

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Background of the study

Education is a site in which individuals and authorities engage with a “struggle over power relations” in a society (Giroux 1983: xiii). Like any other nation-state, education is a place of contestation in Malaysia. Various policies in education (i.e., education policies, medium of instruction policies and language policies) in the country continue to be matters of public discussion and political debate since its colonial era (Malaysia before 1957). Asiah Abu Samah (1999), however, suggests that the language issue played different roles in pre and post independent Malaysia – before World War II colonial language policies were aimed at sustaining the ‘divide and rule’ doctrine; while in the 1950s, prior to independence, nation building issues became more important and finally, after independence, the policies were aimed to negotiate national interests; often, mediated by ethnic concerns. These divergent aims involving language policies were reflected in the Razak Report (1956), Rahman Talib Report (1960), Education Act of 1961, and so on.

While there were different aims, there were opposing voices too, in order to sustain the debates. These debates have been represented in the media in elaborate manners. Among various issues within education, and especially, within language policy debates, the medium of instruction (MOI) has been one of the most controversial topics in the country. This study narrows down to the issue of teaching of mathematics and science in English, popularly known as PPSMI (abbreviated form for Pengajaran dan Pembelajaran Sains dan Matematik Dalam Bahasa Inggeris, tr., English for teaching and learning mathematics and science).

The PPSMI policy was introduced by Mahathir Mohamad, as the Prime Minister of Malaysia in 2003, based on a decision made in a special meeting of the Cabinet on July 19, 2002 (*The Star*, Dec. 14, 2008). Six years later, Muhyiddin Yassin, the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Education announced (July 8, 2009) that PPSMI will be abolished in 2012 (*The Star*, July 09, 2009). It should be mentioned here that after further insistence, he announced that the students who began studying using the English syllabus can continue learning the two subjects in English (*The Star*, July 13, 2009).

To give a general overview, the medium of instruction in Malaysian schools is, Malay for Sekolah Kebangsaan (tr. National schools); while, Mandarin

for Sekolah Jenis Kebangsaan (C), and Tamil for Sekolah Jenis Kebangsaan (T). Sekolah Jenis Kebangsaan (tr. National-type schools), do receive limited funding while national schools receive full funding from the government. Malay and English are compulsory subjects in both national and national-type schools. All schools use the same syllabus for non-language subjects regardless of the medium of instruction. In January 2003, a mixed medium of instruction was introduced so that students would learn Science and Mathematics in English. Due to pressure from the Chinese community, SJK(C) teaches Science and Mathematics in both English and Chinese.

However, the policy was heavily criticized especially by Malay language activists, fearing that the policy might ‘erode’ the usage of Malay language in science and mathematics. Arguments were raised that PPSMI goes against certain acts in the constitution, i.e., section 17 (1) Education Act 550 (1996). Amidst these protests, the government finally announced that the policy would be reversed in 2012, where the teaching of both subjects would revert to *Bahasa Malaysia* (BM), the national language. The rationales given by the government were:

(1) Students’ achievement dropped to a deplorable state and

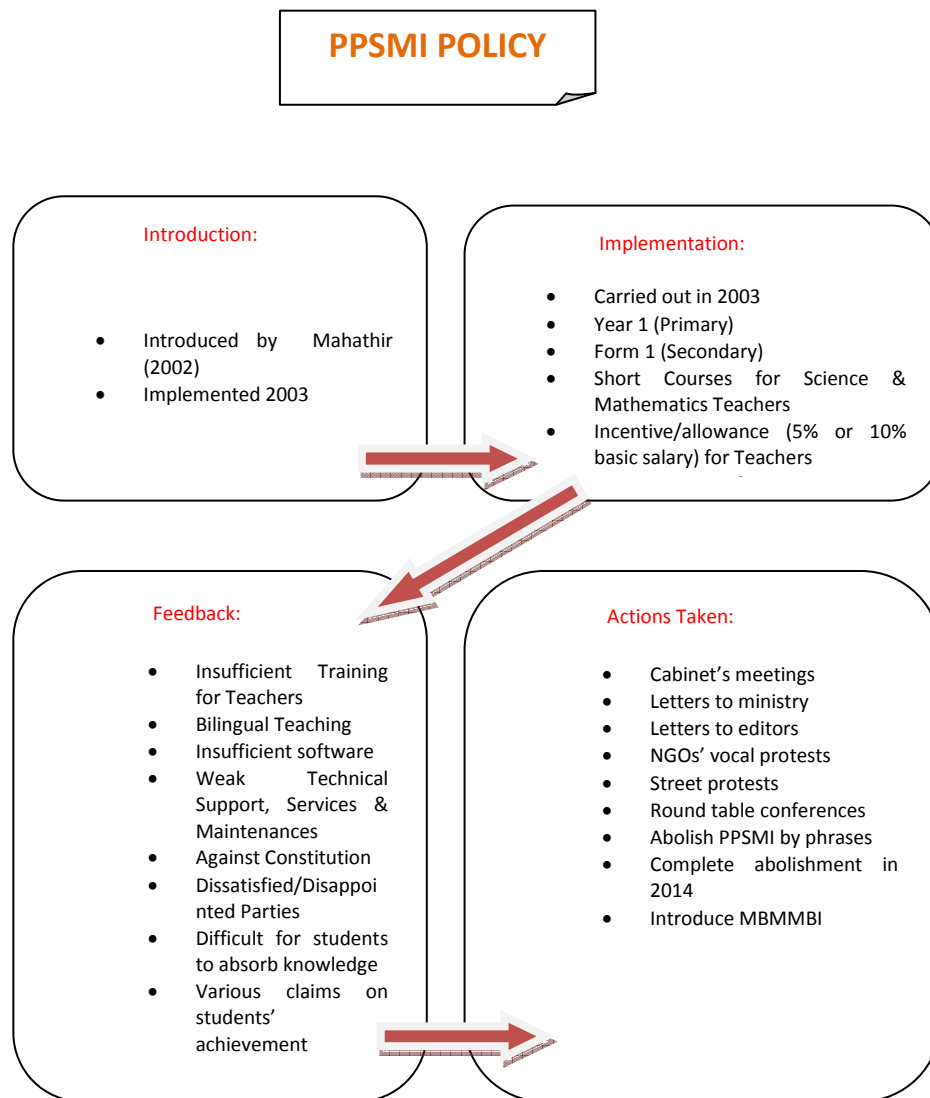
(2) Teachers' literacy was not up to the standard that they could teach in English (*The Star*, July 12, 2009).

In the matter of PPSMI, Muhyiddin, the education minister, explained that the policy was essentially 'good' in terms of vision; however, it could not achieve its goal due to certain constraints. There were some 500,000 students coming out of the education system every year. Muhyiddin revealed that only 8% of the teachers are actually qualified and fewer than 30% of schools are teaching the two subjects entirely in English (*The Star*, July 17, 2009). Contrary to the findings of the education minister, Parents Action Group for Education (PAGE), a pressure group revealed that an opinion poll in seven schools in Selangor and Kuala Lumpur shows that 97% of parents wanted their children's schools to be exempted from the reversal of the PPSMI policy (*New Straits Times*, July 13, 2009). They strongly believed that learning Science and Mathematics in BM, Mandarin or Tamil will push the children further behind in this competitive world. It is apparent that many students, parents and teachers are still reeling over the treatment given to the now aborted PPSMI, and urged the Education Minister to direct his officials to work out a PPSMI solution that is more palatable to all stakeholders. The media took an active role in the on-going debate. The

newspapers, published in Malay (e.g., *Berita Harian* and *Utusan Malaysia*), Chinese (e.g., *Sin Chew Daily* and *Nanyang Siang Pau*) and English (e.g., *The Star* and *New Straits Times*) have run columns on each side of the debate.

Many historical events were involved in the discourse of PPSMI policy. Therefore, the researcher investigated the context by applying Discourse-Historical Approach, in order to trace the details that affected the implementation of the policy. Various dimensions (constitution, political turmoil, local identity, etc) were studied in this paper (see Figure 1.1).

Figure 1.1: Overview of PPSMI policy



1.1 The Social Agents Referred to in the PPSMI Discourse

The debate on medium of instruction was discussed by various authorities, the pressure groups and individuals since the Education Minister declared that the ministry was about to scrap the PPSMI policy. Under the banner of *Gerakan Mansuhkan PPSMI* (GMP), which was launched on 31 Jan (*The Star*, February 1, 2009) that comprises 50 organisations, ranging from political parties such as Parti Keadilan Rakyat (PKR) and Parti Islam Semalaysia (PAS); student groups such as the Persatuan Kebangsaan Pelajar Islam Malaysia (PKPIM); and language stakeholders like Persatuan Penulis Nasional (Pena) and Persatuan Linguistik Malaysia, and Pertubuhan Pribumi Perkasa Malaysia (PERKASA) and GPMS (Gabungan Pelajar-pelajar Melayu Semenanjung) stood against the PPSMI policy. One of the main voices was *Gabungan Penulis Nasional* (Gapena) that represents the writers and litterateurs of the country. Meanwhile, The Parent Action Group for Education (PAGE), Dong Zhong (The United Chinese School Committees' Association of Malaysia) and Jiao Zhong (The United Chinese Teachers' Association of Malaysia) also stood for the policy.

On the other hand, individuals, like Mahathir Mohamad, the former Prime Minister, who implemented the policy; Hishamuddin Tun Hussein, who ran the policy as the Education Minister at that time; Muhyiddin Yassin, the current Education Minister; the Prime Minister, Najib Tun Abdul Razak; opposition leaders like Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim and Lim Kit Siang, all voiced their concerns over the policy. Apart from these organizations and prominent individuals, many of the parents, students and teachers sent their comments on the debate to the newspapers.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Since 2002 PPSMI has become a major issue of contention in the domain of Malaysian education. One of the dominant arguments regarding PPSMI is that, the failure of the project is rooted not in the policy of teaching Mathematics and Science in English, but the way it had been prepared and implemented (Raja Nazrin Shah, *New Straits Times*, 6 July, 2010). The concern of Raja Nazrin can be translated as the ‘abuse’ of economy, i.e., spending (approx. 23 billion Malaysian Ringgit) to produce books, soft-wares, CD ROMs and also, incentive payments

for the teachers. On the other hand, the nationalistic fervour also fuelled the debate as there were concerns that the policy conflicted with the Constitution to uphold the Malay language. While there were issues raised against the policy; there were many who supported PPSMI by referring to empirical studies, conducted (e.g., Norhashimah, 2003).

Hence, the understanding of the problem of medium of instruction needs to be problematized in interdisciplinary (i.e., discourse analysis, education and policy studies) and interdiscursive (i.e., pedagogical issues in education and political hegemonic articulation) terms within a specific discursive field (i.e., PPSMI). The recent literature on the medium of instruction controversy shows that there is hardly any study combining these perspectives.

In recent literatures, the issue of the medium of instruction in the country has been seen, mostly, as an issue rooted either in pedagogy (Sahandri & Saifudin 2009; Razimi Zakaria 2009) or in policy studies (Saran Kaur et al. 2010). On the contrary, the present study aimed at finding, to what extent the issue is also an issue of presentation, that is, how the issue is constructed through the means of media (i.e., newspaper) discourse to establish a specific socio-political position vis-à-vis pedagogy and policy.

1.3 The Objectives of the Study

The objectives of this study are to discuss:

1. The ways the Malaysian English newspapers re-stated (e.g., through direct quote, paraphrase) the arguments produced by individual authorities and pressure groups on the issue of PPSMI.
2. The rhetorical devices (e.g., metaphors, emotive terms, and pronominals) used by the writers of opinion editorials and staff reporters to represent the views by individual authorities and pressure groups.
3. How the act of re-statements and the use of rhetorical devices contributed to establish a position on the issue.

1.4 Research Questions

The research questions are:

1. How do the opinion editorials, letters to the editors and the staff reports in the Malaysian English newspapers (i.e., the *Star* and the *New Straits Times*) re-state (i.e., through direct quote and paraphrase) the arguments produced by individual authorities and pressure groups on the issue of PPSMI?
 - a. What purposes do the categories (i.e., direct quote and paraphrase) of re-statement serve to construct a stance on the issue?

2. What are the rhetorical devices (e.g., metaphors) used by the writers of opinion editorials and staff reporters to represent the views by individual authorities and pressure groups?
 - a. How do the rhetorical devices in the texts contribute to establish a stance on the issue?

1.5 Scope and Limitation

The study uses data only from *The Star* and *The New Straits Times*, the two mainstream English newspapers in the country. The views published in vernacular newspapers are not studied here. The pressure groups and individuals often articulate their arguments more vehemently in their blogs, but those private moments (in the blogs) of public discourse has not been included in the present study because the researcher was interested in the discourse that evolves in the public space, and in English, in order to see, how the debates were ‘mediated’ (Richardson 2006, Fairclough 1995) by the stance of the newspapers.

Although the debate on medium of instruction went beyond 2009; the data has been collected for only a year and a half, i.e., from January 2009 until June 2010. It is due to the volume of discourse data to be analysed using discourse-analytical framework, that is, if the data is huge it might be difficult to analyse by using discourse analysis. On the other hand, during this one-year and a half period, the reports, responses and discussions on the subject matter were vibrant.

The scope of this study was to discuss the argumentation and perspectivation ((Reisigl and Wodak 2001, Griffin 2003)) that related to PPSMI policy.

Discourse argumentation in a text is not how logically is developed, but the way the argument is built (Cook, 2001). Argumentations are specified by statements claimed in the data. Argumentation relationship between the claim and data referred as justification or assurance. The important points in the argumentation are the mode of giving reasons for an argument, from the beginning until the conclusions is made, and how the recipient analyzes the arguments. The quality of an argument is in the aspects of strength that might raise consequences, for example, *...the implementation of PPSMI decreased students' performance...*, and valence, which is the desired consequences, for example, *...if we want to be more successful in life, we need to master English language*. There are four types of techniques commonly used in developing the arguments, namely: (i) give a reason, cause, or explanation; (ii) make a comparison or analogy; (iii) provide examples, and (iv) quote authoritative sources.

Perspectivation, on the other hand, is about making a viewpoint of an angle or a matter that we know, or how we assess a view of an existing social phenomenon (Reisigl and Wodak 2001, Griffin 2003). Different individuals usually have different point of view, whether they complement or even mutually criticise each other. Perspectivation is also an interpretation of a perspective or a particular viewpoint.

Since its implementation, the PPSMI faced much opposition and argumentation from the various parties, including politicians, academics, parents and even students. Even though, many were aware that English language has become increasingly important in the era of globalisation. According to former Education Minister, Tan Sri Musa Mohamad, early exposure at school is the best basis to enable students to better understand and appreciate the variety of the latest information related to Science and Mathematics that is dynamic every day. (Utusan Malaysia, 18 Julai 2002).

This study attempted to explain the debate on the issues and the public interests, specifically on the PPSMI policy to see how the authorities and the public (individuals, groups and organizations) articulate (see section 4.1 –

4.2.7) their positions and views by comparing the forms of arguments, put forth the ideology that underlies the argument and the channels they used. With regard to the confined atmosphere of the press in Malaysia to discuss public issues freely and openly, this study examined only the selected newspapers' discourses through the theory of articulation advanced by Stuart Hall (1988). This study will also describe the ideological powers that empower the views put forward by both parties, in support of or in opposition to PPSMI.

The researcher will embed this study with other pertinent historical factors (in line with the Discourse Historical Approach) that influence the vibrant discourse related to the policy including language policy, medium of instructions, education policies, constitution, culture values, ethnicity, politics, economy, nationality, printing policies, and so on (see Chapter 2 for further discussion).

1.6 Definition of Terms

This section provides brief descriptions of some concepts dealt with in this study. Further discussions of these terms are also found in the following chapters.

1.6.1 Critical Discourse Analysis

Critical Discourse Analysis (van Dijk, 1996, Wodak, 1989 & Dellinger, 1995) is an analytical study of social and political discourse on certain topics which addresses social problems, power relations, dominance, ideology, dialectic relations between society and culture, which is mediated by discourse. CDA is interpretative and explanatory (Wodak 2009) that aims at producing an imminent critique of a society (see section 2.2 for further detail).

1.6.2 Discourse Historical Approach in Critical Discourse Analysis

This view of discourse analysis takes into consideration the context of the local and social communities discourse produced due to its *relation with the past* (Fairclough & Wodak, 2001). The context of past here depends on the initial stage of the construction of the subjects matter. For example, the discussion on PPSMI policy started in 2002 when the Policy was launched; hence, the understanding of the phenomenon is rooted in a specific historical past.

In order to place a discourse within a particular social context is to take into consideration on the related time frame of certain factors that might influence the discourse. Hence, one important aspect that would enable understanding of a text is to place the discourse in a particular historical context. In other words, the understanding of a discourse / text can only be obtained if it is known how the situation or social history, culture values, parental issues, legislation issues, and political influences during and before the text were created (see section 2.2.2 for further detail).

