang-loób has both communal and Christian elements to it and is thus better seen as benevolence and beneficence:

> *Kagandahang-loób* towards the *kapwa* is about treating him or her as part of your 'primal group', that is your family, clan or tribe. It is urgently manifested when the *kapwa* is weak or in need. The greatest paradigm is the mother's love for her weak and needy child… without asking for anything in return. It is, especially in the earliest stages, a unilateral giving (p. 159).

Utang-na-loób is commonly understood as "debt of gratitude" (Kaut, 1961, as cited in Pe-Pua & Protacio-Marcelino, 2000); it is Filipinos' deeply embedded sense of obligation to reciprocate the help or assistance received from another. However, Enriquez (1977)

questioned such western interpretation of utang-na-loób, saying it can serve to perpetuate colonial mentality, i.e., a vicious cycle of appreciation towards colonizers giving aid to Filipinos. A more authentic understanding of utang-na-loób highlights Filipinos' deep sense of "gratitude/solidarity" that is not entirely binding and is "not necessarily a burden as the word 'debt' connotes; as in the Filipino pattern of interpersonal relations, there is always an opportunity to return a favor" (Pe-Pua & Protacio-Marcelino, 2000, pp. 55–56). The focus is not on returning a favor but on a profound recognition of the helpful act as honoring and fortifying the unity and connection of the giver and receiver of help as both kapwa. In the words of Reyes (2015): "To have *utang-na-loób* means that one values *kapwa* relationships and seeks to prolong and strengthen these relationships. For Filipino virtue ethics, healthy *kapwa* relationships are ends in themselves and sources of happiness" (p. 161).

Finally, as Reyes (2015) points out, there is an altruistic dynamic between kagandahang-loób and utang-na-loób, as someone who receives an act of kindness (kagandahang-loób) becomes positioned into a state of gratitude (utang-na-loób). Yet if the helpful act was truly a form of kagandahang-loób, then "the return is hoped for, but cannot be and should not be demanded" (Reyes, 2015, p. 162).

Filipino Family and Norms

The first group of kapwa that Filipinos deal with is the family, from whom Filipinos initially learn the meaning and exemplification of pakikipagkapwa, kagandahang-loób, and utang-na-loób. As Jocano (1998) stated: "The family is basic to the life of Filipinos. It is the center of their universe. Most of what they do, what they think, and what they idealize, among others, are first learned within the narrow confines of the family (p. 11)".

The value of family is among the top four Filipino values shared by Filipinos (Bulatao, 1963/1998). From this value of family originates many socio-cultural influences and norms, including the expectation to "sacrifice personal interests for the good of the

family" (Macapagal et al., 2013, p. 43). Filipino parents are expected to work hard to provide for their families, even if this means becoming an Overseas Filipino Worker (OFW) separated from their children for extended periods of time. It is also acceptable for the eldest child to assume this responsibility of providing for the family, even if this means denying oneself the opportunity to complete an education or to marry and have one's own family (Macapagal et al., 2013). Familial rights, expectations, and responsibilities further extend to relatives (Jocano, 1998; Medina, 2001). Such extended family norms include not only social and emotional support but also financial assistance, which many Filipino migrants are known to accept as their duty and motivation for working abroad (see De Leon, 2016; Rich, 2017).

Overall, however, a cultural norm of helping and support exists and is expected to be fulfilled, especially among members of kin and the *barangay*—the Filipino local community and the smallest social unit next to (immediate and extended) family. This is captured by the oft-cited Filipino practice of *bayanihan* or "togetherness in common effort" (Enriquez, 1977, p. 5), cultivated as well by Filipinos abroad (see Aguila, 2014; Hardillo-Werning, 2007) and online (e.g., Soriano, Cabalquinto, & Panaligan, 2021).

Methodology

This study employed a qualitative approach to explore these questions: (1) What are the major storylines that outline the participants' collective ideas of "being a Filipino" in their discussions about migrant life in Germany?; (2) How do the participants discursively position themselves and co-ethnics vis-à-vis their constructions of Filipino identity; and (3) What is the role of Facebook in these ethnic identity constructions and positionings?

The dataset comprised transcripts from six focus group discussions (FGDs) conducted in various German cities. The FGDs involved a total of 33 Filipino migrants, aged between 23 to 71 years old ($\mu_{age} = 43$), and most of whom were women (79% or 26 individuals). Discussions were conducted mostly in mixed Filipino and English, although participants used

some German terms. All participants gave their verbal and signed consent, including their permission for the discussions to be audio-recorded, transcribed, and analyzed for publication. In this article, pseudonyms were used in place of the participants' real names.

The FGD transcripts were analyzed using a combined SR–Positioning Approach, specifically an adaption of Andreouli's (2010) SR–Positions analysis and Slocum–Bradley's (2010) Positioning Diamond analysis for this chapter. Although Andreouli (2010) analyzed an individual case study interview, her approach remained applicable to exploring SR as they are constructed within FGDs, with special attention to positions as both issues of recognition and legitimacy *and* sets of rights and duties tightly intertwined with participants' shared understandings of a social identity. Slocum–Bradley's (2010) positioning diamond enabled a deeper analysis of positions as rights and duties that are dynamically allocated within an interaction through narrative flows and conventions (storylines) and evoked in correspondence to other relevant and intersecting discursive identities (e.g., as a human being, community member, family member, etc.). Furthermore, the positioning diamond allowed sensitivity to various levels of positioning (i.e., first-order, second-order, or third-order) and, more importantly, preserved a "visible marker for social forces, helping researchers be mindful of [a variety of] 'moral fields' (Van Langenhove, 2017) that can shape rights and duties, positions, identities, and storylines…" (Mcvee, Haq, Barrett, Silvestri, & Shanahan, 2019, p. 7.4). Thus, positioning diamond facilitated easier identification of cultural moral orders expressed, rejected, or (re)created in participants' discursive positionings. Overall, this chapter's combined SR–Positioning approach thus enabled me to better capture the participants' shared ideas of the Filipino identity as a *process*, or as involving multiple, dynamic episodes of adopting, resisting, or negotiating discursive meanings and positionings.

Analysis was conducted in six stages. The first stage detected (a) storylines, or "the narrative structures used to organize and give meaning to a sequence of past and/or projected

future events that are conceived as an episode" (Slocum-Bradley, 2010, p. 83), (b) discursive identities, or explicitly and implicitly evoked categorizations and attributes of relevant actor-entities within a certain episode, (c) sets of rights and duties (i.e., positions) of various identities, and (d) social forces of utterances within each storyline. The second stage distinguished which storylines revolved around ingroup identification and relations (i.e., being a Filipino), specifically the migrants' experiences, interactions, and constructions about co-ethnics (i.e., Filipinos in Germany; Filipinos, families, and peers back in the Philippines; or Filipinos in general). The third stage mirrored the identification process of superordinate themes in thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006), i.e., associated storylines were grouped together to construct an overarching storyline. The fourth stage involved detailing the main storylines, most relevant identities, positions, and illocutionary forces. This stage also highlighted significant orders of positioning (first-order, second-order, or third-order positionings). The fifth stage highlighted which parts referred to, implicated, (re)produced, or refuted Filipino cultural moral orders, and what role Facebook played in the storylines. The final stage comprised the selection of excerpts that best illuminated the storylines.

Findings

The analysis highlights three overarching storylines illustrating the dominant shared ideas of "being a Filipino" based on the focus group participants' narratives and interactions with their *kababayans* (fellowmen) in Germany: (Not) Epitomizing *Kapwa*, Being *Kabarangays* (community members), and Emphasizing Filipino Versatility, Excellence, and Devotion to Family. The first two storylines unfolded in all discussions, yet in varying degrees. The last storyline was more prevalent in certain discussions, partly facilitated by utterances of younger immigrants in those groups who arrived in Germany during their late teenage to early adult years. Although generally in unison with the rest of the participants in their respective focus groups, these younger immigrants 'projected' their voices more in the

latter storyline and thus enriched the narrative's positioning dynamics.

The following subsections are organized by major storyline and substantiated with excerpts from the different focus groups. Each subsection also contains a table summarizing the relevant discursive identities, positions, social forces, and role of Facebook.

Storyline 1: (Not) Epitomizing *Kapwa*

Table 13 presents a summary of the first storyline and participants' shared idea of the Filipino as someone who 'should' epitomize the Filipino concept and practice of kapwa (shared identity), regardless of their location in the world. It was interesting yet rather expected to detect this storyline in all discussions. However, more notable was that the participants in most FGDs initially positioned their fellow Filipinos, in Germany or other countries, as poor exemplars of kapwa. Yet later in the discussions, the participants re-positioned and redeemed the moral standing of their co-ethnics, acknowledging that most Filipinos living abroad still exemplify the ideal kapwa. The migrants usually referred to their *kababayan* (fellowman) or *kapwa Pilipino* (fellow Filipino) when they mentioned kapwa, so this paper will also use kapwa and kababayan interchangeably for linguistic variability.

Destructive Kapwa

Excerpt 1.1 illustrates the participants' first-order positioning of their fellow Filipinos as "destructive" kapwa for displaying unpleasant traits or mistreating their fellowmen. For instance, some participants found themselves belittled, gossiped about (*tsismis*), hurt, or "ruined" by envy (*inggit*), or betrayed (i.e., "stabbed in the back") by their fellowmen. In deviating from the ideal (i.e., upholding the spirit of kapwa), destructive kapwa are thus positioned as morally contaminated Filipinos to be rightfully judged, condemned, and especially avoided by Filipino individuals and diaspora communities.

Interestingly, the participants also recognized the positioning of the destructive kapwa as "typical Filipino", which implied a social awareness of ingroup members' customary

Table 13

Storyline 1 – (Not) Epitomizing Kapwa

Discursive Identities	**Rights & Duties**	**Social Force** *(consequences to relations & migration)*	**Role of Facebook**
All Filipinos: Kapwa (shared identity, mutuality of being); Human beings Participants: Exemplars of the "constructive" kapwa; victims of the "destructive" kapwa Filipino migrants in DE (in general): epitomes of the ideal or "constructive" kapwa (Some) Filipinos in DE and other foreign countries: "destructive kapwa" ≈ condescending, judgmental, negative, envious, untrustworthy, unhelpful, exemplify "Filipino crab mentality", gossipers, backstabbers, co-ethnic oppressors	<u>All Filipinos:</u> Right to expect fellow Filipinos to be trustworthy Right to be respected and treated nicely by fellowmen Duty to acknowledge, respect, and treat fellow Filipinos well <u>"Destructive" *kapwa*:</u> Duty to be ashamed and guilty of hurting or not helping fellowmen Duty to change and be a "true", "constructive" *kapwa* <u>Victims of the "destructive" *kapwa*:</u> Right to be wary of other Filipino immigrants, i.e. on which fellow Filipino migrants to trust Duty to warn other fellowmen, especially new Filipino immigrants <u>Second-Order Positionings:</u> Duty to accept differences in attitudes and mentalities Duty to recognize the greater existence of constructive kapwa <u>All (as human beings):</u> Right to be treated with dignity and respect. Duty to respect human rights	Warning other fellowmen, especially new immigrants, against the existence of destructive kapwa Selective contact and relationships with Filipino immigrants, especially Filipinas in Germany Recognition of most Filipinos abroad as still constructive fellowmen to mitigate the ethnic identity threat and moral impact of the destructive kapwa positioning	Double-edged role: ▪ a positioning tool by the destructive kapwa ▪ a networking and protective medium both to welcome and warn co-ethnics, especially new arrivals, from the destructive kapwa

moral shortcomings. This extended positioning also had the social force of acknowledging two sides of "being a Filipino": the morally upright ("constructive") side *and* morally deviant ("destructive") side. As uttered by one of the participants above and to be elaborated later, there are both "destructive" and "constructive" Filipinos. Hence, it is a Filipino migrant's duty to find those Filipinos who are "true friends" or those who represent the ideal kapwa.

Excerpt 1.1, from FGD 1

1	**Queenie:** Our kapwa, really… There are destructive ones instead of constructive, right?
2	**Vivian:** The difficulty here [in the German migration context], when you surpass other people, or if they happen to notice something about you, sometimes [their treatment of you] changes, right? Don't go high or else [you will find] something like a knife on your back."
3	[some unquoted exchanges]
4	**Dolores:** Because here, if you really don't have friends, true friends, not those who will ruin you behind your back.
5	**Queenie:** There are many like that
6	**Dolores:** And those with inggit (envy), like that
7	**Edith:** To really have a true friend…
8	**Dolores:** It's difficult. That's why you must choose, we just really choose those who are true. The ones you, those who befriend you because you have [means], then when you turn your back, uy, there it goes. Like that, like that.
9	**Edith:** There are a lot like that.
10	**Dolores:** Because it is hard also to just trust. You need [to be careful]
11	**Queenie:** Typical Filipino
12	**Dolores:** Yeah, because we are Filipinos (laughs).

Unfortunately, Excerpt 1.2 demonstrates how some participants not only experienced unpleasant attitudes and treatment from fellow Filipinos in Germany but also in other countries. Such encounters came as surprising for the participants, especially because all of them are "outside the Philippines". There was a shared understanding *and* expectation that a Filipino would only bring the positive Filipino traits to the new country; any negative attitudes and practices should be left behind in the homeland. More importantly, a Filipino should still treat her fellowmen with respect and dignity, whether one has gained a new citizenship or not and wherever they may be in the world.

Excerpt 1.2, FGD 5

1	**Nate:** The tsismisan (gossiping), whatsoever. so that's my problem with Filipino migrants. They bring the [negative] Filipino attitudes outside [of the Philippines]. Ok, yes, sure, uhm uh, at, at least in my Singapore experience. … Uh, tsismis (gossip), uhm they think [of] pababababaan [putting people down], I mean crab mentality…
2	**Mario:** I agree with you, with that, because I also observed that, uh, in Saudi, because I was there [for a] long [time] but I'm Filipino. In our hospital there, it's who is the Filipino [who treats you badly], that's why I used to, in my experience—ah— … my mentor is Filipino. You know what he did? Mentorship means you teach [the subordinate] everything, it's like you're a puppy following him because he is supposed to teach you, *eh*. But instead of teaching me, he just kept on ordering me around, "get this, get that." No, I wouldn't learn [that way] in an environment with new technology, new protocols… How will I survive?

Victims' Duty to be Wary and to Warn Co-Ethnics

Consequently, participants who took up the position of 'victim of the destructive kababayans (fellowmen)' claimed the right to be wary of other Filipino immigrants and the duty to warn other fellowmen, especially new Filipino immigrants about the existence of some destructive kapwa. This translates to the social act and consequence of the Filipino migrants' selective contact and relationships with their fellowmen in Germany, as FGD 3 participant Joey narrated:

> Me, I really have three [Filipino] friends that I have known for a long time here in Germany. I'm their only friend… Because they no longer want, they have a lot of… They also had bad experiences with Filipinos. Because, that's it, you can never really tell. Because at the start, you'll start sharing your problems, then after that, when you are no longer okay with each other, they post on Facebook [your problems]. (simultaneous laughter) That's the problem.

The following excerpt could also be taken as a real-time demonstration of the social force of both the 'destructive kababayan' and the 'victim of the destructive kapwa' positionings. During one of the discussions (FGD 3), Din Din who just recently arrived in Germany and was excited to meet fellow Filipinos started to adopt the same wariness of the other participants in the group over befriending fellow Filipinos in Germany. Din Din stated:

> Actually, I am… I am surprised because we are just new here, right? So, like when I arrived here in Germany, I posted in [name of Facebook group]. Like I'm new here, I want to meet some Filipinos. Like I'm open to meet anyone. But, but with what they [other participants] are saying, that you must be careful because not all are nice. I'm like, I'm so friendly right now, I want to meet anyone. Like I'm willing to bring them at home, like have dinner. Yeah, but like, okay, I should be careful… (laughs)

Both quotes above demonstrate the double-edged role of Facebook within Storyline 1. On the one hand, Facebook is a means through which Filipino migrants, especially new arrivals, can network with their co-ethnics in Germany. On the other hand, Facebook is also the medium through which the destructive kababayans fail at their duty to respect and treat their fellowmen well. In turn, participants who have positioned themselves as victims take upon themselves that an important part now of their kapwa duties is warning other co-ethnics of such destructive kababayans, whether through face-to-face or Facebook interactions.

Filipinos as Kapwa Exemplars

Participants in the various groups also felt the need to temper, if not to thwart the positioning of Filipino migrants as destructive kapwa. In second-order positionings, Filipinos were described as generally kind, helpful, and reliable co-ethnics in most encounters, just like themselves who were participating in the FGDs. Filipinos in Germany were positioned as upholding the ideal Filipino warmth, openness, and joviality that migrants could look forward to whenever they meet their co-ethnics—whether encountered offline or online. Facebook's nature as a social networking site served as a virtual 'witness' and channel of these constructive (re-)positionings. Such Filipinos were seen as successful exemplars of kapwa and thus positioned as the constructive fellowmen—a counter-positioning with the specific social force of mitigating the moral threat and impact of the destructive kapwa positioning.

Excerpt 1.3 demonstrates how the participants re-negotiated such positionings of the destructive kapwa. For instance, some co-ethnics who were initially positioned as snobs were repositioned as simply being "wary Filipinos," whose aversion from co-ethnic peers might have stemmed from past negative encounters with fellowmen. Other participants offered the alternative position of a "survivor", not just to "wary" fellowmen but especially to Filipinos who were initially positioned as destructive kapwa. Even if such co-ethnics might have done unpleasant things to the point of "disturbing one's life", the participants recognized the

Excerpt 1.3, FGD 6

1	**Lyanne:** What I can share, one thing I can share, 'no… At work, no, the job I first talked about. I told you, I worked with a lot of people. This is one big company and there are a lot of Filipinas there. I joined. Something happened. Your kapwa Filipina, she will even… Even if she saw what happened, she will even take side with someone else. I experienced that. That is the most painful.
2	**Karina**: Is this, was this with the Arbeitsgeber (employer)?
3	**Lyanne:** Within that company, I can't also say things, like…
4	**Hannah:** With… I could understand that too because she also did not want to get involved because she also needs money.
5	**Karina:** [needs] job
6	**Hannah:** Because she also needs a job
7	**Jessila:** Why did she, maybe she was just protecting herself
8	**Hannah:** Of course, you also think about the other side, 'no? Not just her, not just you. Because you also… She will also protect herself because she needs money, something to sustain the ones [her family] in the Philippines.
9	**Karina:** Maybe there is also a reason
10	**Lyanne:** But this, what will you call this?
11	**Jessila**: In my case, I tell you, also a Filipina. She stole my husband. That's different, right? It's like she's disturbing you[r life].
12	**Karina:** Different situation
13	**Hannah:** No, because perhaps that Filipina that [stole] your husband, [she] wants to stay here. […] Now the, this woman, [is probably] without papers [so she] wants to get married. She wants to hold on to [your] spouse, of course. [Even] if she go[es] through divorce, she will stay. Now this other woman, she wants that [to happen] so she can stay. So, uh, it's like for survival.

possibility that these co-ethnics' actions might have been due to desperate needs or situations.

Finally, other participants re-positioned co-ethnic peers as simply having different mentalities and ways of life. These participants tapped into the existing ideology of human uniqueness *and* oneness, positioning Filipinos to have distinctive personalities and backgrounds but, more importantly, are fellow human beings *and* sharing an important social identity. As one participant (FGD 4), Adele, states:

> …[W]e're all Filipinos, we all have the same experience. … Even if we're not, even if we're not, we don't have the same kind of personality, like, I mean we are all still Filipinos, so we all have something in common and [together] we can have *Kaffee und Kuchen* (coffee and cake) afternoons (laughs).

Overall, Storyline 1 illustrated how the Filipino migrants strongly believe in and adhere to the moral order surrounding the concept of kapwa (shared identity). Storyline 1 demonstrated how all Filipinos—whether born in the Philippines or abroad—were and will always be acknowledged as a kapwa, both as a human being and especially as a co-ethnic peer. Consequently, to be recognized as a kapwa conferred one the right and entitlement to be treated with respect and good will *and* the moral duty to treat others the same way. In this sense, the moral order surrounding general human rights was implicated. Lastly, within Storyline 1, participants described Facebook's double-edged role as (1) a means used by co-ethnics positioned as destructive kapwa, and as (2) a networking and protective medium by which Filipino migrants could both welcome and warn newly arrivals from the 'destructive' fellowmen. This latter role of Facebook and the positioning of Filipinos as exemplars of kapwa would be illustrated further in the next storyline.

Storyline 2: Being *Kabarangays*

Being *Kabarangays* (village or community members) storyline underscores participants' shared understanding of their ethnic identity as one defined by membership and

involvement in a Filipino community. Table 14 gives an overview of how different categories of Filipino migrants are positioned, as they 'import' and sustain the traditional Filipino community unit (i.e., *barangay* or village) and roles into their participation, establishment, and maintenance of diaspora groups in Germany.

Beacons of Familiarity and Guidance

As newly arrived Filipino migrants, the participants expressed an eagerness to meet their co-ethnics, positioned as beacons of familiarity and comfort. The participants would look forward to attending Filipino gatherings and belonging to a Filipino diaspora community, whether online or offline. As the participant (FGD 5) Nate claimed, "you will find Facebook groups of Filipinos in whichever country you go". Such prospect almost always goes together with the Filipino migrants' hope and expectation that they would be welcomed warmly, could be "free" to be themselves, and could simply share the joy of socializing and eating Filipino food. As another participant (FGD 5), Francis, shared:

> For me, among the good traits of Filipinos outside the Philippines is… me, I am happy when I see a Filipino. [I tell myself,] I have a *kababayan* (fellowmen) here, I am not alone. Like, I feel like I am back in the Philippines when I see, oh, I have fellow Filipinos [here], then like, for example, our case here, we only know a few Filipinos, the ones who arrived with us, so they really became our friends, our family, like *kuya* (older brother) [name of another participant]. Like during our first four months of attending German course—yeah, so every after the training, we will meet in a restaurant then we will share our challenges, how we can cope, uh, with life here in, like here in *Ausland* (outside the Philippines).