1.6.3 Discursive Formation

Discursive formation is a formation of discourse of our views on any subject, which is within the bounds that have been determined. These limits were characterized by an object, the definition from the perspective of the most trusted sources and considered true for some people. Our perception of an object shaped and constrained by discursive practice or restricted by defining a view that is real and the other might thought it was unreal. The consequences are that a particular

view to limit and direct public opinion in a particular way of thinking and appreciate it as something that is true (Foucault, 1976).

Foucault also stated that there were internal mechanisms that defend the existence of certain discourses in the discourse-forming. The first mechanism is the comments. When other parties commented on a discourse, the discourse is assumed to be valuable and valid. The second internal discourse is the concept of academic disciplines: it is a broader grouping of discourse that determines what can be spoken and what is factual or true to a specific region. Therefore, each discipline will determine the method; form of propositions and arguments, as well as regions that would be considered true as objects. The articulation conceded the set of this structure a new proposition, but only within the bounds of a particular discourse. Foucault emphasized that more disciplinary structure were rejected rather than accept the proposition. Although the research paper is factually, and has a level of accuracy and insight, but if the research paper does not fit with the form and content of a particular discipline, then the work will likely be removed. Discipline allows a person to speak the truth. In this respect, discipline determines how a data can be classified. Disciplinary structure does not only include certain types of knowledge in a specific region, but also leads to a different construction

of the analytical methodology. In the end, Foucault focuses attention on the refinement of the discourse as a discourse of internal border (an internal discursive constraint). What Foucault meant by refinement is a startling statement that although the speech produced is theoretically not limited, but in fact, the speech was repeated over and over and still be in the bounds of a socially agreed. In theory, people can say anything they want, but first, in selecting topics and talks, people tend to remain constrained by the norms of private and public, and second, that people are always constrained by the case of self-construction desires and their needs. So what they wanted to say, in the set of parameters that can be predictable and limited. Foucault stated that the limit is set by the bounds of discourse.

The discursive formation on PPSMI issues will be discussed in detail while studying the collected data from The Star and New Strait Times.

1.6.4 Interdiscursivity

It is a textual construct as multiple discourses converge. Interdiscursivity analysis focuses on the production of texts and to identify the type of discourse, genre, style, or type of activity used in the production of a discourse of integrated text which contributes to understanding the hidden power behind the language. Typically, a particular discourse (e.g., nationalist) can be used to legitimise the discourse of a national policy. Although policy discourse falls within legal genre, it may include emotive discourse of nationalist fervour. Putting it succinctly, interdiscursivity is the relations of other types of discourse in a specific text (Fairclough 1995).

In the matter of PPSMI policy, the genres involved were education, parental, culture, national language, national identity, legislative, politics, economy and development (discussed in Chapter 2).

1.6.5 Interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary

Interdisciplinary is a study of a few disciplines which are interrelated and considered as distinct (van Dijk, 1996, Wodak, 1989 & Dellinger, 1995). Understanding phenomena like the representation of education policy debates in national media may border a few disciplines, e.g., education, politics and media studies and discourse analysis. In interdisciplinary studies, usually, the logic of one discipline is used to explain another discipline, at the level of theory and analyses (Wodak 2009).

Transdisciplinary in the context of CDA is realised when an association of different disciplines cross each other's boundaries in a discourse and solving problems more independently (van Dijk, 1996, Wodak, R., 1989 & Dellinger, B., 1995).

In this study, PPSMI policy was analysed to discuss the involvement of education policy making including pedagogy, political turmoil, and media reports that created the discourse (see section 2.2 – 2.15).

1.7 Conclusion

In order to discuss the subject matters in this study, the above factors will be investigated and explained thoroughly in the next chapter. Various aspects integrated, affected and influenced the subject matter; how the discourse rolls through the period and the measures taken by the authority in handling the PPSMI policy.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

The construction of a discursive field (e.g., teaching of Mathematics and Science in English, or as it is widely known in its abbreviated form, PPSMI) is often the effect of the ideologies held sublime, officially, in a specific regime. In order to understand the production and consumption of education policies in the country it is imperative that we read the socio-political contexts in which these policies are made.

The analysis of discourse articulated by the norm-setters and their representation in the media requires a complex framework that may enable a researcher to understand what is also beyond the linguistic items in the discourse. It is imperative to explain how disciplines and discourses as porous entities influence each other. Hence, it is necessary to develop a framework that produces a critique of the discourse by including interdiscursive and interdisciplinary dimensions. Critical discourse analysis (CDA) along with the parameter of

Discourse-Historical Approach (DHA), an offshoot of applied linguistics offers such a complex framework for this study.

2.1 Previous Related Studies

Like the press, education is also a part of political business. This is absolutely not a new idea. The politicians became ministers and they construct and run various policies, including education policies.

Samuel Bowels and Herbert Gintis (1976) analysed the political economy of education and stated that education is a mere reproduction of the capitalist system. A very pessimistic view of education is that it is not a platform for the reproduction of knowledge but rather, it is an ideological tool for strengthening the leadership of a government. Education is a tool of social mobility that links between globalisation and politic. It was physical colonialism then, but now colonialism is practiced through education theory and methodology.

J. Bruner in Hidayat (2004) mentioned that learning is an active process that allows people to discover new things beyond the information given to them.

Knowledge is to be learned in specific stages so that knowledge can be internalised in the mind (cognitive structure) of the people who study it.

The orientation of education is to serve the interests of the industrialised world. Schools are like factories that produce workers for the industries. Therefore, what the school taught the world must fit the needs of the industries. The implementation of PPSMI was in order to narrow the gap between Malaysian students and the sources of the two very critical knowledge disciplines (Mathematics and Science) and prepare them towards Malaysia as a developed country in 2020 (Mahathir Mohamad, 2009).

However students' interests towards learning were influenced by their status in real life situations (Crow 1983, Rozumah Bahrudin 2001). PPSMI policy did not take into consideration that family background is normally associated with socioeconomic status. Family's education indicators, employment and earnings of parents were usually depending on economic and social statuses. Some studies also include other indicators such as student expectations, family expectations, and community expectations on a lot of children and their attitude towards the result (Mitchells and Tyreman in Pahrol Radzi, 1996). The usage of English

language in teaching and learning Mathematics and Science would deteriorate most students' interest to learn due to language difficulty.

According to Mohd Hishamuddin (2007) in the case of PPSMI, each student has the potential to achieve the desired success if they are willing to study in earnest with the proper study skills. Students should be given ample study input that suits their degree of intelligence. Some students have different difficulties in their studies. Some do not understand English very well, some were slow in Mathematics, some have difficulties in understanding Science hypotheses, and some were confused with all the subjects.

2.2 Critical Discourse Analysis

Critical discourse analysis (henceforth, CDA) is an analytical approach among various other discourse-analytical approaches (Reisigl and Wodak 2001, 2009; Van Dijk 1993, 1995, 1996, 2001a, 2001b, 2004; Wodak 1990, 2001, 2006; Wodak et al., 1999, 2008), and probably the most widely adopted for the study of media discourse. CDA is rooted in the ideals of 'critical linguistics,' which takes

an interdisciplinary approach to study spoken and written discourse from a critical perspective produced in a specific socio-political context. The interdisciplinarity is realized both in theory as well as in methodology which contributes towards the interpretation of ‘dominance,’ ‘inequality,’ ‘injustice’ and ‘false representation’ perpetuated historically and socially through the means of texts and talks.

CDA acknowledges discursive phenomena as ‘political,’ as it is realized in Gramscian terms (Gramsci, 2008). That is, matters of rights and power are inevitable constituents of any text. Hence, the analysis of text would be in depth and thorough including the analysis of linguistic items, strategic concerns and particular message disseminated in order to sustain or resist the status quo (van Dijk 2001).

In the last 20 years CDA literature has proliferated. There are numbers of books and journal articles published in the area; while there were conferences held on the topic. The three main schools are represented by Wodak, van Dijk and Fairclough and they may differ vis-à-vis the approach to CDA. However, the main concerns of CDA are unanimously accepted by the different schools of

CDA; the main features have been summarized by Fairclough and Wodak (1997) as follows:

1. CDA addresses social problems
2. Power relations are discursive
3. Discourse constitutes society and culture
4. Discourse does ideological works
5. Discourse is historical
6. The link between text and society is mediated
7. Discourse analysis is interpretative and explanatory
8. Discourse is a form of social action

2.2.1 The Facts of the Press

The press is able to provide an overview of the issues that occurred because there had been some previous studies by scholars who concluded that the

press can provide information and thus affect the formation of public perceptions about current issues that occur (see section 2.14 – 2.15.1 for further discussion).

Van Dijk (2001) has described three dimensions of discourse, namely the text, social cognition, and social context. He combined the three dimensions of discourse analysis into a framework. Firstly, examining how the text structure and discourse strategies were used to emphasize a particular theme. Social cognition is the induction process involving text from the journalists' individual cognition. While the third aspect is the social context which are the critical problems that expand the discourse building in the society.

Van Dijk also said that it is not enough to carry out a research on discourse analysis based on the text only, because text is the result of a production practice that should also be observed.

Fairclough (1997) on the other hand, developed the concept of discourse analysis using the following framework:

a. Text

The texts can be written and oral. For this study, the texts were written. Text is analyzed in the formal characteristics, such as semantic or syntactic. However there is an additional analysis in the framework, to uncover the “message” in a narrative that is related with socio-cultural conditions. There is a possibility that the author will see how the loads operate at a regional ideological text (the hidden agendas in the discourse). The ideology is seen as a value to be understood and trusted by both members of the group (the speaker and the listener, or the writer and the reader) while considering the truth or validity.

b. Practical Discourse

An analysis of discourse practice involves the production and consumption of texts. This hypothesis may mean that the social conditions of different cultures can produce different discourse practices as well. Practical discourse occurred between the social practices of text analysis. Therefore it is only through practice, where people ascribe discourse using language to produce texts and can

abstain from forming and formed by social practices. At the end, the readers will put their action in practice depending on what they understand on certain expression made by the writers.

c. Social and Cultural Practices

The framework in relation to this third dimension related to the context outside the text. The context here is a variety of contexts that surround the discourse context such as social, political, economic and cultural. This context plays an important role in influencing the discourse constructs.

The press is an organization that has its own ideology, vision and mission that determine its editorial policy. The editorial policy was developed from the vision of the newspaper concerned. The press at its core will always be influenced to be dominant (capital, political, cultural, moral, etc.) then; the question of message objectivity then becomes highly questionable in every report. Moreover, one of the main characteristics of news or the issue itself is the formation of public opinion (Zaharom Nain, 2000).

The press is influenced by the political importance of the press manager, press relations with a certain political power, and external factors such as market pressure and the political system that exists. Thus, it could be a political event that can generate public opinion which can vary based on the model of critical discourse analysis (Fairclough, 1992).

The reality that we get is a second hand truth or selected reality of the press. Thus, the press may choose to reveal one issue while ignoring another.

There were a few studies which were similar to this study conducted initially. Their hypotheses were the press was influenced in order to spread the agendas and directed the discourses.

The public agenda of the press is also influenced by the interests of the elite. A survey was conducted in Ghana to find out what the local press is setting for the readers. 1,585 respondents indicated that local newspapers in Ghana have created a public agenda which were influenced by the local elite and related to the determination of the national agenda (Anokwa & Salwen, 1986).

The portrayal of current issues of a newspaper is important because they often convey the information we need. The portrayal often covers various aspects, such as economic, political, social, education and the entertainment.

Parallel with the development of the newspapers, the readers were choosier on what to read as part of the agenda. How do the issues appear in the newspaper so it can make the readers create the agenda? The readers can do this through the editorial columns. Newspapers as a party that stands between the readers and the government, give the readers the option to choose whether they want to know the developments taking place or not. Faridah Ibrahim and Rahmah Hashim (1996) stated that most of the readers really need newspapers as the sender of information and the catalyst of changes in individual socialization.

The study of how newspapers' exposure can influence a person's perception was done by Williams & William D. (1978) who found a strong correlation between the press and the determination of the agenda. Their findings show a good correlation between the press and on the agenda for public disclosure. When information supplied by the press became a hot agenda, the issue will be the topic of current discussions.

Atwood, et. al. (1978) conducted a study on 39 150 correspondents in rural Southern Illinois and found a significant correlation between the local daily newspaper content to the issues discussed by the local population.

The affecting determination of the agendas was selected by the editors, managers and external factors. These external factors may not be from the press but from the government or even private parties. These factors that influence the process of determining the press agenda with its reliance on the elite who control the press, means that the press has a strong relationship with the elite people or authorities who will play the press agenda to the public (Littlejohn, 2005).

2.2.2 Discourse-Historical Approach

The Discourse-Historical Approach (DHA) is the most appropriate tool for this study. It serves as an affirmation and support elements of the argumentation in this study. The DHA is an analytical approach within critical discourse analysis (Reisigl and Wodak 2001, Wodak et al. 2001, Wodak 2009). It is a qualitative research design which has taken into account discourse and context to support

findings and arguments. The results obtained through the critical analysis of selected texts are checked against the background history of the events and issues affecting a context at a certain period of time.

Unger (2010) made a study on the Scots language that became an important medium in Scotland. He applied DHA (Wodak, 2001) in exploring the struggle of the Scottish to implement Scots language in institutional and private context. Similar to Unger's implementation of language for institutional and private context, this study tends to investigate the vehement discourse on the issue of PPSMI. The historical aspects were discussed further in section 2.2 and onwards.

The importance of Malay language and National Identity was also discussed in the case of the representation of the medium of instruction policy debates in Malaysia (David & Govindasamy 2003, Azirah 2003, Pandian 2003, Solomon 1988, and Watson 1983), the analytical framework must include the variable of temporality and multi-ethnic tapestry of the country.

Initially in Malaysia, Bahasa Malaysia, English and native languages skills were formed and reinforced through the education system. In certain situations the concept of socialization or acculturation is used to refer to the educational

process. In general, it refers to the process of acculturation of an individual with knowledge, values, norms, attitudes, a source of unity and national integration (Teo, 2011). It is also a major determining factor in the formation and development of the nation state itself. Language is the most suitable elements for purposes of consolidation and the inculcation of national consciousness, as well as numerous other national purposes.

Teo (2011) also emphasized that either Malay language or English language or any other languages were merely seen as a vehicle to deliver knowledge. Thus, the use of any language as a tool to express thoughts, to record facts and information exchange is more than sufficient. The basic function of this language can be played by any modern language, which has been standardised.

According to Asmah Haji Omar (1984), Science and Mathematics subjects were taught in English in the Philippines. The reason was that many were aware that English language has become increasingly important in the era of globalization. China, for example, is also moving towards changes and modernisation. That was the reason why a growing number of Chinese were sent by their government to various countries to learn English language.

The goal for the establishment of PPSMI was to make Malaysia a world-class educational excellence and create a generation that can meet the challenges of Vision 2020 (Mahathir Mohamad, 2009).

However, many scholars were not happy with too much involvement of English language in the national education policy. They worried that the native language would be deteriorated, forgotten and lastly Malaysians would lose their identity (Berita Harian, 2011).

In the polemics to restore the teaching of Science and Mathematics in English (PPSMI) into the national education system, the argument which was put forward by its supporters, the use of English would not deny the position of Malay language as the national language because it is enshrined in the Federal Constitution and the National Language Act (Berita Harian, 2011).

The other factor that affected the turmoil in the PPSMI discourse is whether the students who do not master the English language would understand Science and Mathematics as well as those who have better grasp with English. The reason is that English is the international language. Therefore it is important to master the English language because the majority of references were written in

English, particularly the scientific terms. We may read translated books for the subjects but we could not be sure the translation could be appropriate or not (Utusan Malaysia, March 2005).

The above factors were a part of the influences for this study to examine the language issues on PPSMI reported in the editorial structure of the New Straits Times (NST) and the Star using a modified paradigm of Discourse Historical Approach (DHA) analysis framework by Wodak (2001) and Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) framework by Fairclough (1997).

2.3 Political System in Malaysia

Malaysia practices Parliamentary Democracy under the ruling of Constitutional Monarchy (parlimen.gov.my, 2009). The parliament is led by His Majesty the King (Yang Di-Pertuan Agung). However, the Executive Authority is led by the Prime Minister and supported by the cabinet members. It has been stated in the Federal Constitution that Government Administration is divided between the state and the federal government.

Since Malaysia gained independence on 31 August 1957, the government has been represented by the National Front Party (Barisan Nasional), comprising United Malay National Organization (UMNO), Malaysian Chinese Association (MCA), Malaysian Indian Congress (MIC) and a few other affiliation parties. The multi-ethnic demography of the country coincides with the racially lined political system (Gomez, 2004, 2007). This structure of society and political commitment has definitely influenced the development of the current Malaysian Education System which has gone through various reformations just to 'suit' the current and the future nation demands.