A highly cited endearing aspect of Filipinos being members of diaspora groups and communities is their voluntary positioning as "elders" or "advisers" who provide guidance and a lending hand to newcomers and younger Filipinos. These community elders are older

Table 14

Storyline 2 – Being Kabarangays

Discursive Identities	**Rights & Duties**	**Social Force** *(consequences to relations & migration)*	**Role of Facebook**
Filipino groups and communities in DE: "imported" barangays and microcosms of Filipino society Participants and other Filipinos in DE: beacons of familiarity, helpful, supportive, fun to be with Older Filipino migrants in DE: community advisers, veterans and experts, and knowledge police of migrant life in DE New Filipino migrants in DE: young, need support and assistance	Right to be acknowledged for helpfulness and kindness Right to correct false and misleading information and pieces of advice Right to choose whether to share knowledge and experiences and to whom Duty to assist members of community especially those who are new, young, or in need Duty to provide valid, reliable, and truthful information Duty to be honest when an issue lies beyond one's expertise Duty to be clear when one is providing an opinion versus a fact <u>Specific to *new* Filipino migrants in DE:</u> Right to ask questions and to be supported Duty to show that they have researched first before asking questions	Participation in local and Facebook diasporic groups and communities 'Importation' and continuity of Filipino cultural practices and traditions in host society and in cyberspace	Enables both participants and Filipino migrants in general Facebook as a virtual meeting and collective space Facebook as a reflection and constant reminder of Filipinos' duties of hospitality, communal understanding, and support (i.e., bayanihan)

migrants, especially first-generation migrants who have been in Germany for more than 10 years. They tend to introduce newcomers in the diaspora community's practices and relations so that the new migrants can integrate better and "feel at home" in their new German life. Additionally, many of these elders are female. Hence, some participants described them as "mother", "godmother", or "aunt" who show care and concern to newcomers—a positioning which the older, female migrants gladly accepted like in the following excerpts:

Excerpt 2.1, FGD 1

1	**Dolores:** We advised her [what to do] because we knew the guy. He has been a long-time friend. 20 years, [for the] past 20 years... So, before we [introduced him] we gave her advice.
2	**Edith:** They are like my mothers, my godmothers, my aunts… Everything [I consult] from them. They are my advisers.

Excerpt 2.2, FGD 4

1	**Tita:** Yes. And newcomers like her, it warms my heart. I say [to myself], "I hope I will be able to help her in many ways, or in some way, so that my difficulties before, so that she can run to me, I can be her mother," like that. That's why I enjoy being called Auntie [real name]. … So, there, I enjoy when there is a newcomer, *'no*. "Auntie, where can I buy fish, rice, like that? How do I send money [back home]?" Like that, things like that. I feel very motherly especially to new ones.
2	**Adele:** May I please go to your house? (laughs)
3	**Tita:** Yes. When do you want?
4	**Adele:** Yes! (laughs)

Community Advisers, Veteran–Experts, and Knowledge Police

Older participants also positioned themselves as a kind of *migrant life veterans* and thus *experts*. They claimed a moral authority to share their knowledge and opinions as someone who has had "success" in Filipino life in Germany, despite the lack of technological advancements that younger migrants enjoy today. Excerpt 2.3 illustrates such veteran and expert positionings that tap on older migrants' generational experiences, age, and history of residence in Germany, and their implication of intergenerational moral expectations.

Excerpt 2.3, FGD 1

1	**Queenie:** The new[comers]. Like you, dear. You don't know the story behind our success.
2	**Vivian:** The new ones… The 80s generation, they can understand that. Right? Us. Because those who arrive here in a different time, [they come here and already experience] a different life. [Life here] keeps changing. That's why…
3	**Queenie:** That's one point also that they are very lucky, this young generation. You have to, you know, categorize. They are very lucky because they have all the information because they have the internet. At that time, you know, I wrote letter[s], uh…
4	**Vivian:** That is right

The older participants maintained this veteran and expert positioning even in online Filipino diaspora communities, which now abound because of social media. Given how social media has facilitated exchange of and access to (mis)information, some of these migrant-veterans also acted as a form of *community knowledge police* in online diaspora groups. Such identity was associated with a selective form of engagement: instead of sharing experiences or tips, they owned up the responsibility to correct false and misleading advice (see Excerpt 2.4) and the right to reprimand those who spread erroneous information.

Excerpt 2.4, FGD 2

1	**Beatrice:** Yes, then ehm, yes, sometimes I check, I also read comments. I would say, hmmm, sometimes I don't care, they can fool each other, like that, but sometimes when [someone posts] something personal, I feel sorry when people give wrong advice—
2	**Andy**: That's right, hmm, hmm
3	**Sonia:** True, true
4	**Beatrice:** —so I would engage [in the discussion] then. So that's my interaction there [in the group].

Filipino as Community-Oriented

Amidst all the above-mentioned clusters of rights and duties in the "Being Kabarangays" storyline was a common and core positioning—that of Filipinos as ontologically helpful ("*matulungin*") and community-oriented beings. This positioning enabled participants, whether young or old, to justify their willingness to assist newcomers even in online Filipino communities where everyday issues and questions are addressed. Acceptance of this positioning also prodded participants to re-assess and negotiate earlier positionings of fellow migrants, especially newcomers. For instance, co-ethnics who seemingly breached social sharing norms online (e.g., lack discretion in sharing private life) were re-positioned as persons in dire need and had no alternative channels for social support.

The participants overall accepted the duties and responsibilities of providing different forms of support to these new kabarangays and their right to ask questions and to request for assistance. However, newcomers were also given the duty to exercise initiative and to take the responsibility to research before asking—which all the newcomers in the discussion agreed with and accepted as their social obligation. Still, older migrants insisted on the duty to help and to maintain social harmony rather than to criticize others. Take for instance the

participant (FGD 3) Joey, who identified as a village elder and veteran expert, and was an actual leader of a Filipino diaspora group in Facebook. She stated:

> If you cannot give a nice answer, just do not comment. Because, not everyone likes… those things. But now, [name of an admin] does not like people who respond rather harshly. So hopefully, in the future, no one will do that. Because we do not want that.

Overall, Storyline 2 revolved around the shared idea that to be a Filipino is to be a supportive member of Filipino diaspora communities providing semblance of the traditional Filipino *barangay* life. Positionings were rooted in the Filipino cultural moral order of acknowledging the knowledge and wisdom of older co-ethnics, especially those migrants that identified as village elders, veteran experts, community knowledge police, or leaders. Newcomers had their 'beginner' rights yet also the duty to take initiative to research on their own and learn the ways of the community. In all these positionings, Facebook played a significant, enabling role for both participants and Filipino migrants in general. Facebook not only provided a virtual meeting and collective space for Filipino diasporic groups; Facebook served as a reflection and constant reminder of how every Filipino migrant is bound to duties of hospitality, understanding, and support to perpetuate a nurturing community of Filipino altruism, kagandahang-loob ('beauty-of-will'), and kindness.

Storyline 3: Emphasizing Filipino Versatility, Excellence, and Devotion to Family

Table 15 summarizes how the third major storyline encompasses cultural narratives, rights and duties surrounding two overlapping social identities: (1) the *Filipino Migrant*, which includes all Filipinos living abroad permanently (e.g., as naturalized Germans or permanent Germany residents), temporarily (e.g., as students, trainees, or Overseas Filipino Workers, OFWs), or irregularly (e.g., undocumented Filipinos abroad); and (2) the *Balikbayan* or how Filipino migrants are called when they return to the Philippines temporarily or indefinitely. This storyline highlighted the participants' discursive attempts to

Table 15

Storyline 3 – Redefining the Filipino Migrant and Balikbayan

Discursive Identities	**Rights & Duties**	**Social Force** *(consequences to relations & migration)*	**Role of Facebook**
Filipino migrants *as seen and positioned by families and co-ethnics in PH* (according to participants): rich co-ethnics living abroad; arrogant *balikbayans* (returnees) Family members, relatives, and other co-ethnics in PH: some are deserving dependents; others are undeserving, shameless, inconsiderate, lack knowledge of migrant life and struggles Participants & Filipino migrants in general: Philippine ambassadors	<u>Filipino migrants:</u> Right to spend money the way they want Right to reject requests for money or gifts Right to be respected and appreciated by families and co-ethnics in PH for all their hard work, devotion, and sacrifice Right to a good life Right to be proud of Filipino resilience and capabilities Duty to set boundaries in terms of giving Duty to be devoted to Filipino family and community BUT right to act against misuse of extended family culture Duty to break foreigner's stereotypes of Filipinos and to exemplify Filipino ideals and excellence <u>Families and co-ethnics in PH:</u> Right to invoke the Filipino extended family culture Migrant's duty to share wealth or success from abroad Migrant's duty to uphold extended family culture <u>Second-Order Positionings</u>: Families/co-ethnics have *no right* to demand money or gifts. Many *balikbayans* and migrants are just regular Filipinos, with simple and hard life abroad. Other Filipino migrants are show-off, spendthrift.	Conscious use of Facebook and other social media Contesting and redefining western/international (mis)representations of Filipinos Challenging expectations surrounding Filipino migrants and their devotion to family and community (i.e., extended family culture).	Facilitates the indirect, third-order positioning of migrants as "rich" Filipinos abroad by co-ethnics or absent others from the Philippines Enables migrants to challenge co-ethnic impositions and unreasonable expectations

reconstruct and negotiate clusters of rights and duties stereotypically imposed on overseas Filipinos and returnees especially by family and relatives in the Philippines.

Rich and Arrogant Migrant/Balikbayan

A stark first-order positioning of the participants and of Filipino migrants in general within Storyline 3 is attributed to the migrants' use of social media, specifically Facebook. The participants deemed that they (and other Filipinos in Germany) are indirectly positioned as having easy, well-off lives by co-ethnics in the Philippines due to the pictures posted by migrants in Facebook. From the perspective of the participants, Filipino migrants have all the right to use social media as they please, including sharing online what it is like to live in a foreign land. However, this online posting of overseas experiences has the unnecessary social consequence of families and friends back home positioning the migrants as "rich Filipino migrants or returnees". As illustrated in Excerpt 3.1, to be identified as such seemingly grants relatives the right and legitimacy to ask for money or material things from the migrants.

Excerpt 3.1, FGD 1

1	**Queenie:** We must look back because in Facebook, you can keep posting all the nice building[s]. Those, [your] travels around the world. What is behind that?
2	**Vivian:** Right, right.
3	**Queenie:** What is behind that?
4	**Peñaflor:** That's just a world of make-believe.
5	**Queenie:** Yeah, and then the Filipinos in the Philippines [think or say]: "Oh, you are rich in the, you are very rich in Germany."
6	**Vivian:** You are rich. Right, what she's saying is right.
7	(simultaneous laughter)
8	**Queenie:** That's a miscommuni–, misinformation with the pictures. Because of the virtual, you know. So, you must tell the truth.
9	**Vivian:** *Ja, stimmt, stimmt* (Yes, right, right)

10 **Peñaflor:** You don't know what's behind that smile.

11 Interviewer: So, am I getting it right, that everyone on this side agrees?

12 (simultaneous laughter)

13 **Dolores:** Ja. (Yes)

14 **Queenie:** I think they will agree.

15 Interviewer: What do the others, the other side say?

16 **Railey:** Also agree. Because I have three Aunts here…

17 [some unquoted exchanges]

18 **Railey:** …*Opo* [polite "yes"], because I have three Aunts here [in Germany]. Just like them [older participants in the group], they [my aunts] arrived here in the 80s. And, you know, [with] Facebook, Filipinos [in the Philippines] would think they [my aunts] are rich here in Germany. They already have a different life in Germany. But when they return, uhm, of course, they need money as well, right? Just for going back, right? Then the people in the Philippines [are like]: "Uy, they are already rich. Let's ask for money from them. Or balikbayan boxes. Ay, how about shoes, is that ok?" Like that. So, I experienced that too with my parents when we went back. My aunts in the Philippines, or my uncles back in the Philippines [would say]: "Uy, do you have money, girl?"

19 **Vivian:** Right.

20 **Dolores:** They do not know the life here.

21 **Queenie:** They do not know.

22 **Railey:** And then Facebook, it's like, it just pretties up life [abroad].

23 **Queenie:** So, there was … double *Belastung* (burden). Double Belastung.

Excerpt 3.1 demonstrated further that the participants strongly opposed and attributed such rich Filipino migrant/balikbayan positionings to Facebook and its capability to "pretty up life". The participants thus insisted on their fellow Filipino migrants to be "responsible" social

media users, specifically by taking it as duty to not just post nice things online but also to "show the truth" that not everything is "pretty" in the lives of Filipinos in Germany.

Nonetheless, the participants also acknowledged that this 'rich migrant/balikbayan' positionings existed even before social media and was in fact originally constructed and perpetuated by Filipino migrants themselves. Such Filipino migrants were described as arrogant (*mayabang*) and show-off (*nagpapasikat*), for instance by holding parties or spending extravagantly back in the Philippines. In another FGD's episode (Excerpt 3.2), such arrogant and spendthrift Filipino migrants were described by a participant, Roby, as "balikbayans with hepatitis" due to their fondness of wearing gold jewelry when they are in the Philippines.

Excerpt 3.2, FGD 4

1	**Roby:** …they have "hepatitis". Do you know that? … They look yellow because they're wearing gold jewelry all over (laughs).
2	Interviewer: Ah, okay.
3	(simultaneous laughter)
4	**Tita:** I just realize that now
5	**Roby:** You haven't heard that?
6	**Adele:** I know the gold rings.
7	**Roby:** That's it! That one already has hepa[titis].
8	(simultaneous laughter)
9	[after a few unquoted exchanges]
10	**Roby:** There are people like that so it's also the fault of those who go abroad why the way of thinking of other Filipinos back home is ignorance of our life here [abroad]. As if we are laundering money here. Because they brag. *Ay*, if only you would tell the truth that life is difficult here. Like my uncle here, would receive a call from the Philippines asking for help, [he says] "you wait. I will send money, [but] wait for three weeks because I still must work for it."

Such “balikbayans with hepatitis” were recognized to have the right to enjoy and spend their hard-earned money in any way they want. Yet the participants expected these fellow Filipino migrants to also fulfill their obligation—to themselves and their Filipino networks—to “tell the truth” that life is not easy abroad and that migrants work hard for every money or thing that they send to their families back home.

Exemplars of Filipino Versatility, Resilience, and Excellence

In other cases, the participants repositioned Filipino migrants/balikbayans, themselves included, as Filipinos who simply adapted to life abroad and consequently gained confidence (Excerpts 3.3 and 3.4). This reframing of Filipinos in Germany as versatile and confident overseas Filipinos served a dual social force: it aimed to soften, even discredit, the prior positioning of arrogant balikbayans and so reclaim a morally upright positioning for all Filipinos abroad. The misinterpreted attitudinal change of balikbayans should instead be seen as a symbol of Filipino success and growth.

Excerpt 3.3, FGD 5

1	**Carolina:** The other thing is that when you return to the Philippines… like me, I've been abroad a lot … I cannot, I have to be careful with [my] relatives that do not… do not [understand] you. So I… I lived in, first of all, that is why I stay in [name of Philippine province], aside from the traffic in Manila, I didn’t want to stay in Manila, it’s too near [to some relatives], because they always get mad, always *nagtatampo* (sulking or giving cold treatment) because I have become direct when speaking.
2	**Mario:** Yes, seriously [they say or think] “*yumabang na* (has become arrogant)”. But that’s not true because it cannot be that you do not adapt because we are here (in Germany). If they say here, if you remain sensitive here, you won’t get anywhere.

Excerpt 3.4, FGD 4:

1	**Roby:** […] Perhaps the mentality or mindset of Filipinos in Germany ay, let's say, we feel richer when in the Philippines because we have the money.
2	**Tita:** Hm
3	**Adele:** True. Because it's also Euro eh.
4	**Roby:** Yeah. Because our, there is, do you feel when [you're] walking on the street and it's like people are looking at you?
5	**Adele:** Here?
6	**Roby:** Back home.
7	**Tita:** In the Philippines.
8	**Roby:** And when you look, they are indeed looking [at you]. Have you ever experienced that? Like that. Then I asked my cousin: "why do people here in our locality always look at me?" I thought at first it's because I am tall, because I am taller than normal Filipinos…
9	[some unquoted exchanges]
10	**Roby**: No, but my cousin said, it is our *Selbstbewusst*… What do we call that?
11	**Adele**: Yes. Self-confidence
12	**Tita:** Awareness
13	**Roby:** Confidence. Our confidence. We have a different *dating* (aura or impression). For example, when you enter a restaurant, of course you won't enter a restaurant if you know you don't have money. Of course, for me, even if I'm just wearing shorts, sandals, I have money. I can pay. That's our thinking sometimes so our impression there is different. [Perceived as] slightly arrogant. But I am not arrogant in the Philippines.

In several episodes, this 'versatile and confident Filipinos' positioning further tapped on and was bolstered by another positioning of overseas Filipinos—as exemplars of Filipino resilience and excellence. Excerpt 3.5 shows, for instance, how a participant, Mario, asserted this positioning. First, Mario positioned himself and his co-ethnics as bearing unmatched resilience, hard work, passion, and drive to succeed abroad. Second, he positioned Filipino nurses like himself as exceptional professionals because of their trainability, adaptability, and genuine care for their patients. Mario then employed both positionings to buttress his claim of Filipinos being the "number one choice", especially in the provision of healthcare services around the world. Altogether, Mario's positionings not only bestow the participants and their migrant co-ethnics the right to celebrate and to take pride in their Filipino identity. Such positionings further grant Filipino migrants the right to hold themselves in moral esteem: because in upholding Filipino excellence and resilience especially abroad, they also fulfill and show commitment to their moral duties to their families.

Excerpt 3.5, FGD 5

1	**Mario:** Yes, that is what I said. No one can beat our resilience. We survive no matter how difficult a job is. Whatever we face, we survive because, as we say, we have a *hugot* (deep reason or emotions) for being here [abroad] (laughs)
2	Interviewer: *hugot*? What *hugot*?
3	**Mario:** Isn't it a deep desire, for a good future, right? Because you have a dream that you can realize if you do well here in Germany. You can achieve it, and you can support your family, you'll give [your best]. And because we are easily [adaptable]… and because it is in our [nature] as Filipinos, that's why we are the number one choice, especially that, I'll just share, in our industry, healthcare, Filipino nurses are in-demand. Why? [We are] caring, can easily be taught, can easily adapt…

In another episode from the same discussion, participant Nate positioned himself as a kind of 'Philippine ambassador' and thus representing Filipinos wherever he is in the world. He has especially committed to breaking foreigner misconceptions about Filipinos:

> When I started moving outside of the Philippines I have this goal to actually break whatever, uhm, ideas people have of Filipinos, like for example, like a lot—ah, I will touch on topics we already talked about—uhm, a lot of foreigners would actually think that if you are a Filipino, or like whether you're a guy or a girl if you're a Filipino here in Western countries or like in EU itself, they know that you should have or you have maybe like some special visa like marriage visa, or whatsoever that is not really about your personality or about, sorry, your skills and stuff like that so this kind of things I have to make sure because like, at least, in the, in my industry or, like in my company, I represent Filipinos, so I have to make sure that I am breaking all these mindsets about Filipinos and stuff. … it's not actually I'm representing myself but it's, like representing the Filipinos can do this. Because I believe [in] Filipinos, that even if there's like one person out there who can do this, it's possible. … I'm presenting this to other Filipinos or at the same time to international people that, "hey, they [Filipinos] can do this," hey, not because, like, we're "brownians" because, like, a lot … say you're actually so far away from, … from the [Philippines], from the east side [of the world], and like, "why did you come here?," and stuff like that so, I repeat it's because of my skills that I [have been able to do] this and they'll be like surprised that a Filipino can do this. And if a certain Filipino can do this I know that a lot [more] of Filipinos can do this, in the future and [that] it's possible…

Nate's utterance echoed Mario's previous positionings regarding Filipino qualities and competence and extended their social force: taking pride in being a Filipino must translate to protecting the image and reputation of Filipinos. Nate's positioning also

implicitly imposed on other Filipino migrants a moral obligation to not only have confidence in their ethnocultural identity but also to preserve and reclaim it from misrepresentations.

Devoted and Grateful Family Members

Despite debatable positionings of the balikbayan above, what still stands out is the identification of both the migrants and relevant co-ethnics back home as "family". With this identity comes the shared right to be treated well, and the duties to help each other and for the balikbayans to be warmly welcomed back, as illustrated in the excerpts below.

Excerpt 3.6, FGD 1

1	**Dolores:** Because our life then, we think to work, work, work. Earn money, help family.
2	**Vivian:** Earn money…
3	**Dolores:** Because we Filipinos, our priority is family.
4	**Vivian:** …to be able to help
5	**Dolores:** *Es egal was* (no matter what).

Excerpt 3.7, FGD 4:

1	**Tita:** What's nerve-wracking is when your relatives suddenly visit you, right?
2	**Adele:** *Ay*, that's the thing!
3	**Tita:** When they visit, [from] breakfast, lunch, [to] dinner.
4	**Adele**: Yes, that, too.
5	**Tita:** You'll feed them, pay for their cigarettes, pay for their drinks. And they still won't go home even if it's already late, right?
6	(simultaneous laughter)
7	**Adele:** Yes, that's it. Especially when they find out you're from abroad. My *yaya* (caretaker as a child), she always comes to visit us, but I know she's just there to ask money. But that's okay because she was my *yaya* before. (laughs)

8	(simultaneous laughter)
9	**Adele:** So, I was a bit selfish as a child, so… (laughs) Anyway, her child needs it. So, here's all the money, here's chocolate, so…
10	(simultaneous laughter)
11	**Adele:** Just like that. That is what I miss. It's like, I mean, *utang na loob* (debt of gratitude) also has a dark side, but—
11	**Tita:** Yes, *utang na loob*.
12	**Adele:** —in a way, like you keep stock of the things that you do for each other. And like we also have transactions [when relating to each other] but it is not exactly split down the middle, like down to the last cent we need to split. It is [instead] you do this nice thing to me this one time and I would do something nice for you. Doesn't matter what's the magnitude. So that's it.