In late 1990s Parti Keadilan Rakyat (PKR) was born with an aim to form Barisan Alternatif (BA), that is, an alternative to Barisan Nasional (BN), the main political platform that ruled the country since independence (*New Straits Times*, November 24, 2010). Eventually, the political party became a platform for voicing demands including issues in education.

For example, PPMSI issues have been politicized by certain parties for their own political interests.

The Combined Council of Head Masters of Malaysia (Gabungan Majlis Guru Besar Malaysia, GMGBM) deplored the actions of certain parties who were willing to entertain the issue of the teaching of Science and Mathematics in English (PPSMI) for political, because it is feared may have a negative impact on education. Its president, Ruslan Madon, said the opposition claimed was behind the organization of a street demonstration on Saturday against the policy to achieve political interests, described as if they want to present themselves as the champion of the issue. The parties were seen as taking advantage of the PPSMI policy issues that were taking place. For GMGBM, let this matter resolved well without those taking advantage of the situation for political motives (*Berita Harian*, March 11, 2009).

The subject matter caused a split in BN too. MCA suggested that SJKC (Sekolah Jenis Kebangsaan Cina) students should learn Science and Mathematics in their mother tongue for primary schools. Use English and Bahasa Malaysia to teach the two subjects from Form One to Form Three, and complete English should be used only for secondary education (form four and five). These stands which have been taken by MCA had taken a position in contrast to UMNO (both primary and secondary) on the issue of PPSMI (*The Star*, July 15, 2009).

The BA (Alternative Front) was divided in three views propounded by DAP, PAS and PKR. Member of the parliament and DAP leader Lim Kit Siang condemned the implementation of PPSMI in 2003, because it was carried out so suddenly - the preparation for the implementation was just around six month. The policy continued for six years. When the latest education minister declared to abolish the policy, Lim Kit Siang said that it was a wasteful thing to do. He suggested that the policy should go on but there should be research and development for the policy so that it could be improved. Lim Kit Siang proposed that PPSMI should start at the secondary school. He was referring to Chinese students as he felt that the Chinese primary students were already excelling in Science and Mathematics should be allowed to focus on English proficiency. He also felt that the national and Tamil school should implement special programmes that cater their needs to improve their proficiency in the three subjects (Lim Kit Siang, 2009).

On the contrary PAS, and also PKR, took a position against PPSMI. The PAS mouthpiece *Harakah Daily*, the online news portal (<http://www.harakahdaily.net>) underscores the roles of 'education', 'principles of language' and 'soul of the nation' arguments to formulate their views against

PPSMI. PAS fears that Malay as the language of the nation might disappear as the Jawi script has disappeared. PAS referred to the argument that in the 1960s the government decided to expel the Arabic Jawi script in favour of Roman script to write in Malay. This attempt had a negative effect on the supreme role of the Islamic image of the national language. Hence, the ruling government was accused for ‘destroying” the position and dignity of the Malay language again, by implementing the teaching of Mathematics and Science in English. PAS fears that the language of instruction will eventually enter into each communicative segments of life. To PAS, the cabinet should continue the original national education system back on and abolish PPSMI completely (Dzulfikar, November 25, 2009).

2.4 Rights group and civil society in Malaysia

These were the groups which actively expressed their suggestions, comments and actions towards the PPSMI issues:

2.4.1 Gerakan Mansuhkan PPSMI (GMP)

Jawatankuasa Gerakan Memansuhkan PPSMI, the body that articulates the issue of PPSMI for the NGO named GMP felt that the decision of changing the medium of teaching and learning Science and Mathematics from the Malay language (the official language and national language of Malaysia) back to English was a ‘wrong’ decision. They found the policy, beside of being irrelevant, was not reasonable in the context of education in Malaysia; the policy was created in a sudden, and it was without any in-depth discussion with the related parties in the fields of Science and Mathematics education (gerakanmansuhkanppsmi.blogspot, 2009).

The GMP body felt that the implementation of the policy caused many problems, especially the problems vis-à-vis students in the national schools in the rural areas. These students do not understand Science and Mathematics because these subjects were taught in a language which they do not understand very much, and the problem with teachers who do not master English language to teach these subjects in English.

2.4.2 Gabungan Penulis Nasional (Gapena)

The GAPENA First Chief, Ismail Hussein (2009) said that the change of the language of instructions in the education policy was a sudden move. It was a shocking situation, especially among the Malay community. Almost no one in the field of education which was met saw it positively (gerakanmansuhkanppsmi.blogspot.com, 2009).

Malay as the national language and as the medium of instruction in the education field has been championed for decades, and represents a great victory over colonialism. There was no refutation on the importance of the English language. It is an international language and it is an advantage to master it. GAPENA officially agreed with the need for improved proficiency of English language among students and the Malay community. The question was how well the implementations of the PPSMI method could improve students' proficiency in English. The implication of the proposed method was very highly risky. Their concerns focused on the effectiveness of this method over the majority of Malay students in the rural areas. Many have seen the use of English to teach the two subjects will not solve the problem of English language acquisition weaknesses of

the Malay students, because the real problem was related to the teaching of the English language itself (pedagogy scope).

2.4.3 Persatuan Kebangsaan Pelajar Islam Malaysia (PKPIM)

Muslim Students Association of Malaysia (PKPIM) is the main Islamic body of Muslim students at the national level. It was established on March 31, 1961 in Second Hostel, University of Malaya, Kuala Lumpur (pkpim.net, 2010).

PKPIM also strongly oppose the PPSMI policy. On February 18, 2009, Muhammad Faisal Bin Abdul Aziz, the president of PKPIM led the association to follow GAPENA to lodge a police report on the implementation of new teaching and learning of Science and Mathematics in the English language at Gombak Police Station, Selangor.

2.4.4 Persatuan Penulis Nasional (Pena) and Persatuan Linguistik Malaysia

Before PPSMI was implemented in 2003, the National Writers Association of Malaysia (PENA) under the leadership of Ahmad Sebi Abu Bakar,

has issued a press statement on June 20, 2002, against the government's decision of replacing Bahasa Malaysia with English language, as the language teaching and learning of Science and Mathematics. PENA's opposition was based on the consideration of the historical struggle for independence, the National Cultural Policy, the Constitution, and democratic education (gerakanmansuhkanppsmi.blogspot.com, 2009).

Similar to Pena, the Linguistic Association of Malaysia represented by its president Norhashimah Jalaluddin, assumed that PPSMI is an anomaly. The Association brought up an economic justification as they felt that Malay language was sophisticated enough to be used to convey the knowledge of Science and Mathematics. Many materials were produced in the form of text and reference books in Bahasa Malaysia. In emotive terms the Association expressed that they do not reject other languages, and do not reject the domination of other languages, but they were not to "sacrifice" national conservation policies respectively.

2.4.5 Pertubuhan Pribumi Perkasa Malaysia (PERKASA)

PERKASA, under the leadership of Ibrahim Ali, welcomed the government's decision to abolish PPSMI and the respective subjects will be taught in Malay in the national schools and in their mother tongue, Mandarin and Tamil in the national type schools. PERKASA congratulated and deeply appreciated Muhyiddin Yassin, the Minister of Education for making a 'wise' and 'pragmatic' decision that can meet the demands of virtually all segments of the community (malaysiakini.com, 2010).

2.4.6 The Parent Action Group for Education (PAGE)

PAGE, chaired by Noor Azimah Abdul Rahim was organised by the elite parents who lived around Damansara and Bangsar. They supported the PPSMI policy as they deemed it right that Malaysian students should go on learning Science and Mathematics in English. One of the arguments made PAGE was, through English, Malaysians could be 'unified'. Hence, by abolishing PPSMI, the government had barred that possibility of national integration while they have

already wasted billions of Ringgit to produce texts in English between 2002 and 2009 (pagemalaysia.blogspot.com).

2.4.7 The United Chinese School Committees' Association of Malaysia (Dong Zhong) and The United Chinese Teachers' Association of Malaysia (Jiao Zhong)

These two associations represent the rights of the Chinese communities in Malaysia. They differ from PAGE that wanted PPSMI to continue. The Zhongs upheld the mother tongue argument, as it would help also to maintain their culture. Hence, the abolition of the policy was greeted by them (see <http://www.djz.edu.my/>).

2.4.8 Gabungan Pelajar-pelajar Melayu Semenanjung (GPMS)

GPMS considered that the implementation of PPSMI was not so profitable for Malay students, especially those in remote areas. GPMS's president, Reezal Merican felt that the PPSMI issue related directly to the future of the young

Malaysians students. Hence, the policy should be re-drafted or refined in a way that serves the national interests. The Association deemed that the leadership among institutions of higher learning should be allowed to present their views and opinions. Consequently, decisions and opinions have already been notified to the Ministry of Education. GPMS would like to urge and encourage cultural groups to take the attitude that is more open in expressing their views. It was the hopes that they should not ever being 'exploited' by certain political party, in seeking the support from the people through street demonstrations over the PPSMI issue. Stance and views should be brought into academia and political discussions, and not motivated by emotion alone (Mahathir, 2009).

2.5 Constructing a Platform to Sustain Plurality of Struggles

Plurality of struggle is an act which occurs during political crisis and when multiple political actors come to construct a platform in order to address the problem (Laclau & Mauffe 1985). The term 'political' can be taken as an inclusive category that may involve individuals representing political parties and

social organizations that are fighting for a specific cause (e.g., supporting or resisting PPSMI policy in Malaysia).

As a leader Dr. Mahathir has been known to have a harsh attitude and “hard” in implementing any agenda that can make Malaysia a great nation (Aziz, 1997). However, not all ultimate goals can be implemented. Dreams and expectations sometimes cannot be realized because of the reality itself does not allow it.

The support for the reversal of the PPSMI was based on the principle that they do not want their children, especially in rural areas, to fail in mastering the English language, Mathematics and Science. There were many recorded studies by many non-governmental bodies such as Gapena, Teras and academicians who have no partisan political agenda (Temanteras, 2008). For those who were angry at the government’s decision to restore the teaching of Mathematics and Science in Malay need to understand (Berita Harian, 2011) that this system gives a lot of problems that affect the achievement of children in rural areas. One of the problems was because of the lack of skilled teachers to teach Science and Mathematics in English (GMP, 2009).

2.6 Language Identity

For the Malaysians, the language identity is ‘dictated’ by the Constitution and is claimed to be guided by the spirit of nationhood that form the basis of the Federated Malay States and later the Federation of Malaysia. Being a Malaysian is to be comprehensively able to speak fluently in the national language. There are concerns that multi-racial countries are usually unstable (Mahathir, 2009). Hence, to avoid racial conflicts Malaysia must try to reduce the differences between the races. In order to realise this, the government introduced Bahasa Malaysia as National Language. At the same time, the position of other languages has been acknowledged by the Constitution. Speaking other ethnic heritage languages and practicing native heritage in a manner in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution, outside the context of official business and in private practice in the community.

A language is related to identity through various processes such as education and functional in various aspects of life, including social, economic and political.

According to the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis, language is a powerful force that controls perception and thought (in Lynd 1999: 72). This at once explained that the language is a fundamental element of identity formation of a community.

Abdullah Hassan (2009: 63) wrote that there were several elements that characterise a society's identity, including the same ancestors, speaking the same language, the same place of residence (geographical location), the same religious society, and culture. In fact, there is also the identity of a society which is characterized by legal documents, for example, the identity of the Malays in Malaysia determined by Federal Constitution of Malaysia, as being Muslims, speak the Malay language and practice Malay culture.

2.7 Education Policy Making Initiatives in Malaysia

Since pre-colonial times till the age of ICT the domain of education continues to be lively in debates often translating into street demonstrations involving the law and some of the major tenets in the Constitution. In the contemporary Malaysia, with the rise of online societies and *netizens*, these issues

have become more “fragile” (the issue could easily become out of control), and easily absorbed into all the layers of the society. The issues that have been the focus of public discussion were the curriculum, good teachers, discipline, extra-curricular activities, and quality of education, objectives, education mission and vision. These were always the core of the discussion among several bodies close the National Education Association, who contributed to the construction of National Education Philosophy, and the National Education Master Plan (PIPP), for instance. Before a discussion on national philosophy on education, it is useful that we look into the historical trajectory of education reform in the country.

2.8 Historical Trajectory of Education Reforms in Malaysia

The education in Malaysia went through a number of changes before and after the independence of the country in 1957 (Ministry of Education Malaysia, 2001). Before independence, during the British administration, schools in Malaya were divided into four streams, the English Schools, and Malay, Chinese and Tamil schools. Each school had prioritized its own language as the medium of instruction and kept the curriculum different from each other. However, before

independence, there was an awareness of creating single stream school in order to expedite the nationhood agenda. A few committees had been formed to review the school systems at that time and produce the following reports:

2.8.1 Barnes Report (1951)

Barnes Report was proposed by Barnes, the Director of the Community Faculty at the University of Oxford. Among the contents in this report were suggestions to consolidate all vernacular school to make Malay and English as the medium of instruction, to use Chinese and Tamil for the time being and gradually phase them out, to establish modern vocational schools, and teachers' colleges to train teachers. For the medium of instruction the two languages that had been proposed were Malay and English (Barnes, 1951).

2.8.2 Fenn-Wu Report (1951)

While the Barnes Report made extensive comments on the Malay schools, the Fenn-Wu Report addressed the issues and problems surrounding Chinese schools. It is often suggested that the Barnes Report favoured the Malays while the Fenn-Wu favoured the Chinese (Tham, 1979). Among the recommendations contained in the Fenn-Wu report were to defend the existence of the Chinese school, to learn three languages, namely Malay, English and their native language, the educational goals of national identity, build a Chinese college, and increase financial aid for the schools. The medium of instruction proposed in the reports were all the vernacular languages, i.e., Malay, Chinese and Tamil besides English (Fenn and Wu, 1951).

2.8.3 Razak Report (1956)

This report laid the foundation for the development of the education system to foster unity through the National Education System for all,

Malay as the main medium of instruction and the national curriculum, syllabus and examination system is the same for all schools. However, for the medium of instruction, it was suggested that if in a class there were more than 15 students of Indian or Chinese origin the medium can be changed to Chinese or Tamil based on requests (Razak Report, 1956).

2.8.4 Rahman talib Report (1960)

In 1959, a Review Committee was formed, known as the Rahman Talib Report. The Committee was chaired by the then Education Minister, Abdul Rahman Talib. The reason for the appointment of this committee was to review the national education policy as proposed in the Razak Report (1956). Among the recommendations made in the Rahman Talib Report were: to make the Malay language as the main medium of instruction in all schools including the Chinese and Tamil national type schools.

After the Rahman Talib Report in 1960, two other reports were made: Hussein Onn Report in 1971 and Mahathir Report in 1976. Both of these reports were to review the National Education reports of the Razak Report and Rahman Talib Report. However, on the medium of instruction they expressed the similar views with the previous reports.

The committee that proposed the national education policy in 1979 came up with New Primary School Curriculum Plan (KBSR) which was implemented in all primary schools throughout the country beginning in 1983. KBSR Plan emphasized, among others, in implementing the values which do not necessarily rely 100% on the specified curriculum content but also based on their own initiative. It was also emphasized that the teachers must be proficient in delivering educational content as well as applying the values in the service. They were given the freedom to select innovative methods in teaching. However, on the issue of medium of instruction, nothing new was suggested.

2.9 National Philosophy of Education and National Education Policies in Malaysia

In 1989, the National Philosophy of Education was released which reads as follows:

Education in Malaysia is an on-going effort towards further developing the potential of individuals in a holistic and integrated manner, so as to produce individuals who are intellectually, spiritually, emotionally and physically balanced and harmonious, based on a firm belief in and devotion to God. Such an effort is designed to produce Malaysian citizens who are knowledgeable and competent, who possess high moral standards, and who are responsible and capable of achieving high level of personal well-being as well as being able to contribute to the harmony and betterment of the family, the society and the nation at large (INTAN, 1994).

It is apparent that the national philosophy of education reflects the tenets of national principles or as they are known in Malay, *Rukunegara*. The national philosophy of education in fact goes back to 1957 when the country's first

national education policy was implemented in the country. In fact, the 1957 Policy relied heavily on the ideals of the Razak Report in 1956. It was emphasised in the Policy that,

...this policy is implemented effectively, particularly in determining the development of a progressive education system and the national language as the main medium of instruction (Ministry of Education Malaysia, 2006).

It is obvious that the national education policies adopted in Malaysia before and after the independence of the country, underscored the nationhood agenda that was aimed at constructing a “balanced and harmonious” nation. Hence, it is not surprising that the issue of the national language as medium of instruction will be considered as an important step towards such nation-building agenda.