As Adele in Excerpt 3.7 stated, being a Filipino involved being subject to the "Filipino family extended culture," which included a set of rights and duties related to the Filipino value of *utang na loob* (deep sense of gratitude and reciprocity). To be identified as part of a Filipino family not only granted one the right "to keep stock of things" that members do for each other; More importantly, it held every member accountable to the communal duty of practicing the deeper essence of utang na loob, either by wholeheartedly supporting the family "no matter what" or knowing how to "give-and-take".

Overall, Storyline 3 narrated the diverse, negotiated discursive positionings surrounding overseas Filipino identities. Facebook's role here immediately stood out as it was mainly perceived by participants as contributing to a indirect, third-order positioning of migrants as "rich" Filipinos abroad by co-ethnics (or absent others) from the Philippines. Facebook's facilitation of such positioning enabled co-ethnics in the Philippines to tap into an existing moral order of "Filipino extended family culture" and impose certain duties on

migrants such as giving money or gifts to (extended) family members. Despite this unwanted "rich" positioning and the unpleasant "arrogant" positioning, the participants did not shun the terms Filipino migrant or balikbayan because such identities enabled several social forces such as migrants' conscious use of Facebook, contesting and redefining western/international representations of Filipinos, and challenging moral order surrounding Filipino migrants' devotion to family and community (i.e., extended family culture) also with the assistance of Facebook. Although the participants disliked and challenged the socially imposed duties of providing, gifting, or spending for the extended family, the participants would continue to acquiesce prudently to such demands, keep in touch with relatives, and still look forward to visiting the Philippines. In the end, there remained great joy in *pagbabalik-bayan* (returning to the native land) because to be called balikbayan meant returning home to one's loved ones.

Summary

In this chapter, I sought to illustrate the political aspect of social media, particularly Facebook, as a digital (trans)formative site of social representations (SR) as process or as involving an active construction and contestation of shared meanings and discursive positions. Using a combined SR–Positioning approach based on Andreouli's (2010) and Slocum–Bradley's (2010) works, I analyzed six focus group discussions among Filipino migrants in Germany. Specifically, I explored the participants' shared understandings of their Filipino ethnic identity, how they correspondingly position themselves and relevant others, and the role of Facebook in both processes.

The analysis revealed three major storylines outlining what it means for the participants to be a Filipino in the context of their migration in Germany: (1) a (non)epitome of *kapwa*, (2) a helpful and reliable *kabarangay*, and (3) a versatile, excellent, and family-devoted overseas Filipino or *balikbayan* (returnee). Each storyline further illustrated how the migrants' shared definitions of their ethnic identity involved diverse, intricate networks of

rights and duties that are dynamically negotiated in various episodes, as the acceptance, resistance, or alteration of such positions further implied certain social consequences.

These findings bolster what other SR scholars (Andreouli, 2010; Harré & Moghaddam, 2015; Van Langenhove & Wise, 2019) have asserted: how SR are not just descriptive but are "above all prescriptive" as they are activated and (re)constructed in discourse (Philogène & Deaux, 2001). SR endorse certain ways of being and doing made more specific and with moral weight by rights and duties.

To this extent, the findings also strengthen Andreouli's (2010) claim that moral orders are the "normative aspect" of SR that define identities—in that systems of rights and duties serve as a deeply embedded yet fluidly negotiated structure that steer identity constructions and positionings in social interaction. We see this in how the Filipino participants tapped into existing, overarching arrays of rights and duties surrounding Filipino cultural values and constructs of "Filipinoness" (Aguila, 2014, 2015).

Such findings are additionally consistent with the ideas that (1) ethics and morality are embedded in SR and Self-Other interdependence (Marková, 2007, 2016), and (2) that kapwa remains at the core of Filipino identity (Enriquez, 1977), even for overseas Filipinos in this digital age (Aguila, 2014, 2015). Yet in contrast to previous studies, the present findings emphasize that kapwa is strongly understood by the migrants as a moral duty profoundly ingrained in the Filipino identity. Like originally conceptualized by Enriquez (1977), kapwa is as much a *paninindigan* (conviction and commitment) as it is a "mutuality of being" (Mendoza & Perkinson, 2003). Additionally, consistent with Reyes's (2015) conceptualization and as illustrated within the immigrant narratives, Filipino migrants expect the co-ethnic practice of virtuous cycles of pakikipagkapwa, kagandahang-loob (good will), and utang na loob among other Filipino moral values—whether online or offline—as these best manifest and realize kapwa as a paninindigan. In these regards, the concept of kapwa can

be better defined as the social *and* moral core of the Filipino self, to highlight both the Filipino identity's relational and moral normative qualities.

Lastly, the role of Facebook emerges naturally in the Filipino migrants' SR constructions and positionings, especially in the way Facebook facilitates the participants' collective acknowledgment and fulfillment of moral rights and duties associated with their being a Filipino. For instance, in Storyline 1 Facebook is a favorable medium through which the participants can connect with co-ethnics in Germany and, more importantly, realize their declared kapwa duty of good will by counseling newcomers caution against the destructive kapwa. Alternatively, Facebook is also considered a means through which one may identify which co-ethnics can be considered destructive, i.e., their use of Facebook deviated from kapwa ideals and expectations. In Storyline 2, we see more of how Facebook supports the participants' construction of the Filipino as naturally *matulungin* (helpful, altruistic) and their positioning of themselves and Filipino migrants in general as supportive members of the Filipino diaspora, fulfilling their duty to nurture a caring migrant community. Finally, in Storyline 3 Facebook serves an 'agentic role' as it was recognized as being 'responsible' for beautifying the life of Filipinos abroad and balikbayans (returnees), and thus enables an indirect, third-order positioning of Filipinos abroad as 'rich' by co-ethnics (or absent others) from the Philippines. Alternatively, Facebook also facilitates the participants' counter-positionings or resistance to unwanted positionings by co-ethnics back home.

Overall, the present study reminds us of the non-neutrality and socio-cultural embeddedness of Facebook and social media in general (Costa, 2018), as these digital technologies and their affordances have tacit and offline impact on relational and power dynamics. In as much as groups and individuals creatively appropriate social media for their own (collective) needs and goals—i.e., for ingroup negotiations of ethnic identity and (discursive) positions—people's needs and goals are influenced by pre-existing social and

normative systems in which their communities are embedded. Also, that Facebook usage and activities may imply or facilitate certain moral rights, duties, and social consequences give another meaning to “power plays on social media” (Hermida, 2015). Especially in the case of diasporic communities, significant actors on social media may in fact be absent others and not necessarily individuals with many followers the same way social influencers are defined. As social media continue to change in form, capabilities, and usage, researchers will have to continuously investigate the extent to which digital technologies enable or inhibit asymmetries and negotiations of legitimacy, authority, and influence.

CHAPTER 5[†]

FACEBOOK AND SR OF MIGRATION ANCHORED IN SPACE AND TIME

A revised and abridged version of this chapter is originally published with SAGE as follows:

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Abstract

This article explores Facebook's role in how Filipino migrants negotiate their diasporic chronotopes, that is, spatio-temporal constructions of their past/homeland and present/hostland. Specifically, focus group and digital ethnographic data with Filipino migrants in Germany are analysed using ethnography and discursive psychology approaches. Findings illustrate how Facebook enables Filipinos to re-enact and challenge past/homeland practices, which in turn help create a more meaningful present/hostland life. Facebook further facilitates the capture of conflicting yet socially consequential chronotopes – or irony chronotopes – that traverse and impact both offline and online dimensions of diaspora relations. Capturing such spatio-temporal interplays in migrant realities through social media provides a nuanced and dialogical view into migrants' lifeworlds, looks beyond the communication role that social media play therein, and contributes to the digital media and temporal turns in diaspora studies.

[†] This chapter's findings were initially presented at the Migrant Belongings Conference on April 22–23, 2021 and the Cultures of (Im)Mobile Entanglements Workshop held on July 16, 2021. Earlier drafts of this chapter won the Best Paper Award (see A.1 in the Appendix) at the aforementioned 2021 conference and the 2022 BIGSSS Paper Award, Single-Authored Category (https://www.bigsss-bremen.de/about/news/detail?id=292).

In this chapter, I give attention to the aspects of space and time, both in the development of shared meanings (especially about migration) and on how social media, specifically Facebook, captures and facilitates the negotiation and performativity of such social representations (SR) online. Borrowing from diaspora and literary studies involving the dimension of time, I first introduce the Bakhtinian idea of *chronotope*, or the inherent interconnectedness of space and time. Adapting Peeren's (2006) spatio-temporal approach to diaspora, I recognize chronotope as both a sociocultural concept and representational practice applicable to people's collective experiences and ideas of migration. Afterwards, I employ the SR lens to further expound on the chronotope and the nuances of its relation to migration. Specifically, I elaborate that migration is an object of SR, while chronotope can be considered as among the various anchoring mechanisms through which community members construct their collective understandings of migration. I further describe social media as contemporary sites of diasporic interactions and meaning-making, and thus where the contemporary negotiation and re-enactment of chronotopes associated with migration can be explored. Afterwards, I briefly introduce the idea of irony as among alternative chronotopes arising from diasporic interactions in social media and which will be illustrated in the findings. Finally, I present my methodology and analysis of Filipino migrants' navigation of their diasporic chronotopes on the Facebook group platform.

Migration and Spatio–Temporal Relations

Migration has always been studied and understood through spatial terms, i.e., as movement or relocation from one place to another, whether at a local or international scale. However, recent scholars have been emphasizing that migration is equally defined and should be also investigated through the aspect of time (Cwerner, 2001; Griffiths, Rogers, & Anderson, 2013; Ryan, 2018; Wang, 2020a, 2020b; Wang & Chen, 2020). For instance, diaspora involves the navigation of various forms of flow, rhythm, and "rupture of daily

routines" (Cwerner, 2001, p. 19). Migrant temporalities can be about issues as mundane as adjustments to different seasonal practices, changes in pace of lifestyle, or residency time requirements for permanent settlement and citizenship (Cwerner, 2001). Times in migration can also be as political as periods of uncertainty and detention especially faced by involuntary migrants like refugees and asylum-seekers (Griffiths, 2014), or aspects of temporariness, precarity, and exploit in migrant work (Wang, 2020a, 2020b; see also Griffiths et al., 2013 for other migrant temporalities).

Other recent diaspora studies have critically adopted the idea of *timespace* (Mavroudi, Page, & Christou, 2017) or *chronotope* (Christiansen, 2017, 2019) to highlight the "interdigitation" (Mavroudi et al., 2017, p. 4) or inextricable relations between space and time in diasporic meanings and experiences. In this chapter, I employ the term *chronotope*, its conceptualization by the Russian philosopher Mikhail Bakhtin (1975/1981), and its application to diaspora by Peeren (2006).

Chronotope literally means "timespace" and was conceptualized by Bakhtin (1975/1981) as "the intrinsic connectedness of temporal and spatial relationships that are artistically expressed in literature" (pp. 84–85). Initially applied by Bakhtin to novels, the chronotope highlights constructions of space and time that move the narrative, events, and characters into certain changes, trajectories, and forms of thinking, speaking, and acting (Lemon, 2009). For instance, the road chronotope illustrates a representation of a person's life, choices, and experiences being tightly intertwined with his actual travel on a physical, spatial path (Dentith, 2005). Alternatively, the adventure chronotope presents a construction of an exciting, 'hiatus' kind of time where a character travels or is transported to a distant or foreign land and overcomes challenges that emphasize admirable qualities, such as bravery, determination, or skills (Dentith, 2005).

Such timespace juxtapositions are very much constitutive of real life: Every lived

experience is anchored in and gains meaning through a specific time and place (Bakhtin, 1975/1981). However, migration particularly exemplifies chronotopes because migration precisely involves transitions and reconciliations among multiple relations of space and time, e.g., past/homeland life vis-à-vis present/hostland life. Esther Peeren (2006) seems to be among the first to notice this applicability of the Bakhtinian concept of timespace to the diasporic life. She points out that that there are at least three chronotopes related to migration. The *homeland chronotope* involves the cluster of values, norms, and relations from the migrants' 'there-and-then' or past/homeland life. The *hostland chronotope* refers to the migrants' 'here-and-now' which consists of a new constellation of objects, rhythms, or practices defining their present/hostland life. Additionally, the diasporic experience for some migrants is defined by the *third space chronotope*, which involves the journey between the migrant's origin and destination (e.g., liminal or in-between moments and places such as being at the airport or in the plane). Peeren (2006) does not discount the presence of other chronotopes in the migration experience; the emergence of such alternative chronotopes is among the foci of the empirical study and analysis later in this chapter.

More importantly, Peeren highlights that chronotopes (diasporic or otherwise) exist layered over one another and "will always bleed into one another in some way, requiring efforts of negotiation" (Peeren, 2006, p. 71). Hence, Peeren (2006) ultimately defines diaspora as a "dwelling-in-dischronotopicality", as migrants continuously navigate through various interpellations of timespace. Hence even after relocating, the elements of the homeland chronotope are still implicated or nurtured in migrants' everyday hostland life.

For instance, though not explicitly a study on chronotopes, Maller and Strengers' (2013) study on migration and practices demonstrate how even mundane homeland practices such as daily bathing or washing of clothes are carried over and negotiated vis-à-vis the hostland practice of seasonal variations in the frequency of bathing or washing of clothes.

Another example is when migrants have to negotiate the spatio-temporal norms and rhythms (e.g., punctuality behaviors or weekend practices) that they have become accustomed to in the host society as they temporarily or permanently return to the homeland.

Finally, Peeren (2006) emphasizes that chronotopes are especially tied to social and community life, relations and memories, norms, and traditions. Different communities give birth to diverse chronotopes, as even the same time-space coordinates and dynamics can have various meanings for different groups. Hence, Peeren (2006) insists on the chronotope as a "cultural concept", not just a literary one, that is highly applicable to investigating diaspora; chronotope is a "socio-cultural practice of time-space construction, constituted and maintained through intersubjective interaction and cultural memory" (p. 69).

I follow this collective emphasis, especially on how both migration and chronotope are simultaneously a "social-cultural phenomenon and *[social] representational practice*" (Peeren, 2006, p. 70; emphasis and addition mine). By integrating a social representational lens here, we can clarify further the nuances between migration and chronotope and enrich Peeren's (2006) elaboration of both as social constructions and practice.

Chronotope as a Social Representational Anchor

Moscovici's (1961/2008, 1984/2001a, 1988, 2001b) theory of SR focuses on how contemporary commonsense knowledge about objects or events in the world develops and transforms in everyday interaction. SR serve as a community's social psychological frame of reference or symbolic coping mechanism (Wagner et al., 1999) for dealing with 'novel' and 'unfamiliar' things, issues, or experiences. SR enable communities to make sense of such new and unfamiliar phenomena through the communicative mechanisms of objectification and anchoring (refer back to Chapter 1, subsection on SR Theory).

On the one hand, migration within the SR framework is an example of a new or 'unfamiliar' object or phenomenon around which a community's shared understanding

develops. Migration involves not only individual psychological shifts but also transformations in people's social psyche—their collective knowledge, affective and normative values, practices, and so on with their community of origin or a group of reference (e.g., Abadia et al., 2018; de Moura & Hernandis, 2013)—as people literally journey across both space and time. On the other hand, chronotopes serve as among a community's social representational anchors or familiar clusters of meaning and ways of doing that people refer to and utilize to make sense of a salient object of community concern and knowledge. Apart from themata (Marková, 2000; Moloney et al., 2005), metaphors (Christidou et al., 2004; Höijer, 2011), emotions (Höijer, 2010, 2011), or antinomies (Bonomo et al., 2013; Marková, 2003), some SR like that of migration can emerge and be defined by specific spatio-temporal relationships, qualities, or dynamics (i.e., chronotopes).

As an anchoring mechanism, I classify the chronotope as a space-related modality through which collective memory or remembering operates. Wagoner (2015) described it well when he stated that, within SR theory, collective memory is not stagnant knowledge; it is not kept pristine and unchanged within storages in our minds until we 'open' them again for use. Instead, collective memory is "actively engaged, socially and materially situated, reconstructive and oriented to the future" (Wagoner, 2015, pp. 150–156). Collective remembering occurs through different modalities, including through the *body* (e.g., socialized body postures, such as proper ways of eating or sitting, gendered ways of behaving), through *language* (from oral and folk traditions such as epic poems, songs, and storytelling to more literate, writing means), and through the (re)construction and (re)organization of *spaces* (e.g., both places of memory such as monuments, museums, streets, and public squares imbued with memories) (Wagoner, 2015).

Similar to the spatial modality of collective memory, chronotopes involve the power of the environment as a "collectively constructed sign systems, in Vygotsky's sense [of

mnemonic or mediated remembering]" (Wagoner, 2015, p. 155; see also Vygotsky, 1978); once a place is communally recognized or created to bear a community's network of salient meanings and emotions, such place shall from then on serve as a symbolic and material resource for the community to anchor new knowledge or phenomenon (Wagoner, 2015). As the concept suggests, however, chronotopes underscore the element of time and its various forms (e.g., as past/present/future, various seasons, routines, habits, sequence of movements or events, disruptions, waiting times, and so on) as inextricably tied to how social phenomena acquire meaning through spatial configurations. Take for instance, how the church or any space considered sacred is almost always associated with periods of silence, prayer, worship, or meaningful pauses in front of figures or statues. When we reflect on different communal events or social activities, all are "defined by various kinds of fused time and space: the rhythms and spatial organization of the assembly line, agricultural labor, sexual intercourse, and parlor conversation differ markedly" (Morson & Emerson, 1990, p. 368).

Additionally, chronotopes as SR anchors involve what Ritella and Ligorio (2016) describe as the semiotic and socio-material aspects—the interrelations of spatio-temporal frames at multiple levels of interaction as they are activated in discourse, and how the element of "space" includes the placement of bodies (i.e., of the self and the other/s), respectively. For example, Ritella and Ligorio's (2016) study illustrates how participants creatively employ the chronotope of past individual experiences and anticipated situations vis-a-vis the here-and-now dynamics of a meeting (e.g., participant positions) and broader spatio-temporal frames (e.g., the long-standing tradition of professional practices) to work towards finalizing a web platform.

A more pertinent example is the current pandemic and how "normalcy" has become a salient object of everyday shared knowledge. Normalcy since the start of pandemic has been defined by "new normal" constructions anchored on and contrasted to certain pre-Covid

timespace configurations. For instance, pre-pandemic normalcy involved *work* or people conducting their productive activities (e.g., educational or professional) within a specific timeframe of the day in an office or an environment separate from one's residence; work also included commute time and other spatio-temporal routines like after-work hobbies or social activities with colleagues (some examples in Rogers, 2020). Due to mobility restrictions and social distancing regulations, pandemic-induced "new normal" work and social interactions have mostly been conducted remotely at *home* (Corpuz, 2021; Rogers, 2020)—which is an intimate social sphere and space usually defined by comfort, relaxation, personal time, and family time. Additionally, pandemic-induced practice of work-from-home is similar to *pre-pandemic telecommuting* or *remote work*, which is "organizational work [or activity] that is performed outside of the normal organizational confines of space and time" and mediated through various information and communication technologies (Olson, 1983, p. 182; see also Feng & Savani, 2020 for more recent telecommuting literature). Yet telecommuting is previously the non-conventional, flexible work arrangement and preference due to lifestyle or family conditions (Olson, 1983); now it is a health protocol and has affected perceived productivity and work-life balance, especially for women (e.g., Feng & Savani, 2020). Lastly, remote work has been increasingly associated to the so-called "Zoom fatigue" or exhaustion from countless meetings (via the leading videoconference software Zoom) and stimuli enabled by digital connection and accessibility (Bailenson, 2021). In this sense, remote work has increasingly blurred embodied spatio-temporal boundaries (i.e., social and psychological presence and availability; see Bailenson, 2021; Rogers, 2020) and has induced a sense of "longing for the past" or the "good old times [pre-pandemic]" when constant engagement was not required (Nesher Shoshan & Wehrt, 2021, pp. 15–16).

Now returning to the object of migration, considering chronotope as a SR anchor then provides a deeper understanding of Peeren's (2006) assertion that diaspora is an

"interpellation" of the diasporic chronotopes of the homeland and hostland. Leaving one's homeland means leaving not only a specific place and timezone for another, but also a lifeworld and constellation of knowledge, norms, rhythms, and relations. Yet this homeland chronotope is not completely lost, as it is a part of the collective subjectivity and consciousness that migrants carry and "re-member" (Fortier, 1999). More importantly, the homeland chronotope is not simply abandoned or forgotten; it is creatively employed and synthesized by migrants and their diasporic communities to adapt to a new place and time of belonging and realities (i.e., host chronotope) and to work towards their envisioned future or anticipated actions (i.e., the group's "project" in Bauer and Gaskell, 2001).

Guided by this SR lens, a second focus of this chapter is to illustrate such migrant negotiation of their diasporic chronotopes in the most contemporary site of everyday migrant community life and interaction—social media. For this purpose, I briefly discuss next how social media platforms are compatible with the idea of chronotopes.

Social Media as Chronotopic

Social media facilitate connections between people and ideas regardless of location or time by being a "space of flows" made up of "nodes and networks; that is, of places connected by electronically powered communication networks" (Castells, 2009, p. 34). As such, the internet and social media have become an omnipresent, contemporary form of "social space" (Jones, 1997/2002)that makes possible massive amounts of information dissemination, communication, and social activity to take place.

By enabling the gathering of minds regardless of spatio-temporal positions, social media have also contributed to a differentiation of people's sense of time. Time is no longer just "lived time" or its actual experience and natural passing as a "sequencing of practices" (Castells, 2009); it is now also social time, or a "form of obligation" (Jones, 1997/2002) or experience in relation to accomplished tasks (Castells, 2009). Social media enables

accomplishment of multiple actions, asynchronous interactions, and a digital record of individual and community stories and activities.

For migrants in particular, social media are "transnational social spaces" or "deterritorialized spaces" (Christiansen, 2017, 2019). They enable migrants to nurture ties and engagement in both home and host societies (Madianou & Miller, 2012; McGregor & Siegel, 2014) while building new networks and communities (Dekker et al., 2016; Oiarzabal, 2012), shared identities and ways of belonging (Alinejad, 2011; Marino, 2015; Oiarzabal & Reips, 2012; Ponzanesi, 2020) regardless of their diasporic locations.

More importantly, social media are continuously "socially constructed spaces" (Fernback, 1997/2002) that migrants actively employ and transform to co-construct both a social arena and imagined collective (i.e., "networked publics," boyd, 2011). Illustratively, migrants are shown to appropriate Facebook and Twitter affordances to discursively co-create chronotopes—specifically, shared experiences despite varying timespace locations—and thus perform and negotiate cultural practices, relations, and identities, whether among people with existing social ties (Christiansen, 2017) or none at all (Christiansen, 2019).

I follow this last line of research by exploring how Filipino migrants in Germany specifically appropriate Facebook's group platform to enable three things: the re-enactment of the Filipinos' time-space constructions of their Philippine homeland, the migrants' negotiation of their host chronotope of Germany, and the emergence of other chronotopes that are contradictory yet meaningful to the community. Thus, I also introduce next the notion of irony as among such alternative chronotopes and how it can serve to enrich our understanding of diaspora communities' lifeworlds and social media experiences.

Irony as a Chronotope

Irony has a rich history of use and investigation, especially in literature, pragmatics, and linguistics (see Attardo, 2000). It is commonly understood in its verbal or literary form—

a classical figure of speech expressing contradiction. Yet it is a multifaceted, culturally dynamic, and emotionally charged construction of paradox (Hutcheon, 1992, 1995; Simpson, 2011), whether verbal or nonverbal.

Especially in its situational form, which is far understudied compared to the verbal form, irony reflects the positioning of selves in a salient situation of incoherence—"when our concepts and the world to which they apply are saliently out of sync" (Shelley, 2001, p. 814). For instance, people may express discomfort about certain events or changes in their community yet remain living in the same neighborhood; this still reflects sense of belonging, albeit at a "critical distance" (Yarker, 2019). Furthermore, irony serves both as rhetorical device and affective frame to manage competing emotions as migrants find themselves experiencing incongruities between cultural beliefs and community practices (Gallo, 2015).

With these understandings of the complexities of irony, I thus interpret an *irony chronotope* as representing the juxtaposition of at least two paradoxes, especially between what are expected (cultural or "encyclopaedic knowledge," Simpson, 2011, p. 39) and what happens ("situational context," Simpson, 2011, p. 29). In this article, I aim to illustrate the emergence of such irony chronotopes in migrant negotiations of their diasporic chronotopes within Facebook. In the following section, I discuss the methodological approach and steps I conducted to accomplish such goal.

Methodology

The empirical data analyzed for this chapter include all data from my ethnographic fieldwork with Filipino migrants in Germany—specifically, my field notes, six focus group transcripts, and a data corpus comprising select discussion threads, and posts from the partner community's Facebook group page that were saved as PDF files once a week from January to March 2017. Names were changed to protect the participants' privacy. Excerpts were English translated from mixed Filipino, English, and German.

I analyzed the data using both ethnographic and discursive psychology approaches to examine and reflect the scaffolding of spatio-temporal meanings in Filipino migrants' construction and negotiation of their home and homeland chronotopes. First, I adapted Christiansen's (2019) online ethnographic analysis of chronotopes in social media and identified themes among utterances pertaining to the home and host countries in the focus group transcripts, field notes, and Facebook group posts. I also coded whether the constructions pertained to the past, present, or future, and to familiar or unfamiliar objects or practices. Second, I focused data parts pertaining to the Facebook group, and identified Filipino values, ways, and other forms of cultural engagement that reflected the themes from the first analysis. I also noted the posts' multimodal construction, i.e., presence of images, videos, emoticons, or shared links. Third, I further teased out the Filipino migrants' negotiations of diasporic chronotopes by concentrating on spatio-temporal constructions that emerged strikingly contradictory yet socially meaningful and consequential to the migrants' shared experience and understanding of diaspora. In this last level of analysis, I adapted a more discursive psychological stance based on the work of Cresswell and Sullivan (2020).

Cresswell and Sullivan's (2020) discursive psychology (DP) enriches this study's ethnographic endeavor as their approach also draws from Bakhtin's chronotope. Their chronotopic DP emphasizes an attentiveness to *connotations*—instead of just denotations—in social interaction. Paying attention to connotation fosters a sensitivity to *polyphony* reflective of the 'modern psyche' and contemporary interactions (Cresswell & Sullivan, 2020). Polyphony is the simultaneous interlayering of meanings and temporalities at a given moment and space—which can be sometimes contradictory and 'can be experienced in terms of oneself or in terms of the chronotopes embodied by interlocutors' (Cresswell & Sullivan, 2020, p. 125). Chronotopic DP thus enables the capture and analysis of a scaffolding of spatio-temporal configurations, including "experiential tensions at play" (Cresswell &

Sullivan, 2020, p. 137) such as conflicting constructions, biases about contexts, and the "voices of 'absent others' as epiphanic signs" (Leimann, 2002 as cited in Cresswell & Sullivan, 2020). Consistent with the DP tradition, chronotopic DP further examines the action-orientation of such overlapping timespace constructions—for what purposes or practical ends are such chronotopes constructed within an utterance or interaction. As such, chronotopic DP encourages taking a "hermeneutic attitude to 'earnest irony'" (Cresswell & Sullivan, 2020)—an openness to the different ways participants' experiences interact, including the emergence of absurdity and irony itself in participant exchanges—and so "reveals what other cannot see for themselves" (Cresswell & Sullivan, 2020, p. 138).

Altogether, this combined ethnographic and DP approach provides a more nuanced and dialogical way to answer the following research questions: (1) How do Filipinos make sense of their overlapping ideas about the Philippine homeland and German host land?; (2) How do they navigate this interplay between the home and host chronotopes in the digital context of Facebook group platform?; (3) what other time-space constructions arise from these migrant community interactions on Facebook and for what diasporic ends?

Findings

This section is divided into four parts. The first part discusses the Filipino migrants' spatio-temporal constructions associated with the Philippines, i.e., their homeland chronotope. The second part describes the participants' hostland chronotope of Germany. The third part discusses how the participants and their online Filipino migrant community utilized the Facebook group platform to negotiate further and re-enact their aforementioned diasporic chronotopes. Finally, the fourth part describes seemingly contradictory yet overlapping and communally significant chronotopes. In the excerpts supporting the analysis, some original terms used by the participants were retained and italicized for emphasis.

The Filipino Homeland Chronotope

The Philippines 'then-and-there' life is associated with the country's sunny climate and relevant tropical features—what can be described as a 'tropical island' chronotope. Migrants become cognizant of this 'then-and-there' Philippine life characterized by an almost everlasting summer, where they can go swimming in warm beaches and enjoy "really fresh fruits and vegetables" and seafood all year round. In contrast, their 'here-and-now' Germany leaves them wanting in these aspects since, as some of the migrants would joke, "summer is but a day" ("*Sommer ist nur ein Tag*"), "the fish are so frozen," and tropical fruits are "not as fresh" and "way expensive".

The "warmth" that the migrants associate with the Philippines also comes from their co-ethnic relations (see Excerpt 4). The Philippines is a timespace of solace and comfort, in

Excerpt 4

Exchange about the Philippines from one of the FGDs

1	**Matthew:** I would still cry then even during my first three years [in Germany]. I would always cry because, I would say, what am I doing here? I can't leave because I have work and my wife was studying her masters. Uhm, [I miss] the warmth, like even your neighbors [there, compared to] my neighbor here, I met him, talked to him, but it took one year before I realized, ah so he's my neighbor, like that.
2	**Rachel:** Yeah, even without money
3	**Nina:** Like they say, there is no place like home
4	**Matthew:** In the Philippines, it's like different
5	**Alex:** The whole barangay you know
6	**Rachel:** Yeah, you know
7	(simultaneous laughter)
8	**Nina:** It's really different
9	**Rachel:** And even without electricity, we will find ways to entertain ourselves, singing, chatting, joking around, right?

the form of "family time" or "community time" (e.g., neighbors or friends), and other familiar ways and customs. The Filipino migrants recognize the amicability of Filipinos in general, which is more pronounced within one's local neighborhood or *barangay* usually characterized by close communal ties. Especially in the company of one's family and friends, time spent together, even "without money" or modern-day comforts like "electricity," and during simple gatherings over food, bear a lot of meaning, fun memories, and pleasant emotions, including a sense of "freedom," especially to just be oneself.

With such homeland chronotope filled with warmth, happiness, and togetherness, it is not surprising that many Filipino migrants express a propensity to search for co-ethnics the moment they arrive in Germany. Additionally, they become active in re-enacting the homeland chronotope, as the later section on "Facebook Group as Re-Enactment of the Filipino Homeland" will illustrate later.

On the other hand, the Philippines is not a complete reflection of the "utopian prelapserian chronotope of the homeland" (Naficy, 2001, p. 152) because of enduring cultural practices of entrapment. The most striking of which is the "*baluktot*" (bent or twisted) practice of extended family culture back home. The migrants lament how many Filipinos overseas bear the burden of supporting not just their nuclear families in the Philippines but even relatives and their children. Worse is that many of these migrant (extended) families disregard the struggles and sacrifice of their family member abroad, by always asking for money or wasting such money on unnecessary purchases. Such situations hold Filipino migrants into a form of 'time loop' of struggle and sacrifice that only ends when they are already old and have spent most of their lives away from their family.

Filipino Migrants' Host Chronotope of Germany

> I arrived here during winter, in the first days [it was] nice, the snow was *nakakaaliw* (amusing) but afterwards it was already saddening especially since [I] did not know

> anyone else and my spouse was at work *hehe*… but now it's ok especially now that I have children and I am no longer alone, *hehe*. (Kristel)

Like Kristel, many of the participants arrived during the winter season in Germany. Having come from a tropical country, snow was a new and entertaining experience. Together with the highly cold temperature and inarguable need to wear multiple layers of clothing, snow was the first palpable proof that these Filipinos have reached foreign soil. For those Filipinos who married German nationals, the wintry weather and landscape made for a perfect romantic backdrop to their life journeys at that point in time. Reaching Germany represented the culmination of their desire and long wait to be permanently reunited with their beloved—much like their own versions of a 'fairytale-come-true'.

However, this initial wonderment over Germany as a place of snow and reunion eventually changed into a place of loneliness, burden, and isolation. Winter is a challenging season to adapt to for Filipinos used to tropical climate. For Filipinos married to Germans, they are usually left at home to figure things out on their own and to care for their children while their German spouses are at work. For other migrants like Carren (quoted in the next page), Germany became the unfamiliar experience of not having any company, particularly of one's family, especially during sickness or trying times:

> I could not move on from that one time I was admitted in the hospital for two weeks, no companion [is allowed] all the time, even if my husband wants to, he can't because he was only allowed during visiting hours. In the Philippines, almost your whole family accompanies you all the time when you're in the hospital… (Carren)

Despite the challenges and feelings of homesickness and isolation, Germany still symbolizes an opportunity for newfound rootedness and transformation. For Filipino migrant-parents (like Kristel at the start of this section), Germany bears greater meaning through their children. The birth of their children gave the migrants more reason to overcome

the difficulties of Germany as an unfamiliar, seasonally wintry land. Their children were enough reason to persevere, to find ways to better integrate, and thus to be happier in their host country. Legally and experientially, the children became the migrants' (separately) living and embodied temporal anchor—of permanence and newfound rootedness.

For other participants, especially Filipino women, being left alone and doing things by themselves forced them to learn new skills, to conquer fear, and to acknowledge their own strength and resilience (Excerpt 5). Dealing with new technologies in German homes such as heaters, dish washers, and ovens also become simple, but stark chronotopic artifacts of the migrants' 'here-and-now' German life—now also associated with "Do It Yourself" (DIY) and "Can Do" attitudes—as compared to their 'there-and-then' less technologically advanced Philippine life. Such technologies additionally serve as spatio-temporal anchors and sources of amusing, sometimes hilarious, experiences that the migrants communally share and which define their new German lives.

Additionally, German ways provide a template and inspiration for the Filipino migrants to be more involved than they were before in the Philippines with groups and

Excerpt 5

Excerpt of a Facebook discussion about Germany

1	**Yolly** Here in DE (Germany) [name of admin] there's a lot of DIY (Do-It-Yourself), because it's expensive when you hire a company, money is wasted. But it's also a good feeling that you are learning something new. And here, every cent counts.
	Like · Reply · 1 Thumb Up · 29 January at 19:57
2	**Rowena** i can relate! haha like cleaning the pipe, repairing whatever. we become super woman. haha
	Like · Reply · 1 Thumb Up · 29 January at 19:58
3	**Yolly** here we are able to do what we do not do in the Philippines. But it's okay so we have more knowledge. Right, [we're] super woman!
4	Like · Reply · 1 Thumbs Up · 29 January at 20:02

initiatives that have tangible socio-civic contributions in both countries. Witnessing Germany and its embodiment of a "possible future" for the Philippines enables migrants to hope that the homeland can also be a land of progress—a future to which they can contribute and make happen. Hence unlike before, both transformation of home and diasporic selves co-occur more 'visibly', with their long-distance 'presence' and "persistent connection to the homeland" (Aguila, 2015, p. 60).

The next section illustrates how Filipino migrants negotiate such home- and host-land timespace constructions in another spatio-temporal context where a lot of contemporary migrant interactions occur: Facebook.

Facebook Group as Re-Enactment of the Filipino Homeland

The tropical island elements that characterize the Filipino migrants' homeland chronotope cannot be "imported" to Germany—but the warmth, comfort and fun brought about by co-ethnic bonds can be. Being able to "re-member" (Fortier, 1999) these communal aspects of the homeland chronotope in turn enables the migrants to better navigate the Germany host chronotope elements of struggle and isolation. Generally, Filipino migrants "re-member" (Fortier, 1999) the homeland through re-enacting the concept and practice of the *barangay* or the traditional Filipino village or community. With the advent of new media, Filipinos in Germany have particularly taken advantage of social media, especially Facebook and its group platform, as an alternative spatio-temporal context not only for establishing such barangays and the oft-associated practice of Filipino solidarity (*bayanihan*), but also the Filipino community space for entertainment and political discourse (*plaza*).

According to Joey, the creator and lead administrator of this study's partner Facebook migrant group, Facebook was an obvious choice for establishing an online community of Germany-based Filipinos. As the most popular social media platform and social networking site, Facebook provides "the most practical" virtual social context to create a "modern

Treffpunkt (meeting point in German) of Filipinos". Many Filipinos use Facebook, and it is very accessible especially for Filipinos that are new, without any family or network in Germany, and do not live in proximity of co-ethnics. Membership is also open regardless of spatio-temporal locations—wherever they may be in Germany or whether they are residents at present, in the past, or in the near future. The important thing is that they are, have been, or will be "genuinely in Germany" and are "willing to be a part of a supportive community".

Like traditional barangay leaders, Joey and her co-administrators are considered the Facebook group's leaders—sustaining the rules and norms, managing or initiating activities

Excerpt 6

Sample Pinned Post from Facebook Group Administrator

1 **Alex [Admin]** with Joey [Lead Admin]
16 February at 11:03 at · [Location in Germany]

Good day neighbors, *ate, kuya,* and *sis*[ters]. To keep a harmonious community here in [name of group] FB group, please follow our rules…

[…unquoted reminders and rules…]

The [main] rule of our community is our *pagtutulungan* (communal support and cooperation), especially towards our fellowmen who are newcomers here in Germany. [We] help each other out with giving information about renewal of passport, different visa, the effective ways to learn German, best ways to adjust to German culture, divorce process, child support, attorney, job application, and many more. It could also be about our sharing of experiences here and not gossip. As long as we respect each other when we have different opinions and perspectives in many matters. Our group has become successful because of our *pagtutulungan*. On behalf of all [group name] administrators, we thank you all for our *pagtutulungan* and *bayanihan* here in Germany.

2 **188 Likes/Hearts/Other Reactions** 26 Comments

and events, and mediating or pacifying tensions within the group. They utilize Facebook's *closed group* feature and administrators' control over who gets accepted or removed from the community. Additionally, they maximize the *pinned post* feature that allows a post to stay always on top of all member posts. Alex, a co-administrator at the time of the study, regularly uses pinned posts (like Excerpt 6) to remind members about the community's purpose.

Alex's post is an example of the group's incessant endeavors to tap on the Filipino spirit of *bayanihan* ("togetherness in common effort")—a characteristic feature not just of the traditional Filipino community life but of Filipino social relations especially in times of need and displacement (Enriquez, 1977, p. 5; see also Soriano et al., 2021 for the idea of "digital labor bayanihan"). The word and practice of bayanihan originates from an actual Filipino context of spatio-temporal movement realized through the values of community, altruism, and collaboration: village members literally carrying a relocating member's physical home (e.g., in the provinces and in the past, a native Filipino hut made out of organic materials such as bamboo, cogon grass, or nipa leaves) from one place to another (see Excerpt 7).

Such community practice is transposed both into the spatio-temporal context of Filipino life in Germany and migrant interactions on Facebook—not only by sharing tips, information, and experiences, but also by providing a timespace to interact in familiar Filipino ways. The Facebook group enables members to speak in Filipino language, or a mixture of Filipino, German, and other Philippine vernaculars; to observe discursive practices of Filipino courtesy and respect (e.g., use of *po, opo*, *ate* [sister], *kuya* [brother], etc.); to encourage each other through Filipino Catholic ways like sending prayers or wishing someone divine blessing (e.g. "God bless", "God is with you", "May God take care of it"); or to simply share migrants love for Filipino food and re-creating them in Germany.

These Facebook *bayanihan* practices naturally extend back to the offline sphere of interactions. For example, members help those who simply need something brought back

Excerpt 7

Original Meaning of Bayanihan as Mentioned in Facebook Group Members' Posts

1 **Paula [reply to a comment to an initial post]**
It's *[U]mzug* (relocation)...When a Filipino relocates [the] whole house is actually moved [in the] province
Like · Reply · 1 Thumb Up · 20 February at 21:56

2 **Dani** That's right[.] this is the one I know as bayanihan. Just need some picture for it. Google will help
Like · Reply · 20 February at 21:58

3 **Paula** For example 😍

***NOTE**: The author does **not** own this image but tried to find the original creator to seek permission to include the figure. If you believe you are the rights holder to this figure, please contact the author at aumel@bigsss-bremen.de.*

Like · Reply · 3 Thumbs Up · 20 February at 22:05

from the Philippines, or from Germany to the homeland. In some instances, the community can assist co-ethnics in dire need even when they are neither German residents nor part of the Facebook group. Such offline extensions of the online migrants' bayanihan reiterate the purpose and sincerity of the group as a barangay.

Finally, the migrants' 'lighter' appropriation of Facebook group as the community's social gathering site akin to the Philippine *plaza*—a public space that is a "basic ingredient in Filipino culture and everyday life" (Alarcon, 2001, p. 103) where members can find comfort outside the home and engage in community interactions. Members thus peruse their Facebook group wall for "everyday entertainment"—open exchanges of jokes, anecdotes, or amusing internet content. For other members, the mere chance to observe co-ethnic interactions, including misunderstandings or disputes, becomes a "comic relief". Excerpt 8

Excerpt 8

Amusing Content Reminding of Homeland

---

1 **Evelyn [initial post]** shared Pinas Dekada 80's photo.

15 February at 09:31

were you good in the past[?]..who [was] hit a lot[?]..choose now..me it is the *walis tingting* (coconut midribs broomstick).hahaha. because I was good then..

***NOTE**: The author does **not** own this figure but sought the permission of the attributed creator (Pinas Dekada 80 blog/account on Facebook) to include the figure. If you believe you are the correct rights holder to this figure, please contact the author via email at aumel@bigsss-bremen.de.*

[Text in photo translates to: "These things are painful to remember but because of these, you grew up disciplined."]

34 Like/Haha/Love 54 Comments

2 [unquoted comments and replies]

3 **Hannah** With my grandfather [it was] belt and with my aunt it was stick *hehe*

Like · Reply · 15 February at 16:55

4 > **Evelyn** ouchhh!! after [that] itchyy *hehehe*.
> Like · Reply · 15 February at 17:42

5 > **Hannah** That's how they disciplined when you did something unpleasant .. because we were hardheaded[.] we grew up under our grandparents' care..
> Like · Reply · 16 February at 10:05

6 [unquoted comments and replies]

7 **Grace** [Your post] lacks chairs 😂😂😂

Like · Reply · 15 February at 18:38

8 **Queenie** But I am still thankful for the disciplining of my dad. When I grew up he was my best friend. That's the time that i understood what he meant. I finished my course and passed the Nat'l Board Exam for Teachers.

Like · Reply · 2 Thumbs Up · 15 February at 18:47

---

illustrates how like Aguila's (2015) participants who used "tagging" to "send feelers (*parinig*)" to relevant others (p. 80), the present study's participants made full use of Facebook's affordances to (hash)tag, post quotes, images, videos, or memes to get the attention of group members and trigger "inside jokes" or nostalgic homeland memories.

Like the political function of the Philippine plaza (Alarcon, 2001), the Facebook group's wall also served as the migrant community's public sphere. Although the admins prohibited discussions about Philippine politics, members got to discuss everyday issues and concerns, especially to contest voices of "absent but embodied 'other[s]'" (Cresswell & Sullivan, 2020, p. 131). For instance, members challenged some co-ethnics' and host society members' representation of female Filipinos as only being able to reach Germany as either a nurse or wife of a German national. Female Filipinos like Winnie (in Excerpt 9) clarified their chronotope of Germany—that getting married to a German national did *not* readily equate to an easy life. Such assertion was related to other members' sentiments regarding the abused extended family culture in the Philippines and existing Filipino chronotopes by family members that money was easy to come by abroad (see Excerpt 10).

These chronotopic ways and social practices of the Filipino migrants in their Facebook community help flesh out a more chronotopic and collective outlook of what Aguila (2014) has described as "online *pakikipagkapwa*", or Filipino migrants' creative ways

Excerpt 9

Sample Post Clarifying Migrants' Host Chronotope of Germany

1	**Winnie [reply to a comment in an initial post]** Germany is not a paradise[.] [Y]ou must work to live[.] [A]lthough you [may] have a rich husband[,] they do not give their wallet for self[-]service[.] [T]hey give you [access to their] bank acc[oun]t but they also control how you manage it[.] [M]aybe not all but mostly [sic] of them. 😊 Like · Reply · 2 Thumbs Up · 7 January at 18:13

Excerpt 10

Facebook Excerpt Showing Migrants Challenging of 'Absent Others'

---

1 **Eleanor [initial post]** shared Filipina & German Stories's photo.
3 January at 21:25
[I] wish this is how all families in the Philippines think.