2.10 Education and National Development Towards 2020

The Ministry of Education Malaysia (2001), in its report stated that the National Education System has gone through many reviews from time to time to ensure that it will be in line with the progress and needs of the country - to restructure the society, achieve racial unity and achieve the aim of the Vision 2020, where Malaysia will not only be developed in terms of economy, science and technology by the year 2020, but also in terms of moral and ethical values. In order to achieve the goals of Vision 2020 the government underlines the need to strengthen the nation's capacity, capabilities in education and resolves to meet the challenges of the new century. The government will give priority to improving facilities and infrastructure and intensifying the use of ICT in all schools and institutions. Rural areas will be modernized through the provision of better ICT facilities, computers, computer labs and classrooms for schools and physical infrastructure, and move Malaysia's educational system forward to enable it to become the educational hub of excellence and quality towards the realization of Vision 2020. In line to that, through the National Education Policy the government promotes national unity through 11 years of basic education and making Bahasa Melayu or Malay Language as the medium of instruction while

using English Language in the teaching and learning of Science and Mathematics. The National Education Policy also stresses the uniformity of curriculum and examinations throughout all schools in the country (Ministry of Education Malaysia, 2006).

2.11 The Issue of Bahasa Malaysia

Article 152 of the Malaysian constitution proclaims that the national language of the country is the Malay language, which is written in the Latin alphabet for the official script; while the use of Jawi (i.e., Arabic script) is not prohibited. The status of Malay language began to be questioned as in the fifties and sixties it became difficult to convince people of the Malay language's ability to take over the English language, and to carry out its nationalistic duties effectively. At that time, a large number of people who doubted the ability of the Malay language questioned the wisdom of replacing the English language, a modern language which is used as a first or second language by a large number of countries such as United Kingdom, United States of America, and many more. These concerns were reflected in the National Language Acts 1963/67 which allowed Malay to be used for all officials' purposes, especially, all court

procedures; however, judge of the court, or the Speaker or the President of the legislative assembly may use English (Article 152(2), Malaysian Constitution). The debate on the status of national language in the legal domain continued in the 1970s. On the other hand, it was during the seventies, when the Malay language was adopted as the main medium of instruction in schools, the language of government, and as the language of public relations.

In 1983, in planning for the national language the government shifted the use of English language in many formal situations to Malay Language. The Malaysian children received all their schooling from primary one to tertiary level in Bahasa Malaysia. In other areas, the use of national languages has been completed. If the years of the 1970's, the native-speakers still wandered in the dark, and the terms and the new expression were still under investigation, in the years of the 1980s the age of assumed 'perfection' in the native language was achieved.

As the government has secured the status of the Malay language since the 1980s and the language has been used in all scientific domains it is expected to be able to deal with things both abstract and concrete in precise and explicit terms. Over the years, technical terms are also found in Malay as are evident in the

brochures meant for modern amenities. In fact, with the nationalist sentiment in reserve, the language's intellectual status has been proclaimed valid in all spheres of national activities.

2.12 The Evolution of PPSMI's Issue

In order to prepare students towards the status of developed country the government implemented PPSMI in order to expose them to adequate knowledge. Since its implementation PPSMI was considered a controversial issue as it contradicted not only the status of national language secured in the Constitution, but also other issues related to pedagogy and the state of vernacular schools in the country. In the media, the issue was unfolded revealing the political, economical, social, and psychological factors affected the policy-making drive.

2.12.1 Political

The media portrayal of a phenomenon may not be necessarily a reflection of the reality; rather, the portrayal may epitomize a selection of events from the

real world (Fowler, 1991). Hence, there is a possibility that the political economy of newspaper might be a variable in the depiction of the reality (Fairclough 1995). Zaharom Nain (2000, 2002) has indicated a relationship that existed between the media and the political elites in the country. Apart from the ownership of the media, it is also important to look at how the language issue contributed to the national politics over the years.

Brown (2005) has provided a detailed description of how language issue had always been a major political issue in the multi-ethnic federation of Malaya and later Malaysia. In 2002 when, the Chinese rights-based organization Dong Jiao Zhong and fellow Chinese organizations organized protests against the PPSMI policy, they were dubbed as “chauvinists” by Mahathir Mohamad, the then Prime Minister and the inventor of the policy (Brown, 2007). With the support of political parties like PKR and Islam-based PAS, the Chinese cry for mother tongue education, in the primary schools, became stronger in successive years against the status quo.

2.12.2 Economical

Implementation of a policy requires of the government to spend money on it. Since the implementation of PPSMI in 2003 till 2009, the government spent, claimed by the then education minister, Hishamuddin, more than RM3billion (*The Star*, April 4, 2009). The media which are linked to the government may highlight this economic factor in order to legitimize the argument to abolish the policy. Besides, the claims and counter claims made by the political agents in the country, it is also necessary that the institutional picture has been taken into considerations.

According to the Ministry of Education the total number of primary schools in the country is 7695 while 2,248 secondary schools. The number of enrolment in these schools is 5,407,865 students; Table 2.1 presents the number of students in the country:

Table 2.1: Enrolment of students in Malaysian schools

Pre-School	163,746
Primary	2,899,228
Secondary	2,344,891
Total	5,407,865

(Data by Ministry of Education Malaysia, Jun 2010)

The number of teachers in the primary schools is 230449, among them 70,600 are male teachers while 159,849 are females. In the secondary schools, there are 175267 teachers; among them 55,571 are male teachers while 119,696 are females (Table 2.2).

Table 2.2 Number of Teachers in Malaysian schools

	Male	Female
Primary	70,600	159,849
Secondary	55,571	119,696
Total	126,171	279,545

(Data by Ministry of Education Malaysia, Jun 2010)

There are claims by the government that (and often cited by the media) the government could have saved millions of Ringgit for each year by abolishing the PPSMI policy. First, if they stop paying the critical allowances for teachers who teach Mathematics and Science in English, 10% allowance out of their basic salary for each of primary school teacher, and 5% allowance out of their basic salary for each secondary school teacher. The government can save even much more if they stop supplying the ICT software, equipment and maintenances to the schools.

2.12.3 Social and Psychological

There are social and psychological effects of PPSMI as the abolishing of the policy impinged on the lives of the thousands of students as well as their parents. *The Star* published a letter to the editor written by an anonymous author that stated:

“... Because of these, people, especially rural dwellers, end up seeing the dark side of the English language, as it appears to them as a “cultural monster” which would erode local identity if not put under control (The Star, May 14, 2010).”

According to the anonymous writer (Harakahdaily, 2009), it is obvious that English language is considered ‘taboo’ by certain groups of people, especially those who lived in the rural and remote areas. Their view on English language is so prejudiced that they have unconsciously rejected the language. That is why teaching English language to them is nearly impossible. Hence, if anyone is literate in English, there were two different situations that they have to face: either they will be looked up and praised because of their intelligence; or, they would be condemned by certain members of the community. When it comes to the Malays, Milner (2001) stated that English was considered as the language of Christianity

in the colonial era; hence, the Malay population rejected English schools. The reality is, till today the language has not been accepted quite *from the bottom of the heart* by the kampong Malays.

2.13 Measures Taken to Implement the PPSMI Policy

Mahathir Mohamad's idea of implementing PPSMI was not intended to increase English proficiency in students (*The Star*, July 12, 2009). PPSMI is the teaching of Science and Mathematics in English and not the teaching of English in Science and Mathematics. It was an idea to narrow the gap between Malaysian students and the sources of the two very critical knowledge disciplines. It is necessary to admit the truth that there are not many quality resources for these two critical subjects in Bahasa, and at the level of higher education, the materials are less than adequate. Hence, it is feared that that after the abolishing of PPSMI, students will face a shock as they leave the comfort of the Bahasa-ready-textbook-school-world to the vast and dynamic world of higher education (Mahathir, 2009).

2.14 Newspaper Industry in Malaysia

The mainstream press in Malaysia has gone through a major period of evolution, beginning in the early 1980s, and extended into the 2000s. The mainstream press and broadcasting agencies in Malaysia has been under one of the stringent political, legal and economic controls (Zaharom Nain 2000, Mohd. Azizuddin 2005, Brown 2004).

It was reported in The KLSE Annual Handbook (1995 and 1996) and Utusan Melayu (Malaysia) Annual Report (1995) that all four most circulated national language dailies in Peninsular Malaysia, i.e., *Berita Harian*, *Harian Metro*, *Utusan Malaysia*, and *Utusan Melayu* have been published by just two local media giants; the New Straits Times Press (NSTP), publishes *Berita Harian* and *Harian Metro*, while Utusan Melayu (Malaysia) Berhad publishes *Utusan Malaysia* and *Utusan Melayu*.

These companies, not only have interests in other media-related activities such as distribution and broadcasting, but also are controlled by groups closely aligned to the political parties in the ruling coalition. For example, in January 1993 the local media empire comprising *Berita Harian*, *Berita Minggu*, *Harian*

Metro, the English dailies New Straits Times and Malay Mail, the Chinese Daily, Shin Min Daily News and TV3, Malaysia's first private television station, came under the control of Real Mild Sdn. Bhd., a private limited company which was fully owned by a publicly listed company, Malaysian Resources Corporation Bhd. (MRCB), effectively controlled by four individuals widely recognised as close associates of Anwar Ibrahim, the then Deputy Prime Minister (*Malaysian Business*, 1 January 1995: 99).

It was in the spirit of NEP (New Economy Plan), and also with the aim of increasing Malaysian participation in the national economy that dominant political partners in the ruling coalition were prompted to invest in the country's major newspapers, to justify their corporate manoeuvres, and, at the end of the day, to exert control or influence over the newspapers they owned (Zaharom Nain and Mustafa Anuar 1998; Loh and Mustafa 1996: 101-104). For instance, the government-owned trading company, Pernas, acquired 80% control of the *New Straits Times* (Means, 1991: 136), which was originally held by investors from Singapore. Later a majority of the shares were transferred to Fleet Holdings, an investment arm of the dominant partner in the Barisan Nasional coalition, United Malays National Organisation (UMNO). The transfer of ownership was then

followed by a change of name to the New Straits Times Press (NSTP). Fleet Holdings subsequently set up an investment company called Fleet Group that oversaw subsidiaries such as the NSTP. Such a corporate move was of great political significance because the take-over involved major mainstream newspapers under NSTP stable.

Further Malaysian participation in the private sector in this period also witnessed the involvement of another partner in the ruling coalition, MCA, in the newspaper industry. It now has a major stake in the popular English Language tabloid, *The Star* (Lent, 1982).

By giving it a close look, the political parties monopolised the newspaper companies for spreading their political agendas. They could spark issues and manipulate them like the PPSMI policy. At the end, they will be seen as doing something good for the voters.

2.15 The Printing Presses, the Regulations and Publications Acts in Malaysia

Indeed, the press serves as a tool for effective dissemination of information in the administration of a country (Kok, 2004). Citizens can find out all the processes carried out in a Cabinet meeting and political affairs in the country. At the same time through the genres of opinion editorials and letters to the editor the people can express their dissatisfaction on specific programs or plans undertaken by the government. Public opinions can be voiced out to the government through press releases. With this, in a transparent and a *media-ted* state the government may exercise the administrative matters more efficiently through public opinions' helpful.

In a multi-ethnic polity like Malaysia while the journalists need to be extra-careful in dealing with matters of politics, which is still fought in ethnic terms (Gomez, 2004), the opinion writers are also responsible in the articulation of issues in national interests. Nevertheless, the pre-emptive actions to regulate the newspapers may look like impinging on the rights of the citizens of Malaysia. For instance, the strict control and selective sanctions are continued to be imposed on the license in avoiding the media and independent organizations from issuing

their publications and broadcast stations. Hence, it appeared that only a handful of political and economic interests were able to strengthen and maintain their control of society through the media.

Various acts that suppress, including the Printing Presses and Publications Act (AMCP), were used to block the release of newspapers in recent times; for instance, The Star's publication was withheld for a short period in 1988. AMCP requires all publishers to apply for a permit issued each year. This requirement does not encourage more publishers to practice investigative journalism (Steele, 2009). Publishers who have planted a lot of capital have reason to be afraid because the license application will not be approved if they are not in compliance with the relevant authorities. AMCP not only controls the issuer, it also requires firms to apply for a printer license every year. Printing Presses and Publications Act (AMCP) 1984. Section 7 (1), AMCP 1984, wrote that the news content cannot be prejudicial to public order, harm the safety, moral prejudice, alarming the public mind, contrary to any law, public interests and national interests (Ministry of Home Affairs, 2009).

This call for public safety resulted among many publishers not to print materials produced by writers who take a critical stance vis-a-vis various national

issues. Other suppressing acts are the Internal Security Act, Sedition Act and Official Secrets Act. The acts have the string effects against press freedom in Malaysia. These laws prevent journalists from doing independent reporting and investigating while it makes the editor to be very vigilant to make self-censorship (aliran.com, 2000).

It is often argued that the restrictions on the media in Malaysia have been implemented by the British in Malaysia. Many newspapers published in Malaysia at that time were banned from their publication because of the articles written were considered anti-colonialist. The newspapers published articles from the leaders who were branded as pro-left or socialist leaders. Security Act 1960 (ISA) has been used by the British before the Second World War to cope such actions. However, in post-independent Malaysia the control and regulation seem to be continued.

Malaysia became independent in 1957 and has continued all the acts that formed during the era of British colonial. Historically, when Tunku Abdul Rahman held negotiations demanded independence for the Federation of Malaya by the British Government showed positive results, and independence has been promised, the British Government has established an independent Constitutional

Commission, headed by Lord Reid from Britain to draft a constitution for the *Tanah Melayu* independence. The Commission is also known as the Reid Commission first established in March 1956. Reid Commission, which comprises experts in the constitution and laws of Canada, India, Pakistan, Australia and Britain. The Malaysian Federal Constitution proposed by Lord Reid introduced more restriction on the media (Federal Constitution, 2006).

The era of open sky system inaugurated a new era in the media business in Malaysia. The radio and local television broadcast Malaysia is controlled by the Ministry of Information. However, the radio and television broadcasting from Singapore, Indonesia and Thailand were enjoyed by people in Johor and north of Peninsular Malaysia since the 1980s. The people of Sabah and Sarawak who have small satellite dishes were able to get access to the programmes released from Indonesia and the Philippines. The price of the dish is cheap and readily available, and it is often seen to be a threat to media control in Malaysia.

It was in the era of Mahathir Mohamad, the long-serving former prime minister of the country that Malaysia saw Binariang Company chaired by Tun Mohammed Hanif Omar to launch a satellite into space to launch the release of

Astro. This open sky system is not fully espoused, but controlled by the Astro satellite broadcasts (Mingguan Malaysia, 2009).

When the sky was opened and borderless, it is easy to access information from every corner of the world. The Ministry of Education used this technology to carry out Smart Schools. Students were given the chance to access knowledge through the Internet. Then when it comes to PPSMI, students were also given the chance to look for further information related to their study through the Internet. That was one of the reasons why the students need to learn Mathematics and Science in English. They could understand the information which was written in English.

2.15.1 The Era of Borderless World

In the 1990s Malaysia faced the issue of a borderless world with the emergence of the Internet with ICT equipment that could get easy access to the web sites, e-mail, Internet phone, instant online communication and blogs disseminating written and audio-visual contents. To a large extent these borderless world of information compelled the mainstream newspapers to loosen their self-censorship practices in the name of national interests (Bose, 2010).

In the beginning, in order to construct a communication-savvy citizenry, the Malaysian government encouraged people to use the internet and computers were supplied also to educational institutes. Teachers of Science and Mathematics were equipped with computers so that they can have easy access to the Internet and perform research and development. At the same time cyber cafes mushroomed and the internet was accelerated to the speed better through Streamyx and broadbands. However, these factors created another problem. School and university students spend too much time in cyber cafes, and worried their parents. To overcome the situation, the government put university students under the restriction of Universities and College Universities Act 1971 (UCUA), and the younger ones were under parental supervision.

On June 17, 2010, in the House of Representatives, Minister of Information, Communications and Culture, Datuk Seri Dr Rais Yatim stated that there were 2 million bloggers in Malaysia and they were free to express and exchange views. Malaysia had 76 daily newspapers, 151 satellite television channels, nine non-performing channels which were private and government owned, and 53 radio channels. There is an IPTV (Internet Protocol Television) using broadband services.

2.16 Conclusion

It is obvious that PPSMI is a matter of ‘national interest’; hence, the news media in the country may take ‘extra’ caution while publishing any news or opinion regarding the policy. Given a description of the political economy of the news media industry in the country it is also possible to connect between the content of the published news and the possible ideological biases available.

CHAPTER III

Methodology

3.0 Introduction

This chapter describes how the study was conducted within a specific research design, by employing particular methods for data analysis. The research methodology chosen for this study is the qualitative method. This is because qualitative data can provide clearer description and explanation that shows chronological flow of events and often provide opportunities and better discovery. According to Miles and Huberman (1994) qualitative study has an ‘undeniable’ high quality because of having more than one concrete word to convince the readers.

This study also uses DHA method because this research contains a historical perspective. Therefore, this study did a lot of referring to the facts from the past. However, the researcher may not be able to collect the entire relevant facts due to limitations of time and circumstances do not permit.