*NOTE: The author does **not** own this figure but sought the permission of the attributed creator (Filipina & German Stories blog/account on Facebook). If you believe you are the correct rights holder to this figure, please contact the author via email at aumel@bigsss-bremen.de.*

[Text in the image translates to:
"Not all [Filipinos] who are abroad have a good life. So to those who are left in the Philippines[,] learn to be thankful and to be content of what is given."]

65 Like/Sad 13 Comments

2 [unquoted comments and replies]

3 **Jake** They only ask how you are doing when you send [money], but after you'll just be seen zone[d] .😃
Like · Reply · 4 January at 01:43 · Edited

4 **Rhealyn** Most of us who are abroad have that problem.. So sometimes you get tired of it too .. You put up with a lot and whichever is cheap that's what you buy just so you can have something left to send them.. When you have sent [money] they would not even tell immediately if they have received it.. It will take a few more days and you will be the one to ask and call them, sometimes this is what's painful[—] that you don't even hear them ask how you are doing and thank you.. That's life abroad.. Pure endurance. 💝 God be with us all.
Like · Reply · 6 Thumbs Up · 4 January at 02:56

5 > **Mars** Right
> Like · Reply · 5 January at 02:14

6 **Marjorie** Because our families in the Philippines think we just pick up money [from the streets here] abroad[.] they do not know how difficult it is to work abroad.
Like · Reply · 1 Thumb Up · 4 January at 04:50

---

of appropriating Facebook's affordances to re-negotiate their Filipino identities and relations. Filipino migrants in Germany have appropriated the Facebook group platform into their own digital and diasporic "terrain of belonging" reflecting the Philippine "historical and cultural possessions" (Fortier, 1999, p. 42) and practices beneficial to their successful navigation of the host chronotope. After exploring these Facebook (re)constructions of the Filipino homeland, I focus next on specific timespace configurations within the community's Facebook interactions that emerged strikingly ironic, and what possible action-orientations such interconnected yet contradictory chronotopes imply.

Other (Irony) Chronotopes as Captured in Filipinos' Facebook Interactions

Amidst the Filipino migrant community's re-enactment of the Filipino homeland, I noticed recurring discussion threads about members' experiences of meeting or socializing with co-ethnics offline (see Excerpt 11). Upon arriving in Germany, Filipinos look forward to chance meetings with co-ethnics. Such "surprise moments" are expected to be joyful and comforting, yet some unfortunately end up as disappointments as they are "snubbed" by fellowmen or treated as "material for gossip". Similarly, communal gatherings that are expected to facilitate and strengthen co-ethnic relations sometimes turn out as timespaces of *pabonggahan* (flamboyance), social judgment, and conflict, and thus hinder or break communal relationships instead. In turn, these ironic chronotopes of disconcerting offline co-ethnic meetings, whether circumstantial or elaborately organized, unfortunately lead to a secondary level of irony within Facebook discussion threads: Filipino migrants discouraging fellow Filipinos from engaging with and trusting co-ethnics.

The incongruities in these timespace constructions of Filipino co-ethnic encounters and trust relations can be better understood in the context of the term "kapwa*"* as mentioned by Mandy in Table 23. *Kapwa* means "shared identity" (Enriquez, 1977, 1978) or oneness of self-and-other (Aguila, 2015). It is considered the core value of Filipino identity and

psychology (Enriquez, 1977, 1978; Yacat, 2013). Filipino as a relational self, goes hand-in-hand with moral, social obligations, especially that of treating one's fellowmen with respect and dignity, as humans and equals (Enriquez, 1978). To be treated otherwise triggers a constellation of perplexing thoughts and emotions, like a deep sense of sadness (Excerpt 11).

Conflicting chronotopes of co-ethnic distancing and distrust amidst a Filipino Facebook group formed in the spirit of Filipino community and solidarity can thus be interpreted in the following ways. Firstly, they are collective "warnings against the betrayal of *kapwa*" (Aguila, 2014, p. 84) and what could be the Filipino diasporic community's social sanctions to co-ethnics who fail to "re-member" (Fortier, 1999) homeland values. They are also a rejection of any Filipino migrants' false belief that upholding of "Spanish attitudes" from the Philippines' colonial times, such as being "disdainful, when they look [at people], from head to toe", is part of homeland values.

Secondly, these ironic timespace constructions also appear to be the Filipino migrant community's versions of preventing "context collapse" (Marwick & Boyd, 2011). They serve to remind migrants that the Philippine 'there-and-then' life and *kapwa* expectations cannot be re-enacted in full in their 'here-and-now' life abroad. Also, as much as the online community endeavors to nurture a supportive community reminiscent of close homeland relations, the same thing cannot be readily expected offline. Selective co-ethnic relations thus become a pragmatic way to spare each other such disappointment, perhaps even a sense of loss.

Yet, thirdly, such contradictory chronotopes are also but a reminder "that's life"—some people cannot be readily trusted, some can be, regardless of nationality. Also as some members (like Sara and Erica in Excerpt 8) catch themselves doing, Filipinos despite being abroad re-enact the "old same days[,] old same ways"…, whether it be "gossiping so early in the morning" or nurturing a sense of community and solidarity, which are but a part of Filipino everyday life, wherever Filipinos may be.

Excerpt 11

Facebook Excerpt Illustrating Irony Chronotopes of Filipino Relations

1 **Mandy [initial post]**

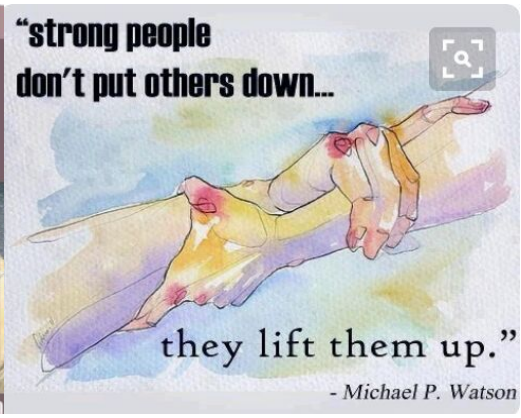
22 January at 22:50

Have you also experienced your kapwa Filipino here, one you just met, asking you what's the status of your stay or visa here, what's your job, how much you earn, how long you've been here, how you managed to get to Germany as single [in civil status]. With a bit of sarcasm, just because they have been here for a long time and are already *big time*. It's just very *traurig* (sad) to think. We are not competing. We are all the same *nakikipagsapalaran* (venturing and taking our chances) to help our loved ones in the Philippines. Please do not belittle your *kapwa tao* (fellow people), especially if kapwa Filipinos.

#thetruthhurts

#stopcrabmentality

#thingstoponder



142 Like/Sad/Haha 194 Comments

2 [unquoted comments and replies]

3 **Riza** I haven't experienced that with Filipinas who have been here for a long time in DE (Germany) but with those who are new, my God. Feeling like a frog. You would think they have been here in Germany for 100 years. Sorry

not sorry But that's the truth.👌 it's just based on my experience here in DE! [Whether] new or old here in DE there really are people like that you can't avoid them so just ignore them because there are still a lot of Filipinas with good behavior..😘

Like · Reply · 8 Thumbs Up · 22 January at 23:19 · Edited

4 **Mandy** That's right.. it's just very *traurig* (sad).. you are so happy to see a fellow Filipino on the streets and that's what you immediately experience.. [so] just ignore..

Like · Reply · 22 January at 23:15

5 [unquoted comments and replies]

6 **Bernadette** I'm only on my way to Germany next week but [that's] severe. Sometimes it's our fellowmen who belittle us when we should be helping each other out because we came from the same country but of course there will always be people who are arrogant.😐 It's just really saddening that you think when you talk to your fellowman your homesickness will go away since you both [get to talk] in Filipino but it's actually more stressful😢

Like · Reply · 23 January at 07:03

7 **Sara** with ofw[s] (overseas filipino workers) dear it is worse. At least here in Germany, you don't feel who is rich who is poor, that's why for us [in the Philippines], there are level[s] in a sense because [people are] still carrying [sic] Spanish attitudes, disdainful, when they look [at you], [it's from] head to toe.hihi

Like · Reply · 23 January at 07:53

8 [unquoted comments and replies]

9 **Erica** There are different nationalities with the same attitude, not just Filipinos. ..so just go with it that's how they are just don't imitate them. 😉😂

Like · Reply · 1 Thumb Up · 23 January at 08:21

10 **Sara** [Another member's name], curiosity kills you. So just don't [mind them], hihi. Anyhow, back to sleep, so early in the morning, old same days[,] old same ways of Filipinas, sigh life.hehe

Like · Reply · 23 January at 08:23

11	**Erica** Sara, that made me laugh gossiping so early in the morning right[?] he hehe that's life .. will sleep again 😂😂 Like · Reply · 1 Thumb Up · 23 January at 08:26

Summary

In this chapter, I accentuated aspects of space and time, not just in the development of social representations (SR) as practice, but especially in relation to social media as a digital public sphere. I did so by focusing on migration as a SR object, by adapting the Bakhtinian concept of chronotope as a social representational anchor, and by mentioning social media's chronotopic nature. As empirical support, I presented an ethnographic-discursive psychology analysis on how the Facebook group platform could capture and facilitate the digital (trans)formation of chronotopic SR of migration among Filipinos in Germany.

Findings support the knowledge that diaspora changes the meaning of space and time for migrants, especially in relation to the home and host lands. As in the case of Filipino migrants in Germany, even trivial matters such as the weather and being able to use household technologies have become stark spatio-temporal artifacts not just of their old and new homes but have also been embedded in the migrants' everyday practices and in the transformation of their diasporic selves. Also, despite the states of entrapment and backwardness represented by the homeland, Filipino migrants in Germany still find ways to re-enact the homeland sense of community (*barangay*), community effort (*bayanihan*), and public sphere (*plaza*).

The Facebook group platform has offered the Filipino participants creative possibilities to continuously negotiate such spatio-temporal meanings and adjustments. The migrants' Facebook group has become a distinctive element of their diasporic community's collective knowledge and lived experience in Germany, enabling the migrants with ways to blend and 'synchronize' present/hostland rhythms and routines with past/homeland practices,

whether offline or online. The Filipino migrants are also able to be "virtually in-sync" and thus communally perform diverse forms of "transnational embodiment" (Alinejad, 2011) and "digital togetherness" (Marino, 2015; see also Christiansen, 2017, 2019), especially with co-ethnics in dire needs.

In this sense, the findings support the idea of "networked publics" (boyd, 2011) or publics whose identity and practices have become tightly intertwined with the digital platform in which the community develops. The findings further demonstrate the notion of "affordances-in-practice" (Costa, 2018), which not only emphasize users' agency but that social media affordances take shape and are defined by specific sociocultural elements and practices—in the Filipinos' case, distinct spatio-temporal norms, dynamics, and disruptions.

Hence, in contrast to concerns that people's use of social media may only lead to consumption and isolation instead of extending sociability and interconnectedness (Fernback, 1997/2002), findings reveal that the Facebook group platform could nurture and sustain virtual communities—precisely because these migrants have shown "commitment in social organization" (Fernback, 2007, p. 64) and, with such motivation, maximize the affordances of the Facebook group platform. In this sense, being away from home seems to intensify the Filipino migrants' desire to keep home "close" and employ an adaptable instrument for successfully overcoming the struggle and isolation that the host chronotope entails.

The Facebook group platform further enabled the capture of other chronotopes that through are contradictory are intersecting and socially meaningful to the Filipino migrant community. Such alternative chronotopes can be described as chronotopes of irony that illustrate another layer of complexity in migrants' lived experiences of diaspora. Identifying such irony chronotopes invites a more dialogical and dynamic view of how diasporic relations prosper or fail, and in what directions diasporic identities evolve. It also invites researchers to further tap into ethnocultural meanings of irony and self-other relations, as

such cultural aspects contribute to what can be collectively defined as ironic (Hutcheon, 1992, 1995; Simpson, 2011) and in what ways irony plays a role in people's spatio-temporal constructions, rhythms, and dynamics.

Finally, this paper's effort to apply and extend Peeren's (2006) conceptualization of diaspora as dischronotopicality—through an empirical investigation of migrants' navigation of diasporic chronotopes within the Facebook group platform—is also an endeavor to contribute to an emerging body of research on time as an equally significant dimension of diaspora (e.g., Christiansen, 2017, 2019; Mavroudi et al., 2017; Wang, 2020a, 2020b). To pay more attention to the intersecting dynamics of space and time in the SR of diaspora also serves to enrich our understanding of the continuously evolving relation of technologies and diasporic life.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSIONS

This dissertation primarily draws from psychology, digital media, and migration literature among others to provide a social constructionist and social psychological understanding of social media that focuses on a collective unit of analysis, embraces qualitative *and* online approaches, and thus inquires more deeply into social media's role and impact on everyday community life and meaning(-making). Primarily employing the theory of social representations (SR), this project first elaborates on the multi-dimensional nature and role of social media in the development of everyday social knowledge—not just as technological tools or communication channels, but as dynamic, (trans)formative social contexts. Secondly, this dissertation substantiates such conceptualization of social media vis-à-vis the development of SR by conducting three exploratory empirical studies, employing a qualitative, digital ethnographic methodology. The scope of the study concentrates on Facebook as the focal social media platform and research base, migration-related phenomena as objects of SR, and Filipino migrants in Germany as sample group and partner community. In the following sections, I discuss the key contributions and implications of my research, as well as the project's limitations and suggested directions for future research.

Theoretical Contributions and Implications

In defining everyday social knowledge as SR, this dissertation's main contribution is arguably to provide focal attention on the embeddedness of social media in 21st century collective meaning-making. As mentioned in the introduction, Wählstrom (2012) already made the argument that new, digital communication technologies influence the development of shared ideas and thus bring forth the "digitalisation of social representations"; yet this line of inquiry—which was highly applicable to social media—seemed to have failed to gain traction in SR literature and social psychology research in general until recently, especially

during the current pandemic. To contribute specifically to this gap in literature, this dissertation hence presents a conceptualization and empirical elaboration of social media that offer some theoretical insights, implications, and eventually methodological tools for the study of SR in our increasingly digitalized world.

Social Media as Multidimensional, Dialogical, Digital Sites of Interaction

In this dissertation, I addressed my research questions by first expounding on how social media function as sites of SR, specifically as *digital* (detraditionalized) *public spheres*, or the 21st century forms of social context and public space where collective meaning(-making) takes shape. To substantiate such theoretical elaboration of social media and specifically answer in what ways Facebook enable the (trans)formation of SR of migration, I conducted three empirical studies that illustrate and analyze the role and impact of social media technologies to the development of SR in its different forms (i.e., as content, process, and practice), focusing on Facebook as the focal social media platform and migration(-related phenomena) as object(s) of SR. Overall, theoretically grounding and empirically elaborating on the multiple aspects of Facebook as a digital public sphere provides a richer, more holistic and dialogical framework by which to investigate collective meaning-making as it develops within social media, whilst these novel interactive platforms are likewise actively re-created by the communities who use them.

To conceive social media as *digital public spheres* is to clarify how they are distinctive vis-à-vis offline and conventional forms of detraditionalized public spheres. Specifically, similar to physical, geographically-based public spheres or to antecedent information and communication technologies (i.e., traditional and mass media), this dissertation demonstrates how social media, primarily through Facebook, as exhibiting the spatial, political, and psychosocial dimensions characteristic of public spheres (Jovchelovitch & Priego-Hernández, 2015), yet also distinctive in their own way. Like streets, plazas, or

public fora, social media provide an arena for members of a group to gather and discuss issues that matter to their community life, albeit in cyberspace (i.e., spatial dimension). Yet precisely as *digital* detraditionalized public spheres, social media enable not the physical congregation of people per se, but the social psychological meeting and communication of beliefs, (religious) values, expressions, and so on (i.e., psychosocial dimension), regardless of members' dispersed physical locations and history (or the lack of) prior offline interactions. Findings in this study (especially in Chapters 3 and 5) illustrate how the Facebook group platform facilitates the connection among dispersed Filipino migrants in Germany, and thus the assembly of a greater plurality of voices and sources of knowledge (i.e., "multivocality", Wahlström, 2012)—even of regional ethnic languages—and diversity in perspectives (i.e., cognitive polyphasia) within the same community vis-à-vis usual offline gatherings that are fairly limited in reach (i.e. usually only involve Filipinos within the city or nearby areas).

This dissertation also explored how social media, particularly Facebook's group platform, offer greater, alternative freedom for public expression, discourse, and community interventions, especially among "counterpublics" (Fraser, 1990) such as migrant groups and minorities (i.e., political dimension). In the empirical chapters, we saw the partner community's Facebook group as a crucial social arena for Filipino migrant exchanges of experiences and opinions, even over authority figures whether in the host or home lands (e.g., Philippine Embassy and consulates, Philippine leaders, local German offices). More distinctively, Facebook provided a way for members to resist, contest, or amend certain SR and positionings held by relevant others (e.g., families and co-ethnics in the homeland, German spouses, or host society members in general), whether online or offline. Additionally, we saw how Facebook usage and activities find their way to impacting *offline* discourses and interactions that are equally meaningful and significant in the transformation of SR and positioning dynamics among Filipino migrants and their co-ethnics.

Finally, social media bring to the fore the element of time (i.e., temporal dimension), as it enables an unprecedented affordance, not only for recording and 're-activating' social interactions; Rather, social media make possible the re-enactment and reconciliation of various spatio-temporal relations, rhythms, and normalized behaviors. In the empirical studies, especially Chapter 5, we see that the Filipino migrants not only consider their Facebook community as a digital archive of their months- to years-worth of everyday exchanges and concerns; their Facebook group also serves as a source and virtual timespace of comfort, belonging, and support, not just among the migrant members but also for co-ethnics to whom the online community decides to assist, especially in times of need. The Facebook group platform enables the migrants to 'imaginatively mark' (Jones, 1997/2002) their collective presence, identity, and accomplishments as Filipinos that, though are in Germany and are primarily bound by their Facebook "imagined community" (Anderson, 2006), still endeavor to "re-member" (Fortier, 1999) the Philippine homeland and to continuously contribute back to it, albeit online.

Overall, this dissertation and its findings reaffirm existing literature that assert social media like Facebook are not just channels of communication and information dissemination; rather, social media are continuously evolving "socially constructed spaces" (Fernback, 1997/2002) that continuously transform and reflect the vibrant diversity, fluidity, ultra-high paced "datafied society" (Burgess et al., 2017, p. 1) of today. If I may borrow Long and Long's (1992) expression, however, I go as far as to claim that social media have become the most contemporary "battlefields of [shared] knowledge" (Long & Long, 1992; addition mine) located in cyberspace. Not only does Facebook (and social media, in general) facilitate a plurality of perspectives (i.e., cognitive polyphasia) and voices (i.e., multivocality); they also impact the formation of meaningful and purposeful discourses, identity dynamics, and social acts. Additionally, the findings remind us of both "technology as material culture" (Castells,

2004) and the concept of "networked publics" (boyd, 2011): how the uniqueness of social media as material and social contexts contribute to changes in human life and engagements (i.e., technology as material culture), particularly the prevalence of publics that are both the 'space' and 'imagined collective' molded and reorganized by these new technologies (i.e., networked publics). In this sense, social media like Facebook are indeed experiential (communal) sites of meaning (Gitelman, 2006).

Implications for Social Representations

To further answer the second research question, I consider this dissertation's findings considering certain aspects and mechanisms of the SR theory and its research tradition in general. Specifically, I discuss what the findings indicated in terms of the development of SR in its different forms (i.e., as content, process, and practice).

SR as Content

We see the emergence of *digital discursive artifacts* that serve as new, dynamically transforming resources for the social representational communicative processes of anchoring and objectifying to take place. For instance, in Facebook data analyzed in Chapters 3 and Chapter 5, we see how migrant shared ideas are formed not just through exchanges of traditional discursive resources (i.e., words, pictures, or videos) but also through sharing of hyperlinks, (hash)tags, gifs, or memes. This relates well to works cited in the Introduction chapter that demonstrate how such virtual discursive artifacts not only link people and relevant topics circulating within the community; rather, they can become affective, even political communicative acts or performative utterances (see Mina, 2019 on exemplar affective and political acts facilitated by memes; Rambukkana, 2015 on #hashtags). They can capture and hold vessel to a history and network of experiences, values, (implied, jocular, or ironic) meanings, and so on that, in the right conditions, are then translated into collective action (e.g., #BlackLivesMatter, #UmbrellaMovement). As these virtual discursive resources

continue to increase and become normalized in everyday interactions, the formation of shared ideas will increasingly involve multiple modes and layers of meaning. For SR research, that also implies adapting other techniques more suitable for understanding the variety and nuances of digital social contexts (more on this in the section on methodological implications). Additionally, these abundant and diverse data made possible by social media like Facebook generally offer great possibilities for semantically mapping everyday knowledge based on real-time interactions and natural expressions.

Furthermore, social media *platform architecture and features* (e.g., algorithms or 'rules' of the participatory media architecture) inform which topics or practices emerge as salient and persistent within an online community. For instance, in Chapters 3 and 5 "pinned posts" and "trending topics" usually determine which posts the members could read first on the Facebook group page and which discussions usually remain among the top 50 posts within a week. In this sense, the saliency and longevity of certain social objects discussed within the online community are influenced *directly* via which topics are chosen as important by administrators or other key figures in the community, or *indirectly* via, for instance, the "Most Relevant" or "Most Recent" organizing algorithms of Facebook. These direct and indirect influences can then inform a collective's anchoring process—and eventually a researcher's analysis—of the most relevant SR themes or practices in the community.

However, as platform structure and features can influence the salience of emergent shared ideas, SR researchers must pay careful and critical attention to how they study and interpret what constitutes commonsense knowledge that is formed online. It is precisely for this reason that this dissertation promotes an ethnographic approach and a variety of analytical methods (whether quantitative, qualitative, or mixed) when investigating SR online. Commonsense knowledge within the SR tradition cannot simply be equated to "trending topics," especially with the prevalence of social bots, fake news, and other

fabricated content, as already mentioned in Chapter 1. To be elaborated further in the section on Methodological Contributions, SR researchers must therefore continue to discover, create, or combine methods or methodologies to investigate and analyze SR (trans)forming in and through digital platforms more validly and reliably.