To recapitulate, this study looked into the media discourse on PPSMI (i.e., the Teaching and Learning of Science and Mathematics in English) policy in Malaysia. The discourse evolved, specifically, in the context of collected articles from the news reports, opinion editorials and letters to the editors published by the *New Straits Times* and *The Star* between January 2009 and June of 2010.

According to van Dijk (1985) discourse features are the symptoms of the larger issues such as injustice, class differences, gender, racism, power, and domination that involve more than just text and speech. Thus, the choice of active-passive forms in the news' title, for example, will provide a variety of matters in respect to the hidden dimensions advocated by the press editor. In practice, critical discourse analysis work through three stages of a simultaneous analysis, namely (1) language text analysis, (2) analysis of discourse praxis, and (3) analysis of socio-cultural praxis. The result is the discovery of hidden dimensions of language use in which the full load of power and ideology are perpetuated.

Fowler (1991) argued that the selection of certain linguistic forms in the text, the wording, and syntax options depends on the writers' reasons for saying something which may mean something different at different times, are not random

and the choices are not accidental. This research uses content analysis method because the method is compatible with the overall research goals. The method of analysis used for this study is the qualitative method of content analysis and not a quantitative analysis.

In qualitative research, content analysis usually refers to either the analysis of the text, a copy of the interview, record or document from notes based on direct experience.

3.1 Research Design

This research is rooted in the ideals of critical theory and especially, discourse-historical approach (DHA) within the paradigm of critical discourse analysis (CDA). DHA provides a linguistic analysis of data besides exposing the strategies used in the contents of the data which is read against a specific temporal and geographic context.

The CDA concept stressed by Fairclough and Wodak (2001) who see the practical discourse of ideological bias does show the effects of an imbalance in power relations on the discourse between social classes, men and women,

majority and minority groups where the differences were represented by a social practice. Fairclough and Wodak (2001) underlined important characteristics of critical discourse analysis:

1. Action.

Discourse can be understood as an action that is associated to a form of interaction. Someone speaks, writes, uses language to interact and connect with other people. Discourse in this principle, viewed as a continuity to discuss, influence, persuade, absorb, and react, and so on. Apart from that discourse is understood as something that is consciously expressed, under control and not something outside the control or unconsciously expressed.

2. Context.

CDA considers the context of discourse as the background, situations, events and conditions. Discourse is produced and understood and considered in the analysis in a particular context. Guy Cook (2003) explained that discourse analysis examines the context of communication: who is communicating with whom and why; the audience, the situation, through the medium of what, how,

type of differences and the development of communication and their respective parties. He mentioned three central scopes of discourse:

- a. Text (all forms of language, not just words printed on papers, but all types of expressions).
- b. Context (all types of situations and circumstances that affect the application of text and language, situations where the text is produced and functions).
- c. Discourse (the text and context of discourse were observed bilaterally).

3. Historical

By placing particular discourse in a social context and cannot be understood without including the context. This study embedded the historical background with the original discursive sources in order to analyse the discourse on the PPSMI policy.

4. Power.

CDA considered the elements of power. Discourse in the form of text or speech was viewed as a form of power struggle. The concept of power is one of

the key relationships between the community and discourse. Ideology is one of the central concepts in critical discourse analysis because each form of text, speech and etc are seen as ideology practice or emission of certain ideologies. Discourse of ideology is the medium by which dominant groups communicate with the audience to prove their power was legit and true.

An important question to answer in CDA is how the formation of discourse was built. Discourse analysis of the structure would not be spared from the association or relationship between the discourses with reality. The fact or reality is understood as a set of social constructs formed through discourse. In CDA, Foucault's (1972) discursive structure is referred.

Discursive structure is the view on an object formed within the limits specified. These limits are characterised by the object, the perspective that is defined as the most trusted was the truth. Our perception of an object is shaped and constrained by discursive practices or restricted by defining a view that is true and the 'others' as wrong. The consequence is that the public's view is directed towards a certain limited direction and accepted it as the truth.

According to Foucault, discourse is capable of establishing and sustaining relations of power within a society. It is normal that the members of society view

discourse differently, but the authority in charge has the power to choose and support a particular discourse until it becomes the dominant discourse, while the other discourses were “marginalized”.

There are two consequences of the dominant discourse: first, the dominant discourse gives instructions on how the subject should be read and understood. The broader view was being blocked because the given choice has been patented. Second, the created discursive structure of an object would not mean the truth. Limitations created would not only limit our views, but also lead to dominant discourses and the others become marginalized.

The implications of discourse marginalizing process were: first, the audience is not given the opportunity to get extensive information and various angles of an event. Second, it could indicate the practical discourse of marginality ideology. It is often that someone, groups, ideas, actions or activities to be marginalised by the other decorated (whether planned or directed) discourses.

3.2 Theoretical Framework

The critical discourse analysis (CDA) was implemented in the framework for analysing the discourse. The CDA intended in this research is the potential disclosure of the hidden meaning of the subjects (editors, personal, pressure groups) submitting their statements. Disclosure is made by placing it in a position to follow the structure of the writers, their intended meaning, and the shaped distribution and production of ideology in the discourse. Thus, discourse is seen from the form of power and opinion relations, especially in the formation of a variety of subjects and the representation of action.

CDA is not solely understood simply as objects of language study. CDA studies the text in the context of a language as a tool that is used for certain purposes, practices and practical ideology. CDA sees the application of spoken and written language as a social practice. Social practice in the CDA dialectic relationship was between the perceived causes of certain events, discursive situation, institutionalisation, and social structure.

The terminology and logic in public discourse in the context of history must be understood as the awareness generated. Thus, Hall's (1986) articulation

theory was not only to look at the relations of power and domination, but he also built a fine sense of creating awareness. Hall in Grossberg, (1992) stated that,

“...the complex set of historical practices by which we struggle to produce identity or structural unity out of, on top of complexity, difference, contradiction. Basically it refers to how individuals relate themselves to their social contexts and histories. While we are all in some sense the repositories of past practices, through our actions we ‘articulate’, bridge and connect ourselves to practices and contexts in ways that are new to us. In other terms, we continually shuttle between practices and meanings that are already constituted and ‘the real conditions’ in which we find ourselves.” (Grossberg 1992, p. 45).

In studying PPSMI issues, Articulation Theory was applied to see the struggle between the groups involved in the newspapers and how an ideology was argued to give meaning that is easily understood by the public.

The articulation theory was used to:

1. Underline the perspective made by the pro and anti PPSMI groups, and looks at the relations of power and dominance in determining the transmission of an ideology in a public discourse.
2. Consider the relationship between the birth of social and ideological groups, and evaluate the significance of these relations in a particular historical context.
3. Applied to see the struggle between the groups involved in the debate and how an ideology was articulated to give meaning easily understood by the public.

3.2.1 Analysis Process

Analysis of qualitative data is an interactive and active process. The researcher adapted this model to act as interpreter, read and edit the whole data to find meaningful segments and units. The researcher read the narrative data in searching for meaning and for deeper understanding. Once this segment is known and surveyed, interpreter developed a plan of grouping the appropriate codes that can be used to select and organize data. The researcher then looks for structures and patterns that connect the categories.

Morse and Field (1995) noted that qualitative analysis is the process of matching data together, how to make something faint to be seen, and linking due to the reason. This is a process of verification and tests, corrections and modifications, the motion and defense.

Morse and Field (1995) identified four roles in the process of qualitative analysis:

1. Understanding

Early analytic process, qualitative researchers strive to be able to consider the data and learn to find “what happened”. If an understanding is reached, researchers can prepare the way descriptions of events, and new data is added in the description. In other words, understanding settled when saturation was reached.

2. Synthesis

Synthesis includes screening data and unites. At this step, researchers gain an understanding of what “special” about an event and any variations and coverage. At the end of the synthesis process,

researchers can begin to make a public statement about the events of the study participants.

3. Theoretical

For the theory, it includes data selection system that researchers developed an alternative explanation of the incident and then take care of this explanation is reached to determine whether the data “match”. Extended theoretical process will developed until the best and most economical explanation available.

4. Recontextualisation

There are two central senses of a discourse, text and context. Text is all forms of language, not just printed words on a sheet of paper, but also all types of communication expression, speech, music, pictures, sound effects, image and so on.

Context include all situations and circumstances that are beyond the text and affect the application of language, such as participants in situations where the editors produce texts, functions as intended, and so

on. The focus of attention of discourse analysis is illustrated in the text and context together in a process of communication. Text defines the critical discourse and conversation on a particular situation; discourse in particular social situations. However, not all contexts are included in the analysis, only the relevant and influential in many ways with the production of discourse. First, participants of the discourse, background that produce the discourse. Second, certain social settings, such as location, time, position of the speaker and the listener or the physical environment is useful to understand the context of a discourse. Therefore, the discourse must be understood and interpreted from the condition and its underlying social circle.

The process of recontextualisation on the other hand included the development of further theory and applicability to other groups investigated. At the last inspection the expansion theory, is the theory should generalize and context.

According to Wodak, Fairclough (2001), Mirza and Coulthard (2003) recontextualisation is a transformation of discourse which was tailored to the goals, values and communication preferences. It means that

the press is not the representative of the objective facts, but the culture builder. The press selects what is considered as appropriate information and facts to be included in a report.

3.2.2 Management and Organisation of Qualitative Data

The initial step of qualitative research data analysis is to organize, without some system of organization, there is only chaos. The main task in organizing qualitative data is to develop methods to classify and index. Namely, researchers should design mechanism to gain access until the parts data, without having to repeatedly read the whole data set. This is the main level; a data must be converted to smaller, more controlled, and manipulated units that can be easily restored and review. Widely used procedure is to develop grouping scheme and then divided data by categories Gagliardi's (1991).

In designing the conceptual categories, researchers need to break down the data into segments, test and compare with other segments of the differences and similarities.

3. 3 Data Selection

The selected data were the articles on PPSMI which were reported in the national major English newspapers; the *New Straits Times* and *the Star* (refer to Table 3.1 and 3.2). The researcher will analyze all reports about PPSMI in the newspapers then discuss the reports according to the listed items on page 98 (see section 3.4).

3.3.1 The New Straits Times

The NSTP Company started on July 15, 1845 with the publication of the *Straits Times* (nstp.com.my, 2010). The New Straits Times Press (Malaysia) Berhad has 24 branches throughout the country, 3 overseas offices, namely in Jakarta, London and New York, 4 manufacturing plants in the Prai in Penang, Senai in Johor, Ajil in Terengganu, and Shah Alam in Selangor. Today, the company has issued daily newspapers and weekly in the two languages, namely Bahasa Malaysia and English. The Bahasa Malaysia newspapers are: Berita Harian and Harian Metro; while the English papers are: The New Straits Times, Malay Mail and The Business Times.

3.3.2 The Star

The Star is another English-language daily newspaper in Malaysia, and is renowned as the largest English language newspaper in Malaysia in terms of total of readership, which is about 290,000 to 300,000 (The Star Malaysia, 2010). The Malaysian Chinese Association is its majority shareholder, the second largest component party in the Barisan Nasional coalition government in Malaysia. The Star (daily) and Sunday Star published in four editions. Two editions cover the northern peninsular states, Penang, Kedah, Perlis, Kelantan and northern Perak while the other two editions cover the other states. There are two main printing premises which publish four daily editions of The Star. The northern editions printed by the Star Northern Hub in Bayan Lepas, Penang, while the other editions are printed by the Star Media Hub in Bukit Jelutong, Shah Alam, Selangor.

3.4 Data Collection

The data for this study were collected from the news reports, opinion editorials and letters to the editors published by the *New Straits Times* and *The*

Star between January 2009 and June of 2010. The data for the NST has been collected from Lexis-Nexis database that store news contents since 1990; while for *The Star*, the data was collected from the newspaper's online portal. The data is described in Table 3.3.

This study revolves around the discourses that ensued between the years 2003 and 2010. However the elements related to the discourse vary. The language issues were discussed much earlier than 2003. The related policies that were implemented were various. The factors affected the medium of instruction in schools and national languages were among the major factor that made the subject matter became popular and a lot of enquiring was done in order to produce a clear discussion on the matter.

By applying the combination of discourse historical approach (Wodak 2001, 2009) with lexicogrammar as the basis for textual analysis the objectives of this study will be achieved.

The analysis of contents uses the theory of the determination of the agenda as a guideline to identify the scope of daily exposure that includes frequency of exposure, headlines, news communicators, the news agency's name, the type of

news, original news, size and location of the news and how depictions of patterns
The NST and The Star issue.

This study was done by the method of content analysis with a qualitative research approach. The aim of this technique is to analyze the content so that the researcher can identify the expressions for the PPSMI policy preferred by the daily starting from January 2009 and runs continuously until June 2010.

In this study, the researcher will analyze the newspapers' contents selected to find the answer to the questions below:

How do the opinion editorials, letters to the editors and the staff reports in the Malaysian English newspapers (i.e., the *Star* and the *New Straits Times*) re-state (i.e., through direct quote and paraphrase) the arguments produced by individual authorities and pressure groups on the issue of PPSMI?

- a. What purposes do the categories (i.e., direct quote and paraphrase) of re-statement serve to construct a stance on the issue?

What are the rhetorical devices (e.g., metaphors) used by the writers of opinion editorials and staff reporters to represent the views by individual authorities and pressure groups?

- b. How do the rhetorical devices in the texts contribute to establish a stance on the issue?

The scope of the study would evolve according to the following listed items:

1. The Contents (articles published in the newspapers)
2. Analyses of linguistic means (different linguistic means used in the reports)
3. The use of quotes and paraphrasing (analysis of the data shows that the use of direct and indirect quotes was a textual device employed by the authors of the texts published in both *The Star* and the *New Straits Times*)
4. Quotes in news reports in the *New Straits Times*
5. Quotes in news reports in *The Star*
6. Quotes in opinion editorials in the *New Straits Times*
7. Quotes in opinion editorials in *The Star*
8. Quotes in letters to the editors in the *New Straits Times*
9. Quotes in letters to the editors in *The Star*

10. Rhetorical Figures (refer to the creative use of language in speech or writing, mostly, to create an impact, influence and persuade people)
11. Emotive Terms (describes the use of emotive terms used within the PPSMI discourse)
12. The Properties of “Should” (discuss purpose of using the modal verb ‘should’ in the reports)
13. Code-switch (to discuss the purpose of code-switching in the reports)
14. Pronominal (to list and interpret the use of pronominal in the reports)
15. Repetition (to discuss the needs to repeat words or phrases)

Critical discourse analysis places the use of language in particular social contexts. One important aspect in understanding the text is to place the discourse in a particular historical context. Therefore, in analysing, one should review to understand why the discourse that emerged or developed in such a way based on historical events and prior texts.

A discourse interpreted in readers’ mind with the same kind of discourse which has been known by the readers analogically. The principle of analogy requires that the reader interprets the text with their prior related knowledge or discourse.

An approach that provides a guide to readers for not creating a wider context than is necessary to make available the most relevant interpretation of the meaning conveyed by the press is known as Discourse-Historical Approach (DHA). DHA was developed to show how discourse of sexism, anti-Semitic and racism in the media and contemporary society. This discourse is called history because the analysis should include the historical context in describing a particular group or community.

This principle requires the readers to see the immediate context and depends on their ability in using the extension of the outside “world” and in using the extension of the past of the same events, to interpret the discourse they read. The experiences of the same events will allow the readers to comprehend the purpose of a discourse deeper.

3.5 Data Analysis

Significant data from PPSMI the issue focuses on “the government”, “professionals” and “the public”. So the interpretations were that the government often became the source of news to give an explanation on the issue of PPSMI.

The emergence of other parties on the other hand, was more often to give diplomacy statements and rhetorical discussions.

The non-government parties such as “professional employees”, lecturers, experts and observers of political situations appeared more often, because the PPSMI issue has become a national agenda that requires reviews, comments or reports from those who really know the history and prudent solution. Thus the frequency of emergence of professional workers as written by Dato’ Asiah Abu Samah (retired Director-General of Education, Ministry of Education) for example, in responding to this PPSMI issues is important.

The data is tabled (Table 3.4) and described briefly the views among the authorities, pressure groups and individuals on the matter of abolishment of PPSMI policy.

The table proved that the NST newspapers reported 2/3 more news on the subject of the abolishing of the PPSMI policy compared to the The Star.

3.6 Conclusion

After going through Table 3.4, we can make the assumption that more reports described the agreements on abolishing the policy. It is obvious that the government intended to revert to PPSMI, but then they allowed the issue to be discussed through the media. Whether Malaysians like it or not, they will still abolish the policy, as announced by the Education Minister. However, since Malaysia is a democratic country, the people were allowed to express their views on the matter.

At the end, we can see that most Malaysians chose to agree with the government's decision, or at least follow it because they have to.

CHAPTER IV

DATA ANALYSIS

4.0 Introduction

This chapter reports the summary of the findings based on the research questions posed in this study. The research questions posed were: (1) how do the newspaper texts re-state (i.e., through direct quote and paraphrase) the arguments produced by individual authorities and pressure groups on the issue of PPSMI and (2) what are the linguistic means, i.e., rhetorical devices used by the newspaper texts? The researcher used a discourse-historical approach to analyze the data that has been collected from *The Star* and *The New Straits Times* on the medium of instruction controversy in Malaysia.

4.1 The Arguments Produced by the Newspapers: The Contents

When the PPSMI policy was introduced in 2002, the decision was based on the assumption that English is the lingua franca or global language for Science

and Mathematics; hence, improving our students' proficiency in English language became a national agenda. This view was applauded by many while others opposed it. Those who opposed the policy and wanted the government to abolish it provided the reasons:

1. The policy goes against the esteemed value of the national language, i.e., Bahasa Malaysia.
2. Learning of Science and Mathematics through mother tongue will ensure a faster learning / acquisition of the contents.
3. The ability to comprehend the subject matter is different among students.
4. The PPSMI policy should have been supplemented by other policies which could improve teaching and learning of both English and Mathematics and Science.

On the contrary, those who agreed with the policy and wanted the government to continue it felt that:

1. To oppose PPSMI policy surmounts to being hypocritical, because most of them who are fighting against it had studied in the English medium, live in

urban locations, and they are wealthy enough to send their children abroad.

2. The language of development, science, technology and mathematics in the contemporary world is English, which incorporates new vocabularies every now and then; while, the existing knowledge in the Malay language is already backdated.
3. It is good to learn Science and Mathematics in English because it would be an advantage for them when students pursue their studies abroad. Students can straight away continue to focus on learning, rather than staying back for a few months to study the language.
4. Many Malays from the rural areas found it difficult to get jobs in large companies because they failed in the job interviews which were conducted in English.
5. Indeed there were Malays who were studying in the U.S. or the U.K. However, they did not lose their identity.

4.2 Analyses of linguistic means

While the contents of PPSMI debates comprised a limited set of issues, these concerns were articulated using different linguistic means. The following sections list down and exemplify the contents in linguistic terms. The linguistic terms explored are: rhetorical figures, emotive terms, intensifiers, repetition, code-switch, interpellation and pronominals. Before illustrating the use of rhetorical devices, the following section describes the use of quotes (direct and indirect) and paraphrasing in the data.

4.2.1 The use of quotes and paraphrasing

The analysis of the data shows that the use of direct and indirect quotes was a textual device employed by the authors of the texts published in both *The Star* and the *New Straits Times*. Newspaper texts are usually meant for re-presenting the reality, that is, either to re-present speech that someone has produced or a phenomenon that has happened. In this discourse analytical study the researcher is interested in showing how newspaper texts re-present speech which has been produced by someone.

The data shows that in the genre of staff reports, the newspapers quote directly on the words and opinions of the original source. There is hardly any vague statement such as: "One source said...", unless anonymity is necessary. Instead, the people who quoted were verified. In the data the names of specific persons or groups that adhere to the opinion were stated. However, it is not surprising and which is also supported by the data that vague utterances are often used in opinion editorials and letters to the editors.

The readers' common knowledge would help them to understand the vague utterances produced by the writers. Even though the facts were vague, as mentioned in 2.1.1, Fairclough (1997) surmised that ideology is seen as a value to be understood and trusted by both members of the group (in this case the opinion editorial writer and the readers) while considering the truth or validity.

4.2.1.1 Examples of quotes in news reports in the *New Straits Times*:

“Deputy Prime Minister, Muhyiddin Yassin, who is also the education minister, said the decision was perhaps one of the most difficult the government had to make in recent years considering its potential

implications on millions of students, teachers, and parents from all ethnicities.” (NST, July 12, 2009) - **Indirect Quotation**

“If allowed to continue, the problem would escalate, considering that there were some 500,000 students coming out of the education system every year, explained Muhyiddin.” (NST, July 12, 2009) - **Direct Quotation**

“Muhyiddin said while the policy was essentially good in terms of vision, it was not achievable because of certain constraints.” (NST, July 12, 2009) - **Indirect Quotation**

“Datin Noor Azimah Abd Rahim is the chairman and founding member of the Parent Action Group for Education (PAGE), a group of parents who are strongly for the continuation of the policy.” (NST, March 21,2009) - **Specific and verified Quotation**

4.2.1.2 Examples of quotes in news reports in *The Star*:

“Malaysian English Language Teaching Association president Dr S. Ganakumaran said that before making English compulsory, the

Government must upgrade the quality of teaching and learning, as well as the professional skills of teachers.” (The Star, June 9, 2009) - **Indirect Quotation**

“Parent Action Group for Education chairman Datin Noor Azimah Abd Rahim concurs, saying that it can only be carried out when weaknesses within the teaching profession had been ironed out.” (The Star, June 9, 2009) - **Indirect Quotation**

“Movement for the Abolition of Teaching and Learning Science and Mathematics in English president Datuk Dr Hassan Ahmad disagrees with the idea.” (The Star, June 9, 2009) - **Specific and verified Quotation**

“Dr. Hassan said it would be more sensible for the Government to revamp the teaching of English to ensure all students, particularly those in the rural areas, became proficient in the language.” (The Star, June 9, 2009) - **Indirect Quotation**

4.2.1.3 Examples of quotes in opinion editorials in the *New Straits Times*:

“WHAT can we expect when the Ministry of Education announces its decision on the teaching of Science and Mathematics in English soon, possibly this week?” (Ahmad A. Talib, NST, July 5, 2009) - **Specific and verified Quotation**

“I’m quite sure the ministry would have done enough research and study to support its decision, one way or the other.” (Ahmad A. Talib, NST, July 5, 2009) - **Specific and verified Quotation**

“Some parents I met raised one common point: they want their children to have a good command of the English language, while at the same time to be equally proficient in Bahasa Malaysia.” (Ahmad A. Talib, NST, July 5, 2009) - **Specific and verified Quotation**

“One ambassador whispered to me that the Foreign Service is starved of Malaysians who can articulate well in English internationally.” (Ahmad A. Talib, NST, July 5, 2009) - **Specific and verified Quotation**

4.2.1.4 Examples of quotes in opinion editorials in *The Star*:

“It was Mahathir, a year later, which made the decision to go back to English for Science and Mathematics after having overseen the switch to Malay first as Education Minister and then Prime Minister, virtually admitting his mistake of carrying the language policy too far.” (P. Gunasegaram, *The Star*, July 10, 2009) – **Specific and verified Quotation**

“WHICHEVER way one looks at it, it is obvious that the decision to revert to Malay, Chinese and Tamil for the teaching of Science and Mathematics from 2012, has been politically motivated, with an eye on the next general election.” (P. Gunasegaram, *The Star*, July 10, 2009) – **Specific and Verified Quotation**

“The Education Ministry and advocates of rolling back the teaching of science and mathematics in English should have taken the trouble to establish what percentage of Malaysian households consider English as virtually their mother tongue and use it as the primary language of

communication between household members. I suspect the numbers are large.” (P. Gunasegaram, The Star, July 10, 2009) - **Indirect Quotation**

“If they have not, these teachers must be purged from the education system and be replaced with others because six years is long enough.” (P. Gunasegaram, The Star, July 10, 2009) – **Specific and verified Quotation**

4.2.2 Rhetorical Figures

The rhetorical figures refer to the creative use of language in speech or writing, mostly, to create an impact, influence and persuade people. This study of rhetoric began with Aristotle but in modern context, rhetoric is the art of language or verbal correspondence involving the presentation of facts and ideas with an interesting and effective language based on a better and an organized form of knowledge. Rhetorical figures are often realized in the forms of metaphor, simile, but also idioms and phrases understood locally or globally. The following table illustrates the examples of rhetorical figures in the data:

Table 4.1: Examples of Rhetorical Figures in the Data

Textual occurrences	Interpretation
<p>I now urge him to go the <u>whole nine yards</u> and let's get things right from the start for the sake of all. (Idioms)</p> <p>(<i>The Star</i>, July 17, 2009)</p>	<p>The phrase, <u>whole nine yards</u> means completely, the whole and not discrete parts. The writer seriously recommended that the policy should be revised completely so that PPSMI could be conducted in a better way.</p>
<p>Both proponents and opponents of the policy should be blamed for following the <u>zero-sum game</u> between Bahasa Malaysia and English which our society finds itself caught in. (Idioms)</p> <p>(<i>The Star</i>, May 14, 2009)</p>	<p><u>Zero-sum</u> describes a situation in which a participant's gain or loss is exactly balanced by the losses or gains of the other participant Still each party to the argument has a gain equal to the loss. Means that the writer's intention was to describe the never ending controversy on deciding which language to be used for teaching mathematics and science, and he was tired about it.</p>
<p>Because of these, people, especially rural dwellers, end up seeing the dark side of the English language, as it appears to them as a "<u>cultural monster</u>" which would erode local identity if not put under control. (Metaphor)</p> <p>(<i>The Star</i>, May 14, 2009)</p>	<p>The phrase <u>cultural monster</u> was used to convey the picture of the negative thoughts and situations.</p>
<p>When the policy <u>kicked in</u>, they lost the motivation to produce academic and educational material in Bahasa when</p>	<p>The phrase <u>kicked in</u> is another negative utterance, showing how urgent it was for the government to jump start</p>

<p>they should have kept their spirits high and risen to the occasion to show what the language can do as a vehicle of knowledge. It's not about translating all those academic or scientific journals, it's about disseminating understandable information in the national language for all of us, not just college students.</p> <p>(Phrasal verb as Metaphor)</p> <p><i>(The Star, May 14, 2009)</i></p>	<p>the policy at that time.</p>
<p>The <u>bottom line</u> is the PPSMI debate has turned into a <u>belligerently-fought</u> battle which did not have to happen. I hope the battle will end on a peaceful note. (Metaphor and Phrasal verb as metaphor)</p> <p><i>(The Star, May 14, 2009)</i></p>	<p>The writer likened the discussions over PPSMI to a war. In his opinion, it should not have happened.</p>
<p>“This is what I meant by a “<u>soft landing</u>” as students will be given time to get used to the new policy,” he said. (Metaphor)</p> <p><i>(The Star, August 9, 2009)</i></p>	<p><u>Soft landing</u> meant that everything was well taken care of, and there should not be a worry for the people that might have caused if the authority had opted for a sudden reversal of the policy.</p>
<p>As a working adult, I can feel how BM has been <u>sidelined</u> over the years. In Kuala Lumpur, many shopping centres and other public places only provide signages and posters in English. Shopping malls in Hong Kong,</p>	<p>The writer used the phrase, <u>sidelined</u> to depict the standard of the national language in the real life, mostly, to show the level of unawareness for the language (BM).</p>

<p>Bangkok and Dubai display signages in their respective national language and English. (Metaphor)</p> <p><i>(The Star, November 19, 2009)</i></p>	
<p>More often than not, the data which needs to be computed is never done, and the forms just <u>gather dust</u>. (Idiom)</p> <p><i>(The Star, April 4, 2010)</i></p>	<p>Delayed works which is left aside without any action taken.</p>
<p>We <u>sacrificed</u> thousands of children in our haste to change to English and now we are preparing once again the <u>altars for sacrifice</u>. (Metaphor)</p> <p><i>(The Star, Jul 19, 2009)</i></p>	<p>The PPSMI policy was considered as troubling Malaysian education. The policy started suddenly; while it was reverted, it was again done in haste. Students, teachers and parents had to suffer the consequences. They were allowed to voice out, since the constitution allows freedom of speech. However, they had to obey the decision made by the government.</p>
<p>As a <u>gift of justice</u> to all children, the Government of Malaysia must allow the children already in the education system — at least those who have spent six years or more studying the subjects in English at the time it affects them — the option to complete their Mathematics and Science education in English. (Metaphor)</p>	<p>There was a suggestion that the students who had gone through the English syllabus should be given the chance to finish their education in English before the new syllabus take effect completely.</p>

<p>(<i>The Star</i>, Jul 4, 2009)</p>	
<p>In fact, when the PPSMI policy was implemented, teachers had to go through much pain to make the switch. Just as they were getting comfortable with teaching the subjects in English, <u>the powers-that-be</u> decided to hastily revert the PPSMI policy. (Metaphor)</p> <p>(<i>The Star</i>, Jun 27, 2010)</p>	<p>This opinion shows that the syllabus switch was done in a sudden. However, as all Malaysian used to be, obedient and lenient. Once announced, all system goes... whether they like it or not, the syllabus will take effect and run by the teachers.</p>
<p>But Mazi sees these problems as <u>part and parcel</u> of her job. (Idiom)</p> <p>(<i>The Star</i>, May 1, 2009)</p>	<p>Some teachers considered that the matter was part of the challenge that they have to face in carrying out their job.</p>
<p>To them, the matter is like trying to get <u>a right-handed person</u> to write with his left hand and then telling him to switch back to the right just when he was getting used to the change. (Phrasal verb as metaphor)</p> <p>(<i>The Star</i>, July 19, 2009)</p>	<p>The matter here is that the awkwardness for the teachers and students, who were used to teaching and learning mathematics and science in English to convert with the new terms and vocabulary in Bahasa Melayu.</p>
<p>For Goh Kin Chye, headmistress of SJK (C) YeongHwa, Lenggong, introducing PPSMI was <u>like jumping</u></p>	<p>Here, a headmistress voiced out that the introduction of the English syllabus</p>

<p><u>the gun</u>. (Simile)</p> <p>(<i>The Star</i>, July 19, 2009)</p>	<p>was a sudden move.</p>
<p>I urge the Education Ministry to go back to the “<u>lab</u>” and work out a solution that is more palatable to all. (Metaphor)</p> <p>(<i>The Star</i>, May 24, 2010)</p>	<p>Tan Sri Alimuddin Mohd. Dom, The Education director-general of Malaysia, considered the PPSMI policy was an experiment and the related authorities should take action to revise it.</p>
<p>But we now see a <u>glimpse of hope</u> in the process of reverting the PPSMI to Bahasa Malaysia. (Phrasal verb as metaphor)</p> <p>(<i>The Star</i>, Jul 17, 2009)</p>	<p>The opposition parties would say this, because they were expecting the syllabus to be abolished. And they won the war.</p>
<p>Personally, I have no objection to the switch because I know for a fact that our present <u>crop</u> of Mathematics and Science teachers are not capable to teach in English. (Metaphor)</p> <p>(<i>The Star</i>, Mar 15, 2009)</p>	<p>This is another sincere view by Education director-general. He knew that the present teachers and those who had just graduated and will be posted were not able meet the standard in teaching the English syllabus.</p>
<p>As an outsider to this debate and with no particular <u>axe to grind</u> it seems that, some basic observations are in order. (Idiom)</p>	<p>This is a neutral opinion, hoping that the new policy would be able to improve the standard of English language among the Malaysian</p>

	students.
...the last six years have shown us that there are many teachers who cannot teach the two subjects in English because of their own <u>woeful grasp</u> of the language. (Phrasal verb as metaphor)	In reality, most teachers teach the two subjects bilingually, similar to teaching English language.
I also believe we should stop using the inability of “ <u>rural children</u> ” to be comfortable with English as our standard excuse for reverting to the use of Bahasa Malaysia, Mandarin or Tamil. (Label) (<i>The Star</i> , March 9, 2009)	This is an example of labelling, which has also been explained as ...by Wodak to stereotype a group or individual. In this context, it might be used as an excuse against the rural population. This gross generalization overlooks the reality that some rural students were intellectually able to cope with English.
One of the reasons for the reversal is that the <u>chasm between rural and urban schools</u> was getting greater because <i>kampung</i> kids and teachers could not cope with English. (Phrasal verb as metaphor) (<i>The Star</i> , Jul 17, 2009)	This is another statement that proves Malaysians like to compare the knowledge gap between the urban and rural students to prove and condemn any failure of education policy. They forgot that there were many <i>kampung</i> students graduated from local and foreign universities.

	The factor is not geographical but exposure to knowledge.
<p><u>Could the quality of teachers in rural areas also be a factor?</u> After all, the teaching profession since the time I left school was the occupation of last resort. (Rhetorical question)</p> <p>(The Star, September 20, 2006)</p>	<p>In this utterance, teachers' quality/ability has been questioned. Some teachers were not committed and went through the PPSMI courses which consisted of six cohorts, and came back to school 'grumbling' and still taught the two subjects in <i>Bahasa Melayu</i>. In some schools, the headmasters sent each and every one of their teachers alternatively to attend the courses because they would have been able to get the ten percent allowances for teaching PPSMI, but they could not even remember the topics that they have to teach.</p>
<p>I don't understand the necessity for teachers to attend courses when the school has a shortage of staff members or when there is no arrangement made to get relief teachers. <u>Can't such courses be held during the school holidays?</u> (Rhetorical question)</p> <p>(The Star, January 10, 2006)</p>	<p>Most teachers said that school holidays is their time for family, social and manage other things. They despise courses held during school holidays. They will come up with whole lot of excuses to escape it, or bring the whole family to the venue and spend their leisure time while attending the courses.</p>

The data shows that several rhetorical devices have been used to describe issues related to PPSMI. These figures have been used perhaps to persuade or influence the readers. Through the device of metaphor and simile it is possible to say what might not have been said directly or explicitly. Besides the use of lexical items as figurative terms, syntactic devices like rhetorical questions have been posed to create a textual atmosphere of conformity. The following section describes the use of emotive terms within the PPSMI discourse.