SR as Process

Social media (as digital communication technologies) do not only quicken anchoring and objectifying mechanisms (e.g., Wählstrom, 2012), but also *amplify and speed up the social impact* (i.e., illocutionary force) *of discursive positions* (i.e., rights and duties) associated with a shared representation. Like previous traditional media, social media facilitate the social dissemination of positionings, or discursive assignments of rights and duties associated with certain SR (as elaborated in Chapter 4). Yet more than in the previous analog and conventional mass media era, social media platforms enable more direct and immediate social episodes among individuals, groups, and institutions. In Chapters 4 and 5, for instance, we gather how Facebook facilitates swift, if not real-time, responses and hence more instantaneous counter–positionings among relevant parties, whether among members of the community or even in response to "absent others," e.g., families or co-ethnics in the Philippines. Additionally, mundane activities become treated as performative acts or having illocutionary force. For instance, as illustrated in Chapter 4, previously it is the embodied actions of Filipino returnees wearing gold jewelry or holding excessive celebrations that reinforce a particular SR of overseas Filipinos as "rich" migrants among co-ethnics in the homeland. Now in the era of social media platforms, migrants' mere posting on Facebook of photos depicting their everyday German life seems enough to trigger the same SR of overseas Filipinos and an existing array of Filipino cultural moral orders (i.e., rights and duties associated with Filipino extended family culture and relations). Additionally, such combination of SR and positionings can tap into existent (cultural) power relations when

figures of authority or seniority are involved (e.g., discursive episodes occurring between young migrants and their parents or older family relatives back home).

Additionally, social media enable an *exploration of SR at varied genetic levels online*. For instance, as illustrated in this dissertation's empirical studies, Facebook's group page feature enables a rich, virtual realm that gives rise to the genetic transformations of SR among individuals with similar interests, causes, or cultural background, as in the case of migrants. In particular, the community platform nurtures the microgenesis of SR, as members can post questions and open topic discussions relevant to the group. These exchanges then allow for the elaboration and negotiation of a rich polyphasia of representations – e.g., tensions between the migrants' old culture and the host country's culture, between knowledge of old migrants and the newcomers' expectations and personal experiences, between existing discourses of migration and migrants in the host society, and between the migrants' cultural identity vis-à-vis other migrant groups' identities.

As microgenesis is considered the "motor" of the different genetic changes of SR (Duveen, 1993; Duveen & de Rosa, 1992; Duveen & Lloyd, 1990/2010), such virtual conversations could then lead to ontogenetic and sociogenetic transformations of migration. For instance, when older Filipino migrants in Germany talk to newcomers through a discussion thread and share their experiences when they first came into the country in the Facebook community (microgenesis), these SR on migration become accessible and "psychologically active" (Duveen & Lloyd, 1990/2010, p. 6) for these new migrants and could lead to their embracing or resistance of particular identities (ontogenesis). For instance, findings in Chapter 4 have exhibited the Filipino participants' claiming the identity of a "constructive kapwa" or contesting the positioning of a "rich" Filipino migrant or returnee (from Storylines 2 and 3, respectively). Because the same interaction can also be read by all members, the elaborated SR of migration between old and new migrants could also lead to

the whole community adopting those shared ideas about migration (sociogenesis). Similarly, wider discourses about migration in the German society (sociogenesis) easily find their way into exchanges (microgenesis) and eventually individual psyches (ontogenesis), as members share what they read and hear from broadcast media or political debates on current migration issues (e.g., massive refugee influx). In these ways, therefore, Facebook and other social media technologies open up a new and rich context where lay meanings, identities, and practices are intermingled (Domínguez et al., 2007), and hence, where SR forming at different genetic levels can be explored.

SR as Practice

Finally, SR do not only form via thematization, antinomies, metaphors and emotional anchoring, and objectification not only via physical materialization; SR can also emerge through the semiotic and socio-material aspects (Ritella & Ligorio, 2016) of timespace relations or chronotopes (as elaborated in Chapter 5). By "tapping into activity-in-context and not only discourse" (Lahlou, 2012, p. 38.4), Facebook (and other digital platforms) enable us to capture the *spatio-temporal dimensions of SR*, as both SR and social media are anchored in space and time. With their affordances of timestamping and archiving online interactions, Facebook and social media additionally present the possibilities of 'tracing' the (trans)formation of a collective's social representational 'project' that develops around subjects and SR object of concern. (Bauer & Gaskell, 2001; refer back to Chapter 1, section on SR theory, esp. on SR triad and Toblerone Model).

In the case of migrants, timespace relations are constitutive of the migration experience, and social media are usually seen as intermediaries for resolving the disruption between migrants' absence from the homeland and their desire to be 'distantly present' to their loved ones and networks back in the homeland. Yet as the case of Filipino migrants in Germany illustrate, social media like Facebook group's platform also allow migrants to

actively ‘re-member’ (Fortier, 1999) spatio-temporal meanings of their Philippine homeland, through *online re-enactments of specific collective activities and interactions*. Examples of which include belonging to a Filipino community despite being abroad (i.e., *barangay*), being able to remotely practice homeland altruistic practices (i.e., *bayanihan*), or engaging in relaxing and entertaining communal activities outside the home (i.e., *plaza*). These homeland practices have become part of the Filipino migrants’ “digital rhythms” (Pink et al., 2016) and habits embedded in their everyday hostland life.

In this sense, the online community keenly nurtured by migrants (or any collective) can serve as a spatio-temporal artifact—simultaneously a social arena and imagined collective (i.e., “networked publics,” boyd, 2011) that emerge and continuously evolve out of the community’s concerted efforts within the Facebook group platform (or similar social media) to negotiate the multiple intersections of past/homeland life, present/homeland ties and contributions, and present/hostland rhythms and relations. As more migrants acknowledge and participate in the community, then the online group can become a virtual social representational objectification—or in the case of the Filipino participants, a ‘digital microcosm’ of Filipino migration in Germany, especially one that articulates and reconciles the Philippine and German temporal dynamics and practices as the migrants interact and committedly create a digital communal life.

Methodological and Practical Contributions and Implications

This dissertation provides an alternative methodological approach for scholars interested in the topics of social media, SR, Facebook, migration, and Filipino social psychology. The qualitative and online techniques employed can also be adapted to different investigations dealing with digital technologies in general, or any social topic or phenomena occurring online. The findings additionally offer practical insights for applied endeavors, like information dissemination, integration, or cultural programs for migrants or minorities.

Methodological Implications

The use of Internet methodologies such as digital ethnography and of so-called computational methods (e.g., topic modelling employed in Chapter 3) in research has become increasingly popular in the past decade, corresponding to the rise of social media. This methodological trend, being a part of "datafication of social science research," will only intensify together with the growing "datafication of society" (Burgess et al., 2017, p. 1); and the development of shared ideas shall also continue to "digitalize" correspondingly (Wahlström, 2012). As the findings of this dissertation also illustrate, social media platforms such as Facebook open new avenues and possibilities for mapping SR that (trans)form in the online space. Thus, I must assert that for SR theory to more truly lend itself to the social psychological enquiry of today's societies and social knowledge, then SR research has to increasingly expand its methodological arsenal with more internet approaches and investigate social media and other digital technologies where contemporary social interactions flourish.

This scholarly imperative to adapt more online approaches has become salient at the time of writing, which is during the COVID-19 pandemic. Online approaches have become the most—in many cases, the only—'safe,' accessible, and viable ways of conducting research. Though recent publications illustrate the high relevance and applicability of SR theory in studying people's shared understandings of the pandemic and related phenomena, not many SR studies prior to the pandemic conducted research using social media.

Although even during pre-COVID times—and surprisingly as early as the mid-90s, thanks to Lahlou's pioneering works (e.g., Lahlou, 1995, 1996, 1998, 2003)—there have been SR studies employing text mining. Yet overall, the use of computational methods remained "underused" and, if they were used, their application had "general lack of creativity" (Lahlou, 2012, pp. 38.4-38.5) since studies mostly adapted Lahlou's text mining technique using Alceste software. This dissertation's application of topic modelling as an

alternative text mining technique and incorporating it within a digital ethnography are a step towards overcoming such under- and lackluster employment of computational methods in investigating SR in social media.

Two possible reasons for such lack of attention on the use of computational methods are the time and effort it takes (1) to learn data mining strategies and (2) to clean and process massive amounts of social media data. These two challenges are also among the common difficulties encountered by social scientists conducting social media research (Quan-Haase & Sloan, 2017). Nevertheless, computational methods will only continue to develop, and current social media usage trends still point to unceasingly increasing generation of internet and social media data. Especially during these pandemic times, SR researchers must have already strongly felt the need to recognize and familiarize themselves with the tools offered by data science and thus become more greatly equipped to examine the linguistic (semantic or pragmatic) and discursive maps of SR formed within digital public spheres.

Finally, digital ethnography and other qualitative methodologies present many opportunities to integrate internet research into SR studies and diverse strategies (as illustrated in the empirical studies) that can fulfill triangulation, creative, and critically reflexive purposes, whether used with computational methods or not. With their attention to detail, nuances, and milieus, digital ethnography and qualitative strategies can both (1) enrich social representational maps produced through computational methods and (2) counter any tendencies of decontextualized data and detached research (i.e., unrecognition of researcher's subjectivities and positionalities), as is sometimes the case in the use of big data and computational methods (Fuchs, 2017; Leurs & Shepherd, 2017). Moreover, digital ethnography and qualitative methodologies enable SR researchers to examine the element of time in various ways. Given the unprecedented affordance of social media to timestamp, record, and store massive amounts of interaction in different discursive forms, shared ideas

(e.g., on 'new normal' or post-pandemic life) anchored in certain spatio-temporal rhythms, norms, or practices (e.g., daily routines, divisions of personal/professional space and time at home) as they are exchanged in digital platforms (e.g., based on memes, images, or videos posted on Facebook, Twitter or Instagram) could well be investigated.

Practical Implications

This dissertation offers insights that can be applied to create programs or services. Here I focus generally on social media and its sensemaking capabilities in potentially influencing public interventions and specifically on the context of (Filipino) migration.

One of the salient practical contributions of this dissertation is that it provides a dialogical, multi-dimensional, and multi-method template by which to understand more deeply and address controversial shared ideas and philosophies mediated through participatory platforms. For instance, the current pandemic demonstrated how social media play a role in *both* the swift spread of and active countermeasures against various misinformation (referring back to Chapter 1; also Gimpel et al., 2020; Mitra et al., 2016; Watson, 2021). Instead of social psychological investigations focusing on general attitudinal content or traits related to the social media development of misinformation or conspiracies, the insights from this doctoral project highlight the significance of socio-cultural nuances and dynamics associated with certain communities' use of specific interactive platforms to make prevention and countermeasures against (mis)representations more tailored and enabling. A part of this "enabling" dimension would be the active partnership and involvement of community leaders or 'influencers' as "knowledge community police" as seen in Chapter 4.

In the context of migration, Facebook and other social media platforms have great potential for socio-political and cultural interventions to not only have greater reach but also to address migrant needs more quickly and efficiently. In fact, some of this potential have been realized as the current COVID-19 pandemic affected the world (see Routed Magazine

and iDiaspora, 2021). This is not so surprising as migrants have always been among the earliest groups of people to recognize and embrace the affordances of technology and the internet (Diminescu, 2008; Leurs, 2021), as mentioned in the Introduction. Most of these current applications of digital technologies, however, focus on information dissemination in relation to diasporic contributions and collaborations.

In terms of Filipino migration, the Facebook platform is already an established virtual meeting point for Filipino migrant individuals and communities, as elaborated in the introduction. However, as illustrated in the case of Filipino migrants in Germany, country embassies and other diasporic institutions have yet to maximize the affordances of Facebook (and other social media platforms) both as the following: (1) a 'reservoir' of unfiltered communal knowledge, where migrants exchange and negotiate everyday ideas and concerns candidly, uninhibited especially by any (mis)judgment by host society members or co-ethnics back home; and (2) a digital form of 'safe communal space' where migrants can go to regardless of their dispersed locations and engage in familiar spatio-temporal artifacts of homeland comfort and social support, to the point of becoming the first place where migrants seek help in terms of crisis. Accordingly, in recognizing affordance (1), consulates, other government institutions, and diasporic organizations could therefore collaborate more with online migrant communities in various social media platforms to gather data and digitally map migrants' shared understandings on certain issues so that they could offer more timely and pertinent programs. In maximizing affordance (2), consulates and diasporic organizations could further utilize their own Facebook (or other social media) accounts to reach out to migrant networks and extend their activities and services especially in response to crisis

For instance, as suggested by the Filipino participants in this study, the feature 'Facebook Live Videos' offers a lot of potential for the Philippine Embassy and consulates in Germany to conduct activities—like a series of webinars or live Question-and-Answer

forums—on their Facebook page in conjunction with the corresponding embassy's cultural or consular programs. Through Facebook's sharing feature, such videos will then be easily shared to any Filipino migrant group or individual within or without the Facebook platform.

Additionally, findings in all chapters also indicated gender-specific issues particularly faced by Filipina migrants, especially those married to Germans and become mothers. Access to virtual counseling programs or emergency consultations and assistance could be offered via social media. Such digitally based services would be a great addition to existing programs offered by the Philippine government, e.g., as part of the Philippines' Overseas Preparedness and Response Team, established in 2011 for supporting Filipino migrants in emergencies or crisis (IOM, 2019). This would also be applicable and beneficial for return migrants, especially in the current pandemic when almost 800,000 overseas Filipino workers who were forced to return home as they lost their jobs abroad (United Nations – Philippines, 2021).

Lastly, the same potential of Facebook Live Videos and virtual-based services can be applied for the migration-related activities of non-government and local diasporic organizations. For instance, some participants mentioned the need for financial literacy among Filipino migrants. Some Filipino diasporic organizations in Germany have already offered such workshops, but they could only cater to migrants living in the surrounding areas where the workshops are held; each workshop could also only include a certain number of participants and only the surface of participant's financial concerns are usually addressed.

Limitations

This dissertation presented an in-depth exploration of the role of social media in the development of SR, particularly the shared ideas of migration (and migration-related phenomena) among Filipino migrants in Germany. Yet there were also several limitations. First, Facebook as the focal social media platform and 'research base' for all three empirical studies might constrain the findings and their applicability to interactions within social

networking sites. Additionally, even different kinds of social networking sites would have their own structure and affordances that might differ or were not offered by Facebook. Also, as social media continuously evolve, Facebook's own platform architecture and features could change as it had in the past. Nonetheless, as indicated in the reviewed literature, Facebook remains the most consistently used social media application since its inception; any changes in structure or features only served to strengthen Facebook's social networking capabilities, whether in terms of people or ideas. Furthermore, precisely for this project's focus on one social platform, it provides a good template for future SR researchers to structure their own in-depth investigations of their chosen digital technologies or platforms in relation to a specific form of SR, i.e., as content, process, or practice.

Second, Facebook's algorithm and its impact on social interactions or flow of shared ideas were beyond the scope of this dissertation. During the data collection, Facebook's algorithm was utilized as an indicator of the 'trending' or 'top' posts within the days of data collection. The assumed criteria for these trending posts were their having the greatest number of comments, likes, and emoticon reactions. Yet the *actual* criteria on how the trending posts were selected by Facebook might have been different to some extent and, unfortunately, could not be investigated. Additionally, the 'trending' posts displayed on the participant community's Facebook group remained consistent—at the time of the study—regardless of the device or account used to access the group wall. Yet since I did not have access on any of the members' profiles or accounts, there was no way to completely ascertain that whatever 'trending' posts were gathered were also the same salient posts (in the same order) seen by the rest of the members.

Finally, the sample group for this dissertation comprised purely of first-generation Filipino migrants in Germany. Most of the participants were also female; though this gender aspect reflects the general Filipino migrant population in Germany and Europe. Also, the

research focus was on one Filipino migrant community in Facebook. Although these sample features would limit the generalizability of the findings, this project's focus on a specific community allowed for rich descriptions and contextual insights that provide a more textured understanding on how new media technologies facilitate or constrain everyday meaning-making processes, especially considering moral-cultural nuances and temporal dynamics.

Future Directions

As this dissertation focused on the Facebook group platform, future research could extend this project's line of inquiry by investigating the (trans)formation of SR within other social networking sites or other types of digital platforms. As discussed in the introduction, even social media of the same kind differ in their platform architectures, which in turn impact the kind of discursive social interaction taking place within the platform (Papacharissi, 2009b). Twitter, Reddit, and Tindr, for example, diverge in terms of structure and interactional dynamics than Facebook. Additionally, there are specific interactive platforms popular in different countries. For instance, Facebook, Viber, and Instagram are highly used in the Philippines while other participatory media are more popular in other countries, such as BAND by Naver and KakaoStory in South Korea or WeChat and Sina Weibo in China. Such differences may imply distinctive processes in the development of shared ideas not just among people of the same nationality or cultural background, but also among diverse groups online (e.g., #FridayforFuture of #BlackLivesMatter supporters on Twitter). Other social media such as Instagram and Youtube also feature other discursive resources like images and videos. Such multi-modal discursive resources require different collection and analytical strategies and facilitate other ways of meaning-making that future works can explore.

Another potential direction for research is a more focused and critical examination on social media algorithms. Digital migration literature has shown that algorithms are being actively used in certain socio-political decisions (i.e., migration border control and

surveillance, Leurs & Shepherd, 2017; see also Leurs & Smets, 2018b for a full issue on Forced Migration and Digital Connectivity). Future work could focus more on how social media algorithms impact certain social psychological mechanisms, such as the flow and dynamics of users' interactions within specific platforms or the anchoring mechanisms involved in the (trans)formation of certain SR online. Such works could also touch upon concepts of power and authorities of knowledge in relation to the creators of social media algorithms and naturally the corporations owning interactive platforms.

Other scholars could also explore the role and influence of key actors or 'influencers' in the shared representations of online communities—like some older female Filipino migrants in Chapter 4 and the Facebook group administrators in Chapter 5. As social media platforms enable the tracing of member relations, there is a potential for identifying the most significant members—or nodes in a network—that steer the (trans)formation of shared ideas.

Finally, more studies on the spatio-temporal dimension of SR and of social media as digital public spheres could be pursued. The current pandemic situation has precisely shown us this taken-for-granted materiality and embeddedness of time and space in our everyday well-being and ways of thinking, doing, and relating. With this dissertation and other (digital) migration scholars providing foundational work and insights, future studies can thus explore more on the idea of time or timespace/chronotope as a social representational anchor, especially for the development of shared meanings of social objects, processes, or practices emerging or originating from online (e.g., so-called "cancel culture" or the growing social use and relevance of "live videos").

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APPENDIX

A1. First Paper Award Received by a Journal-Ready Version of Chapter 5

MIGRANT BELONGINGS

DIGITAL PRACTICES AND THE EVERY DAY

ECREA DMM

BEST PAPER AWARD

EMERGING SCHOLAR

Filipino migrants in Germany and their (ironic) space-time constructions of their home and host societies in Facebook

Audris P. Umel

Bremen International Graduate School of Social Sciences (BIGSSS)

Presented during:

Migrant Belongings. Digital Practices and the Everyday

April 21 – April 23, 2021

Koen Leurs, PhD - Conference co-chair
Utrecht University, the Netherlands
ECREA Diaspora, Migration and the Media Chair

Kevin Smets, PhD
Vrije Universiteit Brussel, Belgium
ECREA Diaspora, Migration and the Media Vice Chair

Irati Agirreazkuenaga, PhD
Euskal Herriko Unibertsitatea
ECREA Diaspora, Migration and the Media Vice Chair

Silvia Almenara Niebla, PhD
Vrije Universiteit Brussel, Belgium
ECREA Diaspora, Migration and the
Media Award Committee member

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CONNECTING EUROPE

A2. Call to Participate as Posted on the Partner Community's Facebook Group[‡]

Dear fellow members of [name of Facebook group],

Good day to you!

I'm Audris Umel, a fellow Filipino currently studying in Germany and member of this Facebook community group [name of Facebook group]. I am writing to you today, hoping to ask for your help, support, and permission to be part of my project as a PhD student.

I would like to invite you to participate in some events or activities in this Facebook group every Friday. These activities are both online (such as surveys and photo novellas in this Facebook group) and offline (focus group discussions) interactions that will revolve around your thoughts and experiences as Filipino migrants. I would also like to know more about the role of social media, especially Facebook, in your life as a migrant in Germany. Your participation will help expand understanding of Filipino migrant experiences, (online) relations, and connectedness. Furthermore, your answers will provide valuable information for different organizations (like Philippine Embassy here in Germany and the Commission on Filipino Overseas) to potentially develop (social media) programs for Filipino migrants here in Germany and in other countries.

Your participation is **voluntary**. There is no penalty or bad impact when you or some members of the group refuse to participate. Alternatively, you may stop your participation at any point of the project without having to give any reason.

I will also save copies of your responses and our discussions to be sure that I have a correct record of your answers. Because of the length and purpose of the project, please also allow me to look back and search through the group's archives for your answers and save other relevant posts and discussions. It will be very helpful for me especially since each online activity will last for a week and many other posts will occur every day after the activity is posted.

Rest assured that all your posts will remain **confidential**. Your identity will also be kept **anonymous**, so your name, appearance, and or any form of identification will not appear on any report, unless you explicitly state that you prefer to be identified with your real name.

[‡] Originally posted in Tagalog and was posted with permission from the partner community's administrators.

All information from the group and activities will be used only for research and academic purposes. I shall also remain open to your questions and feedback. I shall also consult with you at certain stages of the project, especially in confirming certain information, interpretation, or analysis.

For any question, you can reach me through email, mobile, and here in Facebook – whichever is most convenient for you. If you want to also know more about me and the project, please feel free to check the links below.

Thank you very much for your time and consideration.

Yours sincerely,

Audris Umel

Email: aumel@bigsss-bremen.de
Mobile: [redacted]

Note: Details redacted to protect author's privacy.