4.2.3 Emotive Terms

Matters of national interests can be articulated in diverse ways, in which case, the ideological positions (see section 2.2 – 2.12) are merely translated into lexical items or syntactic structures. This section describes the use of emotive terms used within the PPSMI discourse. It is not surprising that if the producer of a certain text has ‘irrational’ or ‘faulty’ beliefs concerning certain social act (e.g., the medium of instruction), there would be negative consequences.

Emotive terms in the PPSMI data were usually represented by the modal verbs, which can be categorized as *possibility*, *probability* and *necessity* statements respectively.

Examples:

1. The words were categorised as a **possibility** when a chance that something may happen or be true, and something which was chosen to be done in a particular situation.

i. ...which would erode local identity... (The Star, May 14, 2010)

ii. ...it would have been sorely disappointed... (NST, Dec.19, 2009)

2. The **probability** words were to express opinions of the speaker based on the information that the speaker has.

i. ...that Science and Mathematics will again be taught in Bahasa Malaysia...

(The Star, July 8, 2009)

ii. ...announced by the Deputy Prime Minister will clear the air over the matter.

(The Star, November 10, 2009)

3. An expression which means that something really need to be done is categorised as necessity words.

i. Those supporting PPSMI should look into why...(The Star, may 14, 2010)

- ii. ...the Government of Malaysia must allow ...(The Star, may 14, 2010)

By adding suitable emotive terms in a text, the author would be able to arouse the readers' interest to read even further and would be able to share the writers' or speakers' ideas with the readers, and could create further rhetorical debates.

On the other hand, the newspapers' intention in reporting the individuals who possess higher authorities or if they were executive decision makers, used the emotive words like *should*, and *must*. The words projected the power that the authorities have, and meant to convey the degree of intensity. For instance,

- i. Those supporting PPSMI should look into why they have lost for now their struggle to retain the policy. (The Star, may 14, 2010)
- ii. As a gift of justice to all children, the Government of Malaysia must allow the children already in the education system at least those who have spent six years or more studying the subjects in English at the time it affects them the option to complete their Mathematics and Science education in English. (The Star, may 14, 2010)

Apart from modal verbs, other lexical items which may often resemble the structure of metaphors are found in the data aimed at intensifying the utterance.

Examples are shown in the following table:

Table 4.2: Intensifiers

Sentences	Interpretation
<p>Because of these, people, especially rural dwellers, end up seeing the <u>dark side</u> of the English language, as it appears to them as a “cultural monster” which would <u>erode</u> local identity if not put under control.</p> <p>(The Star, May 14, 2009)</p>	<p>The phrases, dark side and erode local identity, were used to portray a negative picture due to the use of English (ideological).</p>
<p>Any teacher who taught Maths and Science <u>were forced to teach</u> in English <u>regardless if he or she had any grasp of the language</u>. (phrasal verbs)</p> <p>(The Star, May 14, 2009)</p>	<p>This statement criticized the measures taken by the government in order to improve the standard of the Malaysian education. Their action however turned up to be chaotic.</p>
<p>After <u>a hectic run</u> of six years, the teaching of Mathematics and Science in English (PPSMI) came to an <u>abrupt, unceremonious</u> end.</p> <p>(NST, December 14, 2010,)</p>	<p>It was a sudden decision made by the government through the ministry of education to discontinue their policy in teaching mathematics and science.</p>
<p>“It was a <u>great</u> blow to me but I knew I</p>	<p>This is an opinion by a teacher who</p>

<p>had already tried my best,” she said.</p> <p>(The Star, July 19, 2009)</p>	<p>tried her best to make sure that her students master the English language syllabus. After the trouble that she had gone through, the syllabus changes again.</p>
<p>Mathematics and Accounting teacher Sahila Mat Basir said that she supports the reversal of the PPSMI policy because “both teachers and students were <u>suffering</u>”.</p> <p>(The Star, November 8, 2009)</p>	<p>Sahila’s opinion represents the half who supports the syllabus switch. Due to the hardship that teachers and students had to go through in teaching and learning mathematics and science in English. They have double trouble in comprehending the language and the other two subjects.</p>
<p>As it is, Bahasa Melayu nationalists have labelled English as a <u>colonial language</u> and criticised those who want to learn in English as <u>traitors</u>.</p> <p>(The Star, June 29, 2009)</p>	<p>Referring to the history, most Malays always remembered English as conquerors and spread Christianity. They hated English ever since, and rejected English language.</p>
<p>When I broke the news to my 13-year-old daughter that Science and Mathematics will again be taught in Bahasa Malaysia, her <u>reaction was one of bemusement</u>, not knowing whether that was good news or bad.</p> <p>(The Star, July 17, 2009)</p>	<p>Some young students do not care much about what is to be learnt in school. It is not a burden to them, whether learning in English or Malay. The main problem here is the teachers. Some mathematics and science teachers were unable to commute in English. So they failed to</p>

	convey the knowledge to their students.
<p>Although numerous complaints have been made, they seem to have fallen on <u>deaf ears</u>.</p> <p>(The Star, July 17, 2009)</p>	<p>This statement depicted the unsatisfied voice of the people. They can say anything, but their opinion may not be counted.</p>
<p>Any teacher who could speak English was <u>roped in</u> to teach Maths and Science – never mind if he or she was bad in the two subjects.</p> <p>(The Star, June 29, 2009)</p>	<p>In order to cater the English syllabus, this situation is common. It is one of the reasons why most teachers and pressure groups do not favour the English syllabus.</p>
<p>I am more worried about the standard of teachers that we have in general and the training they have received before being <u>let loose</u> on our young ones.</p> <p>(The Star, May 16, 2006)</p>	<p>This is an opinion from a concerned parent, in order to convey his worries that most teachers were incapable to teach the two subjects in English.</p>
<p>Muhyiddin, as the first Deputy Prime Minister to also hold the Education portfolio at the same time, is now best placed to make a <u>total overhaul</u> of the education system.</p> <p>(The Star, July 17, 2009)</p>	<p>Total overhauling is what he did. He announced that the English syllabus is abolished. In order to improve students' achievement in the two subjects, and at the same time the new policy will uphold Bahasa Melayu and strengthen English language.</p>
<p>It is an unfortunate truth, but our</p>	<p>It is not a secret anymore that</p>

<p>education system gives birth to <u>drones</u>. <u>Human computers</u> that is able to regurgitate, with great efficiency and accuracy, everything that has been fed to them. And little else.</p> <p>(The Star, July 17, 2009)</p>	<p>Malaysian students were fed with strategies in passing their examinations, because they were expected to be excellent in examinations. Covering the syllabus is always the second agenda. The primary agenda is preparing students for the examinations. They were given samples of examination papers to go through for drilling. So they do not get much knowledge or master the subjects but can answer examination papers well.</p>
<p>For 11 years, I, too, was held captive, cold irons bound, in the claustrophobic confines of the Kurikulum Bersepadu. My dreams tortured by the spectre of Al fonso de Albuquerque. His disembodied head, muttering in Portuguese, <u>insisting, over and over again</u>, that his name is in fact pronounced: "Al-Buh-Kur-Kee".</p> <p>(NST, May 12, 2009)</p>	<p>The Kurikulum Bersepadu (Integrated Curriculum) implemented before PPSMI, introduced the subject KajianTempatan to replace the subject History. KajianTempatan is more to researching the local history.</p> <p>Alfonso was one of the settlers who came to Malaysia (at that time known as Tanah Melayu) with the Portuguese ships to trade, conquer and then spread Christianity. The pronunciation of his name became an issue because teachers at that time do not know exactly, how to pronounce it just because of the spelling was a little strange.</p>
<p>Why is it <u>shouting</u> about reverting to</p>	<p>90 percent of the Malay students learn</p>

<p>Bahasa Malaysia in national schools, where currently 60 per cent of the instruction is in the national language? Why is it <u>silent</u> on the vernacular schools, where less than 15 per cent of the instruction is in Bahasa Malaysia?</p> <p>(NST, May 12, 2009)</p>	<p>in national schools. Most of the Malay parents do not favour the English syllabus. They cannot help thinking that their children might not be able to cope with the two subjects if taught in English. On the other hand, the Chinese and Indian students who were studying in the vernacular schools would find it not a big problem. They were not affected so much because they were given the opportunity to commute in both English and their mother tongue for the subjects.</p>
<p>That they have grown up to be professionals, academician, entrepreneurs and ideologies, equally capable in multiple languages, including English, is proof that <u>geography does not define our limitations</u>.</p> <p>(NST, May 12, 2009)</p>	<p>It is true that intelligence is not effected by geographical value.</p>
<p>However, the argument that a <u>poor command</u> of the English language is likely to <u>jeopardise</u> the learners' ability to understand and apply scientific and mathematical knowledge is valid.</p> <p>(NST, May 12, 2009)</p>	<p>This view is disseminated with an apparent view that the level of English of many Malaysian students is poor. So to learn the two subjects in English would be a double trouble for them.</p>
<p>If the Ministry of Education was</p>	<p>To decide for the language for teaching</p>

<p>hoping for a resolution of the language issue in the teaching of Mathematics and Science, it would have been <u>sorely disappointed</u>.</p> <p>(NST, Dec.19, 2009)</p>	<p>mathematics and science is not an easy task. No matter what language should it be, there will be a disappointed party.</p>
<p>There are <u>obvious flaws</u> in this new policy which the ministry should address. Hopefully, the “<u>soft landing</u>” approach announced by the DPM will clear the air over the matter. However, the ministry needs to come out with the details of implementation.</p> <p>(NST, Dec.19, 2009)</p>	<p>The ministry announced that they wanted to abolish the PPSMI policy, and they promised to handle the matter with care, and would cater everyone’s need. However, they were expected to declare the matter of implementation in detail by the people.</p>
<p>“There will be a soft landing. We will make sure that no student is <u>adversely affected</u> by the change,” he said, and I took that to mean that my daughter who would have spent 10 years learning Maths and Science in English would be allowed to finish her education in the same language.</p> <p>(The Star, July 17, 2009)</p>	<p>For students and parents who were already comfortable with PPSMI would wish that they could finish their study with the syllabus. It is possibly awkward for them to learn the terms in Bahasa Melayu.</p>
<p><u>I dread to think what will happen if she is forced to study Maths and Science in Bahasa Malaysia</u> in Form Four and Form Five as her command of technical</p>	<p>This is voiced by an English literate parent, who worries his child who is already used to the English terms, will face problems comprehending the</p>

<p>Bahasa Malaysia will be average at best.</p> <p>(The Star, July 17, 2009)</p>	<p>Malay terms.</p>
<p>I am <u>more worried</u> about the standard of teachers that we have in general and the training they have received before <u>being let loose</u> on our young ones.</p> <p>(The Star, July 17, 2009)</p>	<p>In real life, teachers who went for any courses and their trainers did not absorb much input. They were just spending some time for leisure. The trainers were not ready and short of sources. They both were not well equipped with ICT knowledge and skills.</p> <p>Some teachers went through courses just to fill up the quota. Some of them were not the subject teachers. They were also lack of references. The worst of all is that they could not even read the hand out given to them, because they were not literate in English.</p>
<p>Such <u>drastic switch</u> in direction sends <u>massive aftershocks</u> through the entire education system. <u>The failures of the PPSMI experiment must be avoided at all cost.</u></p> <p>(The Star, July 17, 2009)</p>	<p>They were so concerned that the sudden changes would interrupt their children's education.</p>
<p><u>I am getting tired</u> of the banality of the debate on the teaching of Science and</p>	<p>Discussions and debates held by those who propose and object PPSMI are just</p>

<p>Maths in English because both sides are <u>giving the same old reasons</u> over and over again. Because of this, <u>no amicable solution can be reached</u> to end the controversy.</p> <p>(The Star, May 14, 2010)</p>	<p>rhetorical. They could not make any impact that could improve PPSMI implementation. At the end, some parties will be disappointed.</p>
<p>When the policy kicked in, <u>they lost the motivation to produce academic and educational material in Bahasa when they should have kept their spirits high and risen to the occasion to show what the language can do as a vehicle of knowledge.</u></p> <p>(The Star, May 14, 2010)</p>	<p>Mahathir's idea of introducing PPSMI was to give the chance to Malaysian students to absorb advanced knowledge through English language. At the same time, students will be able to master English language, and the government do not have to waste time and money to appoint translators to translate books in English and other languages. Students will be able to absorb three scopes of knowledge at the same time.</p> <p>In conclusion, Bahasa Melayu can be considered as a language for literature and culture, but not for science.</p>

It is apparent that the device to intensify an utterance may vary and can range from grammatical lexical items like modal verbs to adjectives to label the proponents and the stakeholders of PPSMI. However, phrases and sentences in full length can also be used as a device to intensify an utterance, for instance,

When the policy kicked in, they lost the motivation to produce academic and educational material in Bahasa when they should have kept their spirits high and risen to the occasion to show what the language can do as a vehicle of knowledge. (The Star, May 14, 2010)

The usage of the emotive terms in the sentences above constructed the reality about the characters, events, issues and social settings. The realities that the author wanted to convey to the audience with the chosen words relate to the conditioning of the society’s way of accepting and discussing the issues.

4.2.4 The Properties of “Should”

The modal verb ‘should’ needs to be discussed in detail as the item appears frequently in the data either to recommend or to give advice. It was also used to express obligation and as well as expectation. The data shows that the modal verb ‘should’ has been often used by the authorities, the pressure groups and the individuals in order to express their degree of intensity on certain subject that matters.

“Should”	
<i>Recommendation/ Advisability</i>	<p>Those supporting PPSMI <u>should</u> look into why they have lost for now their struggle to retain the policy.</p> <p>(The Star, May 14, 2010)</p>

<p><i>Obligation</i></p>	<p>When the policy kicked in, they lost the motivation to produce academic and educational material in Bahasa when they <u>should</u> have kept their spirits high and risen to the occasion to show what the language can do as a vehicle of knowledge.</p> <p>(The Star, May 14, 2010)</p>
<p><i>Expectation</i></p>	<p>As Malaysians, we <u>should</u> all be proficient in Bahasa Malaysia.</p> <p>(The Star, May 14, 2010)</p>

In the selected sentences above, the word “should” was used to provide stimulus to the readers’ mind and stress the importance of the matters discussed.

4.2.5 Code-switch

Code-switching is a regular practice of moving between variations of languages in different contexts which will explore and discuss approaches to

language response in the sentences. Some may suggest it as ‘poor English’ or ‘bad grammar’, especially when both languages were used in the environment, obviously that the subjects were speakers of more than one language. However, in multi-lingual polities like Malaysia code-switching is often used during communication as a strategy in order to be better understood, stress their point of view, and to enhance the listeners’ comprehension. Examples of code-switching are shown in the following table:

Table 4.3: Examples of code-switching

Sentences	Interpretation
<p>What makes certain quarters unconvinced is that <i>Bahasa rojak</i> is so prevalent among so-called Malay-language speakers in urban areas, regardless of age or status, including politicians and pop stars, what more on the many local films and TV dramas. Basic Malay words are unnecessarily replaced by English equivalents, such as going “you” and “I” conveniently to forgo a “complex” Malay pronoun system.</p> <p>(The Star, May 14, 2010)</p>	<p>Bahasa rojak is a mixture of at least two languages articulated by Malaysian speakers in their daily communications. The situation here is that Malay-language speakers, especially the urbanites do not mind mixing their mother tongue with other languages while talking, as long as the messages were transferred.</p>

<p>The so-called <i>pejuang bahasa</i> should also be equally faulted for not being sincere enough in wanting to take the national language to a higher level. I have noticed that their struggle is much fixated on our schools and colleges, to the extent of taking to the streets to voice their grievances without doing anything constructive.</p> <p>(The Star, May 14, 2010)</p>	<p>In this case, <i>Pejuang bahasa</i> meant someone or the people who stand tall and ready to serve and protect their values. They voiced out to uphold their national language. However, they were accused for not being constructive.</p>
<p>One of the reasons for the reversal is that the chasm between rural and urban schools was getting greater because <i>kampung</i> kids and teachers could not cope with English.</p> <p>(The Star, July 17, 2009)</p>	<p>The writer switched the word rural to <i>kampung</i> to indicate the lower class lifestyle in this country that underestimated their ability, knowledge, willingness, and motivation in education, due to their way of living, and the place they lived in.</p>
<p>Parents have said that their children have on many instances missed lessons over a considerable period of time because their class or form teachers were busy attending <i>kursus</i> or courses to hone their skills and knowledge. I don't understand the necessity for teachers to attend courses when the school has a shortage of staff members or when there is no arrangement made to get relief teachers. Can't such courses be held</p>	<p>The writer used the word <i>kursus</i> to stress the word courses, in order to highlight the additional factor that caused the failure of the policy.</p>

<p>during the school holidays?</p> <p>(The Star, April 4, 2010)</p>	
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A number of studies show that code-mixing is common in Malaysia. The very reality has been better explained by a quote from the data mentioned above:

What makes certain quarters unconvinced is that *Bahasa rojak* is so prevalent among so-called Malay-language speakers in urban areas, regardless of age or status, including politicians and pop stars, what more on the many local films and TV dramas (*The Star*, May 14, 2010).