Personal Website (including details on the PhD project): [redacted]

BIGSSS: https://www.bigsss-bremen.de/people/phd-fellows/audris-umel

Research Gate: https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Audris_Umel

LinkedIn: https://de.linkedin.com/in/audris-umel-0b413376

A3. Formal Letter of Invitation to Participate (English Translation)[§]

BIGSSS – Bremen International Graduate School of Social Sciences
Jacobs University | P.O. Box 750 561 | 28759 Bremen | Germany

Audris Umel
PhD Candidate
University of Bremen and
Jacobs University Bremen
BIGSSS, Room 307 – South Hall
Campus Ring 1, 28759 Bremen
Email: aumel@bigsss-bremen.de

Invitation to Participate in a Study on Filipino Migrant Life

Dear Sir/Madam:

Good day to you!

I am Audris Umel, and I would like to kindly invite you to participate voluntarily in a research study about Filipino migrant life and the role of social media, particularly of Facebook therein. This study will help expand knowledge and understanding about the different Filipino migrant experiences, particularly within the context of Filipino migrants' involvement in an online community in Facebook and amidst the rise of social media and various migration topics and issues.

You have been chosen to participate in this study because you are a Philippine-born citizen, at least 18 years of age, currently living in Germany, and you are a member of the Facebook group [name of Facebook group] that was invited as the partner Filipino migrant community for the research.

With your consent to participate in this study, you are agreeing to take part in any or all the different activities of the study. These activities are both online (such as a brief survey and photo novellas in the Facebook group) and offline (focus group discussions) interactions that

[§] Made available in Tagalog and English. Both language versions were available throughout the fieldwork period and were downloadable as PDF files from the researcher's blogsite made especially for the project. Links to this formal invitation were also attached to the version posted on the partner community's Facebook group.

will revolve around your thoughts, experiences, and interactions as Filipino migrants in Germany and the role of social media, especially Facebook, in your everyday life.

I will also save copies of your responses and our discussions to be sure that I have a correct record of your answers. Because of the length and purpose of the project, please also allow me to look back and search through the group's archives for your answers and save other relevant posts and discussions. The recordings and saving of archival data will be very helpful for me especially since each online activity will last for a week and many other posts will occur every day after the activity is posted.

Rest assured that all your posts will remain **confidential**. Your identity will also be kept **anonymous**, so your name, appearance, and or any form of identification will not appear on any report, unless you explicitly state that you prefer to be identified with your real name.

Your participation is **voluntary**. You may refuse to participate and there is no penalty or bad impact for your refusal. Alternatively, you may withdraw your consent at any time without having to give any reason. If you withdraw your consent and participation, it is important that you inform me in writing, whether through a formal letter, e-mail, or private message. With your choice to withdraw, your research participation will end. I will stop collecting information relevant to you and will not use any information associated to you.

All information from the group and activities will be used only for research and academic purposes. I will also remain open to your questions and feedback. I shall also consult with you at certain stages of the project, especially in confirming certain information, interpretation, or analysis.

Thank you very much for your time and consideration. For any question, please do not hesitate to contact me, and feel free to check the links below.

Yours sincerely,

Audris Umel
Bremen International Graduate School of Social Sciences (BIGSSS)
Jacobs University, Campus Ring 1, 28759 Bremen, Germany
Email: aumel@bigsss-bremen.de
Mobile: [redacted]

Note: Details redacted to protect author's privacy.

Personal Website (including details on the PhD project): [redacted]

BIGSSS: https://www.bigsss-bremen.de/people/phd-fellows/audris-umel

Research Gate: https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Audris_Umel

LinkedIn: https://de.linkedin.com/in/audris-umel-0b413376

**You can also read and download this letter (in Tagalog or English) and some possible questions that you may have in mind (Frequently Asked Questions or FAQ) on this webpage:* [redacted]

Note: Details redacted to protect author's and partner community's privacy.

A4. FGD Participant Information and Informed Consent Form

Dear Sir/Madam:

You have been invited to participate in a focus group discussion for the study entitled *Ang Buhay Ng Migranteng Pinoy Sa Alemanya (The Filipino Migrant Life in Germany)* and headed by Audris Umel, the Researcher and Principal Investigator of the project. The research runs under the PhD fellowship program of the Bremen International Graduate School of Social Sciences (BIGSSS), and with the support of the Philippine Embassy – Berlin and other Philippine consulates in Germany.

Before you agree to join in the study, you need to know the risks and benefits so you can make an informed decision. This process is known as **"informed consent"**.

This consent form tells you about the study that you may wish to join. Please read the information carefully and discuss it with anyone you want. This may include a spouse, friend, or a relative. If you have questions, please do not hesitate to ask the Researcher.

The **objective of the group discussion** is: To learn more about shared thoughts and experiences as Filipinos living in a foreign country, particularly within the context of our involvement in the [Facebook group name]. The information learned in the group discussion will help expand knowledge and understanding about the different Filipino migrant experiences, especially amidst the rise of social media and of various migration issues. Furthermore, your answers will be used to provide valuable information for different organizations (like the Philippine Embassy here in Germany or the Commission on Filipinos Overseas) who can create programs to address Filipino migrant issues.

Your participation is **voluntary**. You can choose whether or not to participate in the focus group and stop at any time. Although the discussion will be recorded, your responses will remain **confidential** and **anonymous**; no names will be mentioned in the report. After the study, you also have the option to receive a summary of the findings, if you so wish.

There are no right or wrong answers to the discussion questions. We want to hear many different viewpoints and would like to hear from everyone. We hope you can be honest even when your responses may not be the same with the rest of the group. In respect for each other, we ask that only one individual speak at a time in the group and that the identities and responses of all participants be kept confidential.

I have read this document or had its contents explained to me. I understand the information and agree to participate fully under the conditions stated above. This consent is valid unless and until I revoke it.

Name of Participant *(Please write legibly.)*	**Signature**	**Date**

A5. Focus Group Discussion (FGD) Guide

Topic: *Ang Buhay Ng Migranteng Pinoy Sa Alemanya* (The Filipino Migrant Life in Germany)

Introduction

- You were invited to take part in this discussion to talk about your experiences about leaving the Philippines and living in Germany. We will delve further into your everyday interactions and relations, especially with fellow Filipinos, here in Germany, in the Philippines, or in general. Finally, we will also talk about the role of social media in your daily life.
- Your participation is voluntary. You may refuse to answer any question or stop your participation at any time without having to give any reason. There is no penalty or bad impact if you refuse to answer or withdraw your participation.
- Please allow me to take notes and audio-record the discussions to make sure that I have a correct documentation of all information that you share here today.
- Rest assured that everything that is said during the discussions will remain confidential.
- Your names will be changed to maintain your anonymity, though please let me know if you would like to be identified with your real names instead.
- Please let me know if you need to leave earlier than the scheduled time of discussion.
- Finally, I would like to invite everyone to nurture a safe space for our *kwentuhan* (sharing, storytelling) where we can freely and openly share our stories, ideas, and experiences. As we go through the discussion, let us allow everyone the chance to speak their thoughts and feelings. Please think of me more as a facilitator, so please feel free to comment and react to each other's ideas.

Stimuli/Icebreaker

- Short introduction of each participant: name, age, years in Germany, main reason for migrating to Germany, answer to a short trivia question randomly picked from a bowl

Main Questions

1) What is it like living in Germany?

   Probes:

   a. What do you like the most about life in Germany?

   b. What things or situations do you find most challenging about living in Germany?
   c. Are there any issues of Filipinos living here in Germany that you think need to be addressed more actively? By whom?

2) How is life before coming to Germany?

   Probes:

   a. What are the things you miss the most about the Philippines?
   b. What are the things you do not miss about the Philippines?

3) What is it like interacting or relating with fellow Filipinos here in Germany?

   Probes:

   a. How similar or different are interactions or relations with Germans? Other immigrants?
   b. How have your interactions or relations with fellow Filipinos back in the Philippines changed or remained the same?

4) What are your thoughts on Facebook and other social media? How often do you use Facebook and for what purposes?

   Probes:

   a. What have been your most pleasant and unpleasant experiences with Facebook or social media in general?

5) How did you first know about [named of partner community's Facebook group]?
   a. How active are you in the group? What purposes does the group serve for you?
   b. How do you think can the group be more useful or meaningful for you? For the members or Filipinos in general?

A6. FGD Transcription Guidelines

1) Use the transcribing software (f4transkript) and familiarize yourself with the program before doing any transcription. Do not hesitate to ask me for any questions.
2) Transcribe verbatim or as close as possible to what is said. Take note of pauses (i.e., use comma), extended interruptions (i.e., use em dash, —), and laughter (i.e., note with "laughs" or "simultaneous laughter"). Type contractions as they are spoken (e.g., "can't", not "cannot"). Overall, stay as true as possible to the speakers' words and speech patterns.
3) Type the correct spelling of words, even if the words were used incorrectly in terms of grammar or sentence structure. DO NOT CORRECT grammar or sentence structure.
4) Type words in whatever language they were used, i.e., in Tagalog, English, or German. DO NOT TRANSLATE. Leave a comment in the Comment Box (which you find on the upper right side of the f4transkript interface) or mark words, phrases, or time periods that you are unsure of or unclear, and I will review and correct them myself.
5) Please make the transcription complete and easy to read or to understand. Make full use of the time tags, audio speed change, and comment box features of the software to help you throughout the transcription.
6) Once you finish each FGD's transcript, please remember to include a header on each word document that indicates which corresponding FGD it is (e.g., FGD1), your initials/first name, and page #.
7) Please also write any thoughts, feelings, or comments that you may have while transcribing or after each transcribing session on the Comment Box. Such comments will be quite helpful for me once I do the data analysis.

A7. Demographic Information of FGD Participants (Sorted by Age)

No.	Alias	Sex	Age	Civil Status	Highest Educational Attainment	Employment Status	Industry	Original reason for migrating to DE	Years in DE
1	Railey	Female	23	Single	Bachelor's degree	Student	College, university, and audit	Studies	2
2	Andy	Male	27	Living with a partner	Some college credit, no degree	Student	(Declined to answer)	Civil partnership	7
3	Iris	Female	27	Single	Bachelor's degree	Employed, Full-time	Healthcare and social assistance	Work	< 1 year
4	Nicole	Female	27	Married	Bachelor's degree	Student	Healthcare and social assistance	Marriage	< 1 year
5	Rose	Female	29	Married	Bachelor's degree	Employed, Part-time	Retail	Marriage	8
6	Din Din	Female	29	Married	Bachelor's degree	Homemaker	--	Marriage	< 1 year
7	Adele	Female	29	Single	Master's degree (e.g., MA, MS, Meng, MEd, MSW, MBA)	Student; Employed Full-time	College, university, and adult education	Work	4
8	Mela	Female	30	Married	Bachelor's degree	Employed, Full-time	Healthcare and social assistance	Work; Marriage	7
9	Larissa	Female	30	Single	Bachelor's degree	Employed, Full-time	Computer and electronics	Work	2
10	Francis	Male	30	Single	Bachelor's degree	Employed, Full-time	Healthcare and social assistance	Work	2
11	Nate	Male	31	Single	Bachelor's degree	Employed, Full-time	Government and public administration	Work; Explore new culture/surroundings	2
12	Luis	Male	33	Married	Bachelor's degree	Employed, Full-time	Information services and data processing	Work	< 1 year
13	Erica	Female	33	Married	Bachelor's degree	Homemaker	--	Work assignment of spouse	< 1 year
14	Gladys	Female	35	Married	Bachelor's degree	Employed, Full-time	Primary/secondary education	Work assignment of spouse	2
15	Joey	Female	38	Married	Bachelor's degree	Employed, Full-time	Finance and insurance	Marriage	8
16	Gerard	Male	39	Separated	Bachelor's degree	Employed, Full-time	Funding; International development	Work	> 10

No.	Alias	Sex	Age	Civil Status	Highest Educational Attainment	Employment Status	Industry	Original reason for migrating to DE	Years in DE
17	Beatrice	Female	42	Divorced	Trade/technical/vocational training	Student; Self-employed	Arts, entertainment, and recreation	Marriage	8
18	Mario	Male	42	Married	Bachelor's degree	Employed, Full-time	Healthcare and social assistance	Work	2
19	Edith	Female	45	Married	Some college credit, no degree	Employed, Part-time	Private household	Marriage	> 10
20	Roby	Male	46	Single	Bachelor's degree	Employed, Full-time	Healthcare and social assistance	Family relocation	> 10
21	Karina	Female	49	Married	Bachelor's degree	Employed, Full-time	Healthcare and social assistance; Service	Marriage	> 10
22	Rowena	Female	51	Divorced	Some college credit, no degree	Out of work and looking for work	Agriculture, forestry, fishing, and hunting	Marriage; Reunion with children	8
23	Queenie	Female	54	Married	Bachelor's degree	Self-employed	Finance and insurance; Real estate, rental and leasing; Retail	Work; Explore new culture/surroundings	> 10
24	Dolores	Female	54	Married	Professional degree (e.g., MD, DDS, DVM, LLB, JD)	Employed, Part-time	(Declined to answer)	Marriage	6
25	Vivian	Female	55	Married	Some college credit, no degree	Homemaker	--	Marriage	> 10
26	Ophelia	Female	56	Married	Bachelor's degree	Employed, Full-time	Service	Marriage	> 10
27	Peñaflor	Female	57	Separated	Some college credit, no degree; Trade/technical/vocational training	Employed, Full-time	Healthcare and social assistance; Private household	Marriage	> 10
28	Sonia	Female	58	Married	Bachelor's degree	Employed, Part-time	Hotel and food services	Marriage	> 10
29	Jessila	Female	61	Separated	Highschool	Employed, Part-time	Retail	Marriage	> 10
30	Hannah	Female	62	Married	Bachelor's degree	Retired	--	Marriage	> 10
31	Tita	Female	66	Widowed	Bachelor's degree	Retired	--	Marriage	> 10
32	Lyanne	Female	66	Married	Bachelor's degree	Retired	--	Marriage	> 10
33	Carolina	Female	71	Married	Bachelor's degree	Retired	--	Marriage	> 10

A8. Substitution List Used for Chapter 3 Data Analysis

SUBSTITUTE	WITH
?LIPINO	FILIPINO
A1GERMAL	A1 GERMAN
AAPLAY	APPLY
AAPPLY	APPLY
AAUSBILDUNG	AUSBILDUNG
ABOGADO	LAWYER
ACCEPTE	ACCEPT
ACCEPTED	ACCEPT
ACCEPTING	ACCEPT
ACCOUT	ACCOUNT
ACOUNT	ACCOUNT
ADDED	ADD
ADMINISTRATOR	ADMIN
ADMINISTRATORS	ADMIN
ADMINS	ADMIN
ADVICES	ADVICE
ADVISE	ADVICE
AFFORDABLE	MURA
AGANCY	AGENCY
AGED	AGE
AGENXY	AGENCY
AGRE	AGREE
AGREED	AGREE
AGREEMENT	AGREE
AGREES	AGREE
AIRLINES	AIRLINE
AIRPOR	AIRPORT
AIRPORTS	AIRPORT
AIRPOT	AIRPORT
ALAM	KNOW
ALLOWD	ALLOW
ALLOWED	ALLOW
ALLOWS	ALLOW
AMA	FATHER
ANAK	CHILD

SUBSTITUTE	WITH
ANNAULMENT	ANNUL
ANNULED	ANNUL
ANNULLED	ANNUL
ANNULMENT	ANNUL
ANNULMNT	ANNUL
ANULMENT	ANNUL
APINAS	PHILIPPINES
APOINTMENT	APPOINTMENT
APPLAY	APPLY
APPLAYAN	APPLY
APPLICANTS	APPLICANT
APPLICATIONFORM	APPLICATION FORM
APPLIED	APPLY
APPLIES	APPLY
APPLLY	APPLY
APPLYAN	APPLY
APPLYIN	APPLY
APPLYING	APPLY
APPOINTMENTS	APPOINTMENT
APPOINTMNT	APPOINTMENT
APPS	APP
ARAL	STUDY
AREAS	AREA
ARRIVAL	ARRIVE
ARRIVED	ARRIVE
ARRIVES	ARRIVE
ASAWA	SPOUSE
ASUBILDUNG	AUSBILDUNGV
ATITUDE	ATTITUDE
ATTORNEY	LAWYER
ATTORNY	LAWYER
ATTY	LAWYER
AUABILDUNG	AUSBILDUNG
AUBIDLUNG	AUSBILDUNG
AUSBILDUNGS	AUSBILDUNG

SUBSTITUTE	WITH
AUTHOMATIC	AUTOMATIC
AUTOMATIK	AUTOMATIC
AUTOMATISCH	AUTOMATIC
BABAE	FEMALE
BABAYARAN	PAY
BABY	CHILD
BAGAHE	LUGGAGE
BAGO	NEW
BAGONG	NEW
BAHAY	HOUSE
BALAK	PLAN
BALIK	RETURN
BANAKATIRA	BA NAKATIRA
BANDA	AREA
BANKO	BANK
BANKS	BANK
BANSA	COUNTRY
BATA	CHILD
BAYAD	PAY
BAYANI	HERO
BERLIRN	BERLIN
BERRLIN	BERLIN
BF	BOYFRIEND
BIGAS	RICE
BIGAY	GIVE
BIGGEST	BIG
BIGYAN	GIVE
BILI	BUY
BINAYARAN	PAY
BINIGAY	GIVE
BINIGYAN	GIVE
BIRT	BIRTH
BIRTHCERTIFICATE	BIRTH CERTIFICATE
BISAYA	BISAYANG
BISAYANG	BISAYA

SUBSTITUTE	WITH
BLES	BLESS
BLESSED	BLESS
BLESSING	BLESS
BLESSINGS	BLESS
BOOKNG	BOOKING
BOOKS	BOOK
BOXES	BOX
BOYPREN	BOYFRIEND
BRTH	BIRTH
BUHAY	LIFE
BUKAS	TOMORROW
BUMALIK	RETURN
BUMILI	BUY
BUNTIS	PREGNANT
BUTI	GOOD
BUYING	BUY
BUYS	BUY
CALLED	CALL
CALLING	CALL
CARDS	CARD
CATHEDRAL	CHURCH
CERITFICATE	CERTIFICATE
CERT	CERTIFICATE
CERTIFICATES	CERTIFICATE
CERTIFIKAT	CERTIFICATE
CETIFICATE	CERTIFICATE
CETIZEN	CITIZEN
CHANCEN	CHANCE
CHANCES	CHANCE
CHANGES	CHANGE
CHANGESTATUS	CHANGE STATUS
CHARGED	CHARGE
CHARGES	CHARGE
CHEAP	MURA
CHEAPER	MURA
CHEAPEST	CHEAP
CHECKED	CHECK
CHECKS	CHECK

SUBSTITUTE	WITH
CHILDREN	CHILD
CHILDRENS	CHILD
CHILDRENS'	CHILD
CHILDREN'S	CHILD
CHILD'S	CHILD
CHOICES	CHOICE
CHRURCH	CHURCH
CHURXH	CHURCH
CITEZEN	CITIZEN
CITEZENSHIP	CITIZEN
CITEZIN	CITIZEN
CITIZENS	CITIZEN
CITIZENSHIP	CITIZEN
CITIZIEN	CITIZEN
CITIZIN	CITIZEN
CITZEN	CITIZEN
COMENT	COMMENT
COMMENTED	COMMENT
COMMENTO	COMMENT
COMMENTS	COMMENT
COMPANIES	COMPANY
COMPANYA	COMPANY
COMPLETELY	COMPLETE
COMPLETING	COMPLETE
COMPLETO	COMPLETE
COMPLETOHIN	COMPLETE
CONTACTED	CONTACT
CONTACTING	CONTACT
CONTACTS	CONTACT
CONTAK	CONTACT
CONTAKIN	CONTACT
CONTCT	CONTACT
CONTRACTS	CONTRACT
COUNTRIES	COUNTRY
COURTS	COURT
CREADIT	CREDIT
CREDIR	CREDIT
CREDITCARD	CREDIT CARD

SUBSTITUTE	WITH
CREDITED	CREDIT
CREDITS	CREDIT
DALAHIN	DALA
DALANG	DALA
DALHIN	DALA
DAMI	MANY
DAMING	MANY
DATED	DATE
DATES	DATE
DEPENDE	DEPENDS
DEUTCSH	DEUTSCH
DEUTSC	DEUTSCH
DEUTSCH-CERTIFIKAT	DEUTSCH CERTIFICATE
DEUTSCHCITIZEN	GERMAN CITIZEN
DEUTSCHE	GERMAN
DEUTSCHEN	GERMAN
DEUTSCHENGESETZ	GERMAN LAW
DEUTSCHESPRACHKURS	DEUTSCH LANGUAGE COURSE
DEUTSCHKENNTNISSE	DEUTSCHKENNTNIS
DEUTSCHKORS	DEUTSCH COURSE
DEUTSCHKURS	DEUTSCH COURSE
DEUTSCHKURSE	DEUTSCH COURSE
DEUTSCHKUS	DEUTSCH COURSE
DEUTSCHLAND	GERMANY
DEUTSCHLANGUAGE	DEUTSCH LANGUAGE
DEUTSCHSCHULE	DEUTSCH SCHOOL
DEUTSCKENNTNIS	DEUTSCHKENNTNIS
DEUTSH	DEUTSCH
DIBORSYO	DIVORCE
DIFFICULTIES	DIFFICULT
DIFFICULTY	DIFFICULT
DIRECHO	DIRECT
DIREKT	DIRECT
DIVORCED	DIVORCE
DIVORCES	DIVORCE

SUBSTITUTE	WITH
DIVORSE	DIVORCE
DOCS	DOCUMENT
DOCUMEMNTS	DOCUMENT
DOCUMENTA	DOCUMENT
DOCUMENTO	DOCUMENT
DOCUMENTS	DOCUMENT
DOCUMENTSA	DOCUMENT
DODOWNLOAD	DOWNLOAD
DOKUMENT	DOCUMENT
DOKUMENTO	DOCUMENT
DUETSCH	DEUTSCH
DUMATING	ARRIVE
EDAD	AGE
EGENCY	AGENCY
EMABSSY	EMBASSY
EMBASSIES	EMBASSY
EMBASSYY	EMBASSY
EMBASY	EMBASSY
EMSBASSY	EMBASSY
ENGLISCH	ENGLISH
ENJOYING	ENJOY
ESTUDYANTE	STUDENT
EU	EUROPEAN UNION
EUROP	EUROPE
EUROPA	EUROPE
EUROPIAN	EUROPEAN
EUROS	EURO
EXAMINATION	EXAM
EXAMINATIONS	EXAM
EXAMS	EXAM
EXPERIENCED	EXPERIENCE
EXPERIENCES	EXPERIENCE
EXPIRATION	EXPIRE
EXPIRED	EXPIRE
EXPIRING	EXPIRE
FAMILEN	FAMILY
FAMILIA	FAMILY
FAMILIE	FAMILY

SUBSTITUTE	WITH
FAMILIEN	FAMILY
FAMILYREUNIONVISA	FAMILY REUNION VISA
FASTER	FAST
FASTEST	FAST
FB	FACEBOOK
FEELING	FEEL
FEELINGMOTIVATED	FEELING MOTIVATED
FEELS	FEEL
FEES	FEE
FEMALES	FEMALE
FIANCÈ	FIANCE
FIANCEE	FIANCE
FIANCÈE	FIANCE
FIANCY	FIANCE
FILIPINAS	PHILIPPINES
FILIPINOS	FILIPINO
FILIPO	FILIPINO
FLIGHTS	FLIGHT
FOODS	FOOD
FORMALITY	FORMAL
FORMS	FORM
FRANFURT	FRANKFURT
FRAUEN	FEMALE
FRIENDS	FRIEND
FRUNKFURT	FRANKFURT
FSMILY	FAMILY
GALIN	GALING
GALIT	ANGRY
GAMITIN	USE
GAMITON	USE
GATAS	MILK
GAWA	DO
GAWIN	DO
GELD	MONEY
GERAMAN	GERMAN
GERMAL	GERMAN
GERMANG	GERMAN

SUBSTITUTE	WITH
GERMANS	GERMAN
GERNANY	GERMANY
GESETZ	LAW
GETMAN	GERMAN
GIRL	FEMALE
GODBLESA	GOD BLESS
GODBLESSA	GOD BLESS
GODS	GOD
GOETHE-INSTITUTE	GOETHE INSTITUTE
GOTT	GOD
GRMANY	GERMANY
GROUPN	GROUP
GROUPNA	GROUP
GROUPO	GROUP
GROUPS	GROUP
GRUPO	GROUP
GUSTONG	GUSTO
HANAP	SEARCH
HAPPILY	HAPPY
HAPPINESS	HAPPY
HEADED	HEAD
HEADS	HEAD
HEALTHCATE	HEALTHCARE
HELPE	HELPER
HELPED	HELP
HELPFUL	HELP
HELPLESS	HELP
HIGHEST	HIGH
HIRAP	DIFFICULT
HOMES	HOME
HOPEFUL	HOPE
HOPES	HOPE
HOTELS	HOTEL
HOUSING	HOUSE
HUABAND	HUSBAND
HUBBY	HUSBAND
HUSBANDS	HUSBAND
IAPPLY	I APPLY

SUBSTITUTE	WITH
IAUSBILDUNG	AUSBILDUNG
IDEAS	IDEA
IDEYA	IDEA
IDOWNLOAD	DOWNLOAD
IMBITA	INVITE
IMBITAHAN	INVITE
IMBITAHIN	INVITE
IMBITASYON	INVITE
IMPORTANCE	IMPORTANT
IMPORTANSYA	IMPORTANT
IMPORTANTE	IMPORTANT
IMPORTANTENG	IMPORTANT
IMPORTANTI	IMPORTANT
IMPORTANTING	IMPORTANT
INA	MOTHER
INDURANCE	INSURANCE
INFORMASYON	INFO
INFORMATION	INFO
INFORMATIONEN	INFO
INFORMATIONS	INFO
INFORMED	INFORM
INFORMS	INFORM
INFOS	INFO
INGATAN	INGAT
INGERMANY	IN GERMANY
INGLISH	ENGLISH
INSIRANCE	INSURANCE
INSTITUT	INSTITUTE
INSTITUTION	INSTITUTE
INSURACE	INSURANCE
INSURANC	INSURANCE
INSURANCES	INSURANCE
INSURRANCE	INSURANCE
INTINDI	UNDERSTAND
INURANCE	INSURANCE
INVITAHIN	INVITE
INVITATION	INVITE
INVITED	INVITE

SUBSTITUTE	WITH
INVITES	INVITE
IPADALA	PADALA
IPAKITA	SHOW
IPAREGISTERED	REGISTER
IPINASA	SUBMIT
IRENEW	RENEW
IREPORT	REPORT
ISIP	THINK
ISLANDS	ISLAND
JOB	WORK
JOWA	BOYFRIEND
KABABAYAN	FELLOWMAN
KABAYAN	FELLOWMAN
KABAYANIHAN	HERO
KABSAT	SIBLING
KAIBIGAN	FRIEND
KAKILALA	KILALA
KAMAGANAK	RELATIVE
KAMAG-ANAK	RELATIVE
KAPATID	SIBLING
KAPWANG	KAPWA
KASAL	MARRY
KASAM	KASAMA
KASAMAHAN	KASAMA
KASAMANG	KASAMA
KATHOLIC	CATHOLIC
KATHOLISCH	CATHOLIC
KAUNTI	FEW
KIDS	CHILD
KILALANG	KILALA
KILALANIN	KILALA
KINASAL	MARRY
KINDER	CHILD
KINDERGARDEN	KINDERGARTEN
KINDERN	CHILD
KINUHA	GET
KONTAKIN	CONTACT
KONTI	FEW

SUBSTITUTE	WITH
KONTO	ACCOUNT
KOREK	CORRECT
KORTE	COURT
KREDIT	CREDIT
KUHA	GET
KUKUHA	GET
KUKUNIN	GET
KUMPLETO	COMPLETE
KUMPLETOHIN	COMPLETE
KUNIN	GET
KURS	COURSE
LADY	WOMAN
LAGGUAGE	LUGGAGE
LAGNAT	FEVER
LAGUAGE	LANGUAGE
LAHI	NATIONALITY
LAKI	BIG
LALAKE	MALE
LALAKI	MALE
LANGAUGE	LANGUAGE
LANGGUAGE	LANGUAGE
LANGUAGES	LANGUAGE
LANGUANGE	LANGUAGE
LAPIT	NEAR
LAUGAGE	LUGGAGE
LAWS	LAW
LAYO	FAR
LEARMING	LEARN
LEARNED	LEARN
LEARNING	LEARN
LEBENSMITTEL	FOOD
LECKER	DELICIOUS
LEGALCAPACITY	LEGAL CAPACITY
LELEARN	LEARN
LENGUAHE	LANGUAGE
LENGWAHE	LANGUAGE
LEVELING	LEVEL
LIBRE	FREE

SUBSTITUTE	WITH
LIIT	SMALL
LIPINO	FILIPINO
LISTAHAN	LIST
LISTE	LIST
LISTED	LIST
LISTING	LIST
LISTINGS	LIST
LISTS	LIST
LIVED	LIVE
LIVING	LIVE
LOVE	LIEBE
LUGAR	PLACE
LUNGKOT	SAD
MABAIT	NICE
MABILIS	FAST
MABUTI	GOOD
MACHINES	MACHINE
MADALI	EASY
MADAMI	MANY
MAGALIN	GALEENG
MAGALING	GALEENG
MAGALIT	BE ANGRY
MAGANDAAT	MAGANDA
MAGANDANG	MAGANDA
MAGAUSBILDUNG	MAG AUSBILDUNG
MAGKAMAG-ANAK	RELATIVE
MAGPADALA	PADALA
MAGPALIT	CHANGE
MAGPAREHISTRO	REGISTER
MAGRENT	RENT
MAGSALITA	SPEAK
MAGTANONG	ASK
MAGTNONG	ASK
MAGTRAVEL	MAG TRAVEL
MAGULANG	PARENT
MAHAL	EXPENSIVE
MAHALAGA	IMPORTANT
MAHIRAP	DIFFICULT

SUBSTITUTE	WITH
MAINTINDIHAN	UNDERSTAND
MAKAKUHA	GET
MAKAPAGSALITA	SPEAK
MAKUHA	GET
MAKUKUHA	GET
MALAKI	BIG
MALAKING	BIG
MALAMAN	KNOW
MALAPIT	NEAR
MALAYO	FAR
MALI	WRONG
MALIIT	SMALL
MALUNGKOT	SAD
MAMA	MOTHER
MAPAGMAHAL	LOVING
MARAMING	MANY
MAREPORT	REPORT
MARONONG	MARUNONG
MARRAIGE	MARRY
MARRAIGECONTRACT	MARRY CONTRACT
MARRIAG	MARRY
MARRIAGE	MARRY
MARRIAGES	MARRY
MARRIAGEVISA	MARRY VISA
MARRIED	MARRY
MARRIEDS	MARRY
MARRIES	MARRY
MARRIGE	MARRY
MARRUNONG	MARUNONG
MARUNONGAG	MARUNONG
MASAKIT	SAKIT
MASARAP	SARAP
MATAAS	HIGH
MATAGAL	LONG
MATANDA	OLD
MATUTO	LEARN
MATUTONG	LEARN

SUBSTITUTE	WITH
MAYNILA	MANILA
MEETING	MEET
MEMBERS	MEMBER
MEMBERSHIP	MEMBER
MEN	MALE
MESSAGED	MESSAGE
MESSAGES	MESSAGE
MESSAGING	MESSAGE
MGCOMMENT	MAG COMMENT
MGDOWNLOAD	MAG DOWNLOAD
MGKAMAG-ANAK	RELATIVE
MGSALITA	SPEAK
MGSSLITA	SPEAK
MGTNONG	ASK
MGTRAVEL	MAG TRAVEL
MIGRATION	IMMIGRATION
MKAPAGSALITA	SPEAK
MONE	MONEY
MRUNONG	MARUNONG
MUMURAHIN	MURA
MURAHIN	MURA
MURANG	MURA
NAGAUSBILDUNG	NAG AUSBILDUNG
NAGBAYAD	PAY
NAGHAHANAP	SEARCH
NAGPAREHISTRO	REGISTER
NAGSALITA	SPEAK
NAGTRAVEL	NAG TRAVEL
NAKAKAPAGSALITA	SPEAK
NAKAPIRMA	SIGN
NAKATIRA	LIVE
NAKATRY	TRY
NAKUHA	GET
NANAY	MOTHER
NATANGGAP	ACCEPT
NATUTO	LEARN
NATUTONG	LEARN
NGAUSBILDUNG	NAG AUSBILDUNG

SUBSTITUTE	WITH
NGGERMAN	NG GERMAN
NGSALITA	SPEAK
NGTOURIST	TOURIST
NGTRAVEL	NAG TRAVEL
NUMBERS	NUMBER
NURSES	NURSE
OAMANGKIN	PAMANGKIN
OBILIGATION	OBLIGATION
OBLIGASYON	OBLIGATION
OFFCIE	OFFICE
OFFICES	OFFICE
OFFICINA	OFFICE
ONLINRE	ONLINE
OONLINE	ONLINE
OPENING	OPEN
OPENS	OPEN
OPININS	OPINION
OPINIONS	OPINION
OPINON	OPINION
OPINYON	OPINION
OPISINA	OFFICE
OPPENION	OPINION
OPTIONAL	OPTION
OPTIONS	OPTION
PABALIK	RETURN
PACOMMENT	PA-COMMENT
PADALAHAN	PADALA
PADALHAN	PADALA
PADDPORT	PASSPORT
PAGDATING	ARRIVE
PAGES	PAGE
PAGKAIN	FOOD
PAGMAMAHAL	LIEBE
PAGPAMANGKIN	PAG PAMANGKIN
PAGRESIDENCE	PAG RESIDENCE
PAG-UWI	RETURN
PALITAN	CHANGE
PAMANKIN	PAMANGKIN

SUBSTITUTE	WITH
PAMILY	FAMILY
PAMILYA	FAMILY
PAMINGKIN	PAMANGKIN
PANGAMBA	WORRY
PAPA	FATHER
PAPEL	DOCUMENT
PAPER	DOCUMENT
PAPERS	DOCUMENT
PAPUNTA	GO
PARENEW	RENEW
PARENTD	PARENT
PARENTS	PARENT
PASAPORTE	PASSPORT
PASSPORTS	PASSPORT
PEOPLE	PERSON
PERA	MONEY
PERMANENTE	PERMANENT
PERMANENTENG	PERMANENT
PERSONS	PERSON
PESOS	PESO
PHIL	PHILIPPINE
PHILIPINE	PHILIPPINE
PHILIPINEN	PHILIPPINES
PHILIPINES	PHILIPPINES
PHILIPINNE	PHILIPPINE
PHILIPPHINES	PHILIPPINES
PHILIPPIN	PHILIPPINE
PHILIPPINEN	PHILIPPINES
PHILIPPINISCH	TAGALOG
PHILIPPINISCHE	PHILIPPINE
PHILIPPINISCHEN	PHILIPPINE
PHILIPPINISCHER	PHILIPPINE
PHILIPPINNES	PHILIPPINES
PHILLIPINE	PHILIPPINE
PHILLIPINES	PHILIPPINES
PIHILIPPINE	PHILIPPINE
PILILPINO	FILIPINO
PILIPINA	FILIPINA

SUBSTITUTE	WITH
PILIPINAS	PHILIPPINES
PILIPINES	PHILIPPINES
PILIPINO	FILIPINO
PILIPINOS	FILIPINO
PILIPPINEN	PHILIPPINES
PINADALA	PADALA
PINANGANAK	BORN
PINAS	PHILIPPINES
PINASA	SUBMIT
PINAY	FILIPINA
PINAYS	FILIPINA
PINOY	FILIPINO
PINOYS	FILIPINO
PINOYYY	FILIPINO
PIRMA	SIGN
PIRMIT	PERMIT
PLACES	PLACE
PLANING	PLAN
PLANO	PLAN
PLANONG	PLAN
PLANS	PLAN
PLANU	PLAN
PLANUNG	PLAN
PLIPINO	FILIPINO
POSIBLE	POSSIBLE
POSITIBO	POSITIVE
POSSIBILITIES	POSSIBLE
POSSIBILITY	POSSIBLE
POSSIBILTY	POSSIBLE
POSSIBLY	POSSIBLE
POSTED	POST
POSTING	POST
POSTIVE	POSITIVE
POSTS	POST
PRAKTIKA	PRACTICUM
PRAKTIKUM	PRACTICUM
PRESYO	PRICE
PRICES	PRICE

SUBSTITUTE	WITH
PRICING	PRICE
PRIVAT	PRIVATE
PROBLEMA	PROBLEM
PROBLEMO	PROBLEM
PROBLEMS	PROBLEM
PROBLIMA	PROBLEM
PROBLMA	PROBLEM
PROCEDURE	PROCESS
PROCEDURES	PROCESS
PROCESSED	PROCESS
PROCESSES	PROCESS
PROCESSING	PROCESS
PROCESSO	PROCESS
PROSESO	PROCESS
PROUDLY	PROUD
PROUDPALAWN	PROUD PALAWAN
PUNTA	GO
PUPUNTA	GO
PURO	PURE
QUESTIO	QUESTION
QUESTIONS	QUESTION
RACE	NATIONALITY
RATHAUSE	RATHAUS
READING	READ
READINGS	READ
READS	READ
RECHT	RIGHT
RECIDENCE	RESIDENCE
RECORDS	RECORD
REGESTRATION	REGISTER
REGESTRO	REGISTER
REGISTERED	REGISTER
REGISTERING	REGISTER
REGISTRATIO	REGISTER
REGISTRATION	REGISTER
REGISTRATITION	REGISTER
REGISTRIERT	REGISTER
REGISTRO	REGISTER

SUBSTITUTE	WITH
REGISTRY	REGISTER
REGNEW	RENEW
REHISTRO	REGISTER
REIS	RICE
RELATIVES	RELATIVE
RENEU	RENEW
RENEWAL	RENEW
RENEWED	RENEWING
RENTA	RENT
RENTAHAN	RENT
RENTAL	RENT
RENTEN	RENTE
RENTENVERS	RENTENVERSICHERUNG
RENTEVERSICHERUNG	RENTENVERSICHERUNG
RENTING	RENT
RENTNER	RENTE
RENTNERIN	RENTE
REPLAYAN	REPLY
REPLIES	REPLY
REPORTED	REPORT
REPORTS	REPORT
REQUIRED	REQUIRE
REQUIREMENT	REQUIRE
REQUIREMENTS	REQUIRE
REQUIREMNT	REQUIRE
REQUIREMNTS	REQUIRE
REQUIREMWNT	REQUIRE
REQUIRES	REQUIRE
REQUIRING	REQUIRE
REQUIRMENT	REQUIRE
REQUIRMENTS	REQUIRE
REQUIRMNT	REQUIRE
RESIDENCES	RESIDENCE
RESIDENT	RESIDENCE
RESIDENTS	RESIDENCE
RESINDECE	RESIDENCE
RIGHTS	RIGHT

SUBSTITUTE	WITH
ROOMS	ROOM
SAALARY	INCOME
SABI	SAY
SAGOT	REPLY
SAHOD	INCOME
SAKITIN	SAKIT
SALITANG	SALITA
SAMIN	SA AMIN
SARAP	DELICIOUS
SARAPPPPP	DELICIOUS
SARILI	SELF
SASAGOT	REPLY
SAYS	SAY
SCHENGENVISA	SCHENGEN VISA
SCHLECHT	BAD
SCHOLL	SCHOOL
SCHOO	SCHOOL
SCHOOLS	SCHOOL
SCHULE	SCHOOL
SEARCHING	SEARCH
SENDING	SEND
SENDINGS	SEND
SERBISYO	SERVICE
SERVICED	SERVICE
SERVICES	SERVICE
SHARED	SHARE
SHAREU	SHARE
SHARING	SHARE
SHOPPING	SHOP
SHOPS	SHOP
SHOWED	SHOW
SHOWS	SHOW
SIBLENG	SIBLING
SIBLINGS	SIBLING
SIGNATURE	SIGN
SIGNED	SIGN
SIMBAHAN	CHURCH
SINABI	SAY

SUBSTITUTE	WITH
SINASABI	SAY
SINGLENESS	SINGLE
SINGLES	SINGLE
SISTEMA	SYSTEM
SISTEMANG	SYSTEM
SISTERS	SISTER
SITES	SITE
SITUATIO	SITUATION
SITUATIONEN	SITUATION
SITUATIONS	SITUATION
SITWASYON	SITUATION
SPEAKING	SPEAK
SPOUSES	SPOUSE
SPRACHE	LANGUAGE
SPRECHEN	SPEAK
SRACHKURS	LANGUAGE COURSE
STADT	CITY
STADTESAMT	STANDESAMT
STAMDESAMT	STANDESAMT
STANDESAMPT	STANDESAMT
STANDESSAMT	STANDESAMT
STARTE	START
STARTED	START
STARTS	START
STAYED	STAY
STAYING	STAY
STAYS	STAY
STENDASAMT	STANDESAMT
STRESSED	STRESS
STRESSFUL	STRESS
STRESSING	STRESS
STUDENTEN	STUDENT
STUDENTIN	STUDENT
STUDENTS	STUDENT
STUDIED	STUDY
STUDIES	STUDY
STUDIUM	STUDY
STUDYING	STUDY

SUBSTITUTE	WITH
SUBMISSION	SUBMIT
SUBMITTED	SUBMIT
SUPPORTAHAN	SUPPORT
SUPPORTIVE	SUPPORT
SUPPORTS	SUPPORT
SWELDO	INCOME
SYOTA	BOYFRIEND
SYSTEMS	SYSTEM
TAAS	HIGH
TAGAL	LONG
TAKOT	SCARED
TAKS	TALK
TALKED	TALK
TALKING	TALK
TAMA	CORRECT
TANGGAP	ACCEPT
TANONG	QUESTION
TAO	PERSON
TAONG	PERSON
TAOPHILIPPINES	TAO PHILIPPINES
TAPWATER	TAP WATER
TATAY	FATHER
TAWAG	CALL
TAXABLE	TAX
TAXES	TAX
TERMIN	APPOINTMENT
TERMINE	APPOINTMENT
TEST	EXAM
TESTS	EXAM
TETMINAL	TERMINAL
TICKETING	TICKET
TICKETS	TICKET
TIWALA	TRUST
TOTOO	TRUE
TOURISTA	TOURIST
TOURISTEN	TOURIST
TOURISTENVISUM	TOURIST VISA
TOURISTS	TOURIST

SUBSTITUTE	WITH
TRABAHO	WORK
TRANSFERRED	TRANSFER
TRANSFERS	TRANSFER
TRANSLATED	TRANSLATE
TRANSLATION	TRANSLATE
TRANSLATIONS	TRANSLATE
TRANSLATOR	TRANSLATE
TRAVE	TRAVEL
TRAVELE	TRAVEL
TRAVELS	TRAVEL
TRUEE	TRUE
TRUENESS	TRUE
TUBIG	WATER
TULONG	HELP
TUMAWAG	CALL
TURISTA	TOURIST
UGALI	ATTITUDE
ULO	HEAD
UMALIS	LEAVE
UMUWI	RETURN
UNANG	FIRST
UNBEFRISTED	UNBEFRISTET
UNBEFRISTETE	UNBEFRISTET
UNBEFRISTETEN	UNBEFRISTET
USAP	TALK
USAPAN	TALK
UUWI	RETURN
UWI	RETURN
VALIDITY	VALID
VISACARD	VISA CARD
VISANG	VISA
VISAS	VISA
VISA'S	VISA
VISITE	VISIT
VISITED	VISIT
VISITS	VISIT
VISUM	VISA
WATERS	WATER

SUBSTITUTE	WITH
WEBSITE	SITE
WEBSITES	SITE
WESTERNUNION	WESTERN UNION
WOMAN	FEMALE
WOMEN	FEMALE
WORDS	WORD
WORKED	WORK
WORKERS	WORKER
WORKING	WORK
WORKS	WORK
WORKVISA	WORK VISA
WORRIED	WORRY
WORRIES	WORRY
WORT	WORD
WORTE	WORT
WORTER	WORT
ZERTIFIKAT	CERTIFICATE

A9. Exclusions List Used for Chapter 3 Data Analysis

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