4.2.6 Pronominal

The usage of the pronouns (I, we, they, me, us, my, you, our, he, she, them, and their), depends upon the writing context and purpose in the writing. The pronouns were useful to provide clear attribution for an idea or comment, and to distinguish the writer's voice from the views of others. It is also an effective way to convey the writer's passion and involvement in the topic, and to establish a connection with an audience, and sometimes useful and appropriate enough to persuade readers to the related point of view. The writer's way of sharing personal information is relevant when his experience is part of the related data. The writer

might explore his own experience in order to understand a specific phenomenon, or because the way he engaged with his research about the specific phenomena or context he aimed to explore. Often it is helpful to share anecdotes from the writer's personal experience to highlight the problem concerned with, to establish his credibility with the subject matter if he has a background in the area, or to provide an example to support a key idea, and supports the development of the main ideas.

The following are some examples of pronominals from the data:

“We are shut up in our schools and in our colleges for years, and come out in the end with little else than a brief grasp of language and some memory of the thoughts of other men.” (NST, May 12, 2009)

“For 11 years, I, too, was held captive, cold irons bound, in the claustrophobic confines of the Kurikulum Bersepadu. My dreams tortured by the spectre of Alfonso de Albuquerque. His disembodied head, muttering in Portuguese, insisting, over and over again, that his name is in fact pronounced: “Al-Buh-Kur-Kee”.” (NST, May 12, 2009)

“I remember being taught to pass exams. I remember being taught the importance of the almighty "A". I remember being taught to memorise facts. I remember being taught. I do not remember learning. I do not remember having to think. I do not remember why.” (NST, May 12, 2009)

“I also believe we should stop using the inability of "rural children" to be comfortable with English as our standard excuse for reverting to the use of Bahasa Malaysia, Mandarin or Tamil. Stop patronising them. Did not the majority of our urbanites once live in the rural areas, some even without the benefit of indoor plumbing?” (NST, May 12, 2009)

“Before we get too excited and wave the Constitution about, let us look at the issues at hand. First, the position of the national language -- which we all admit is important and must be a cornerstone of our nationhood. As Malaysians, we should all be proficient in Bahasa Malaysia. There are no two ways about it.” (NST, May 12, 2009)

“I urge the Education Ministry to go back to the “lab” and work out a solution that is more palatable to all.” (The Star, Monday May 24, 2010)

“Firstly, every linguist will tell us that the way to mastering any language is through exposure, exposure and exposure.” (The Star, Monday May 24, 2010)

“I am getting tired of the banality of the debate on the teaching of Science and Maths in English because both sides are giving the same old reasons over and over again. Because of this, no amicable solution can be reached to end the controversy. Both proponents and opponents of the policy should be blamed for following the zero-sum game between Bahasa

Malaysia and English which our society finds itself caught in.” (The Star, May 14, 2010)

“Although numerous complaints have been made, they seem to have fallen on deaf ears.” (The Star, May 14, 2010)

“But we now see a glimpse of hope in the process of reverting the PPSMI to Bahasa Malaysia.” (The Star, May 14, 2010)

“When I broke the news to my 13-year-old daughter that Science and Mathematics will again be taught in Bahasa Malaysia, her reaction was one of bemusement, not knowing whether that was good news or bad. It made no difference to her because when she was in primary school and as her teachers struggled to teach her Science in English and often mispronounced words, the class burst out into laughter.” (The Star, July 17, 2009)

“There will be a soft landing. We will make sure that no student is adversely affected by the change,” he said, and I took that to mean that my daughter who would have spent 10 years learning Maths and Science in English would be allowed to finish her education in the same language.” (The Star, July 17, 2009)

“I dread to think what will happen if she is forced to study Maths and Science in Bahasa Malaysia in Form Four and Form Five as her command of technical Bahasa Malaysia will be average at best.” (The Star, July 17, 2009)

“Personally, I have no objection to the switch because I know for a fact that our present crops of Mathematics and Science teachers are not capable to teach in English.” (The Star, July 17, 2009)

“I had predicted that this would happen when the decision was made in 2003 because we have neither the hardware nor software to carry out this bold move. It turned out the situation was really bad.” (The Star, July 17, 2009)

“Any teacher who could speak English was roped in to teach Maths and Science – never mind if he or she was bad in the two subjects.” (The Star, July 17, 2009)

“Any teacher who taught Maths and Science were forced to teach in English regardless if he or she had any grasp of the language.” (The Star, July 17, 2009)

“I am more worried about the standard of teachers that we have in general and the training they have received before being let loose on our young ones.”(The Star, July 17, 2009)

“I now urge him to go the whole nine yards and let’s get things right from the start for the sake of all.” (The Star, July 17, 2009)

“Those supporting PPSMI should look into why they have lost for now their struggle to retain the policy.” (The Star, May 14, 2010)

“Furthermore, I did some research on the Internet to find that many community service, retail or service-oriented websites catered primarily or exclusively to Malaysian users are only in English, while I bet that many Internet users, especially Malay-speaking ones, expect most local web content to be in the national language. How can we ever preach the benefits of English without giving the impression that the so-called international language is threatening the pre-eminence of Bahasa?” (The Star, May 14, 2010)

“The so-called ‘*pejuang bahasa*’ should also be equally faulted for not being sincere enough in wanting to take the national language to a higher level. I have noticed that their struggle is much fixated on our schools and colleges, to the extent of taking to the streets to voice their grievances without doing anything constructive.” (The Star, May 14, 2010)

“When the policy kicked in, they lost the motivation to produce academic and educational material in Bahasa when they should have kept their spirits high and risen to the occasion to show what the language can do as a vehicle of knowledge. It’s not about translating all those academic or scientific journals, it’s about disseminating understandable information in the national language for all of us, not just college students.” (The Star, May 14, 2010)

“The bottom line is the PPSMI debate has turned into a belligerently-fought battle which did not have to happen. I hope the battle will end on a peaceful note.”

(The Star, May 14, 2010)

“How can we ever preach the benefits of English without giving the impression that the so-called international language is threatening the pre-eminence of Bahasa?”

(The Star, May 14, 2010)

“This is what I meant by a “soft landing” as students will be given time to get used to the new policy,” he said.” (The Star, July 9, 2009)

“As a working adult, I can feel how BM has been sidelined over the years. In Kuala Lumpur, many shopping centres and other public places only provide signages and posters in English. Shopping malls in Hong Kong,

Bangkok and Dubai display signages in their respective national language and English.” (The Star, July 9, 2009)

“I don’t understand the necessity for teachers to attend courses when the school has a shortage of staff members or when there is no arrangement made to get relief teachers. Can’t such courses be held during the school holidays?” (The Star, July 9, 2009)

“We sacrificed thousands of children in our haste to change to English and now we are preparing once again the altars for sacrifice.” (The Star, July 9, 2009)

“To them, the matter is like trying to get a right-handed person to write with his left hand and then telling him to switch back to the right just when he was getting used to the change.” (The Star, July 9, 2009)

“It was a great blow to me but I knew I had already tried my best,” she said.” (The Star, July 9, 2009)

“I feel like half my time in class is spent motivating these children instead of teaching them.” (The Star, July 9, 2009)

“In order to be able to cope, I sometimes ask school prefects or class monitors to help me fill in the reports — it’s not something I’m proud of, but it leaves me time to do some actual teaching.” (The Star, July 9, 2009)

“We should not give up the chance to better equip our future generation in facing the challenges of a fast developing world in which English will certainly become the main *lingua franca* in the fields of science, technology, information and communication.” (The Star, July 2, 2009)

One of the main reasons why pronominal are used is to interpellate the reading subject into the world of the author. In the data the writers used pronouns such as: you, your, we, us, and our in order to urge the reader to be involved with the appointed matters or feel the heat of the matters raised. The following table provides examples of the use of pronominal from the dataset:

Table 4.3: Pronominals to interpellate

Sentences	Interpretation
Yes, <u>let's</u> do well in Science and Maths! Yes, let's also do well in English! (The Star, May 14, 2010)	The writer was asking the readers to join in to uphold and realise what he thought right.
Firstly, every linguist will tell <u>us</u> that the way to mastering any language is through exposure, exposure and exposure. (The Star, May 14, 2010)	This is the way the writer transfers his finding to his reader and shares it.
Both proponents and opponents of the policy	Now the writer was saying

<p>should be blamed for following the zero-sum game between Bahasa Malaysia and English which <u>our society</u> finds itself caught in.</p> <p>(The Star, May 14, 2010)</p>	<p>that the issue involves the whole society.</p>
<p>Those supporting PPSMI should look into why <u>they have lost</u> for now their struggle to retain the policy.</p> <p>(The Star, May 14, 2010)</p>	<p>They who have lost here are those who stood for the policy to be sustained. And the writer urged them to look for the reasons that made them lost the struggle.</p>
<p><u>We</u> sacrificed thousands of children in <u>our</u> haste to change to English and now <u>we</u> are preparing once again the altars for sacrifice.</p> <p>(The Star, May 14, 2010)</p>	<p>The pronouns used here were telling the readers that the reversal of the policy would greatly affect our children.</p>
<p>It's not about translating all those academic or scientific journals, it's about disseminating understandable information in the national language for all of <u>us</u>, not just college students.</p> <p>(The Star, May 14, 2010)</p>	<p>Not only students needed knowledge, but the other members of the society need it too.</p>
<p>How can <u>we</u> ever preach the benefits of English without giving the impression that the so-called international language is threatening the pre-eminence of Bahasa?</p>	<p>We, the readers were brought to realise of an issue that maybe bringing problems to our society.</p>

(The Star, May 14, 2010)	
<p>I am more worried about the standard of teachers that <u>we</u> have in general and the training they have received before being let loose on our young ones.</p> <p>(The Star, May 14, 2010)</p>	<p>Once again, the writer seriously involved his readers in what he thought to be fatal.</p>
<p>I had predicted that this would happen when the decision was made in 2003 because <u>we</u> have neither the hardware nor software to carry out this bold move.</p> <p>(The Star, July 17, 2009)</p>	<p>Our readiness to carry out any tasks was limited by our lacking of resources.</p>
<p><u>We</u> will make sure that no student is adversely affected by the change,” he said, and I took that to mean that my daughter who would have spent 10 years learning Maths and Science in English would be allowed to finish her education in the same language.</p> <p>(The Star, July 17, 2009)</p>	<p>A government representative was trying to convince the readers or parents that the government was sure that students will not be affected so much with the future changes.</p>
<p>But <u>we</u> now see a glimpse of hope in the process of reverting the PPSMI to Bahasa Malaysia.</p>	<p>The writer was assuming that his reader can also see what he saw.</p>

<p>(The Star, July 17, 2009)</p>	
<p>Before <u>we</u> get too excited and wave the Constitution about, let <u>us</u> look at the issues at hand. First, the position of the national language -- which <u>we</u> all admit is important and must be a cornerstone of our nationhood. As Malaysians, <u>we</u> should all be proficient in Bahasa Malaysia.</p> <p>(The Star, July 17, 2009)</p>	<p>The writer was reminding his reader that this matter involves all Malaysians, and their commitment was expected.</p>
<p><u>We</u> should not give up the chance to better equip <u>our</u> future generation in facing the challenges of a fast developing world in which English will certainly become the main <i>lingua franca</i> in the fields of science, technology, information and communication.</p> <p>(The Star, July 2, 2009)</p>	<p>The assumption was made by the writer to give the reason for his opinion that English is important for everyone.</p>
<p>I also believe <u>we</u> should stop using the inability of "rural children" to be comfortable with English as <u>our</u> standard excuse for reverting to the use of Bahasa Malaysia, Mandarin or Tamil. Stop patronising them. Did not the majority of <u>our</u> urbanites once live in the rural areas, some even without the benefit of indoor plumbing?</p> <p>(The Star, July 2, 2009)</p>	<p>The locals used to look down on rural dwellers and used them as excuses for any unsuccessful policy.</p>

<p><u>We</u> are shut up in <u>our</u> schools and in <u>our</u> colleges for years, and come out in the end with little else than a brief grasp of language and some memory of the thoughts of other men.</p> <p>(The Star, July 2, 2009)</p>	<p>The same scenario was faced by students in almost any schools in Malaysia.</p>
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The involvement from the audience was expected because the matters raised were vital to those, especially the ones who are related to education in the country. The writers tried to bring their audience as close as possible to the matter and comprehend the issue raised.

4.2.7 Repetition

The use of repeating certain words or phrases in a text may increase the impact and ensures the effectiveness of an argument in the speech or article. This may also promote clarity and encourages the acceptance of appointed ideas, adding rising momentum, and emphasis. Thus, it may establish the ideas firmly in the audiences' minds. Table 4.4 describes the examples of repetition in the dataset.

Table 4.4 Examples of Repetition

Sentences	Interpretation
<p>Yes, <u>let's do well in Science and Maths!</u> Yes, <u>let's also do well in English!</u> And no, <u>we don't want to see the decline in the standard of Bahasa Malaysia in schools.</u></p> <p>(The Star, May 14, 2010)</p>	<p>It is the inspiration of the Ministry of Education, the government, teachers, and parents to see the students improve their achievement in mathematics, science and English. At the same time the national language is not neglected.</p>
<p>Firstly, every linguist will tell us that the way to mastering any language is through <u>exposure, exposure and exposure.</u></p> <p>(The Star, May 14, 2010)</p>	<p>It was proven that one way of teaching and learning languages effectively, is by giving the chances for students to be exposed, to the environment, culture, and the people who originally use the language.</p>
<p>I am getting tired of the banality of the debate on the teaching of Science and Maths in English because both sides are giving the same old reasons <u>over and over again.</u></p> <p>(The Star, May 14, 2010)</p>	<p>The same issue was debated repeatedly but there was no sign of any solution.</p>

4.3 Stance analysis

The discussion of a topic in institutional forms carries more weight than they are debated in a non-formal way. When critical views are expressed in the offices, coffee shops, cafeteria, lounges, and other places where people gather, their talks and ideas would merely dissolve in the thin air. Nobody will do anything about it, no action taken or can be taken. However, if they voiced out their stands through proper channels, especially through the media, they might get a little consideration from the authorities if the subjects were seriously alarming, but there were no guarantees that changes or actions will take place.

The situations differ when some authorities, having the power to command or control made their stands, voiced their thoughts and ideas. For instance, when the former Prime Minister, Mahathir Mohamad, who still retains prestige in the socio-political discourse of Malaysia, says something, it might be discussed in the cabinet or the parliamentary assemblies. The voice of Mahathir Mohamad has been heard quite often and in eloquence covered by the media on the issue of PPSMI. The ideas propounded by the former PM lauded the globalization argument against the ideological stance of mother tongue argument.

The discussions on PPSMI were seen a little 'unfair'. This is so because the discussions were not 'diverse' enough. The majority of the discussions were attended by solely the political parties, often without representing the views of the opposition. The experts involved in the discussions also represented views close to the ruling elites, thus making their views and opinions rather 'reserved.' One of

the stances found was: partisan politics and racial attitudes were still thick and overrode the education aspects.

The scientific and educational debate on PPSMI by the authorities was well covered in the newspapers. They were intended to be healthy discussions. However, it was a major dilemma because a fair solution did not take place.

As the data shows that numerous voices claimed that PPSMI was ‘proposed in haste so it was reversed’, reveals an act of ‘negligence’ in the matters that involve the citizens of the country. It is often debated that whether those politicians involved in the discussion were still ‘stuck’ in terms of ‘premature’ ethnic politics or perhaps in the vote politics, that is, for them to win the voters’ heart was the major priority, rather than solving the problems scientifically. NGOs such as PAGE in their columns claimed that it was necessary to conduct ‘fair’ conferences and come up with ‘neutral’ decisions before abolishing the policy. At the same time, individuals like Raja Nazrin Shah (*New Straits Times*, 6 July, 2010) proposed that the country should have dropped any whatsoever political interests’ aside and try to be fair in the matter of solving PPSMI’s failure.

The data shows that there were a number of reports published in order to support or denigrate the PPSMI policy. The reasons why they took such stances were as follows:

a) Nationalistic fervour: The claim was, the status of Bahasa Malaysia is confirmed in the Constitution; this is the national language and must be used as a medium of instruction.

b) Utilitarian nationalism: The claim is the use of English language is not going to undermine the spirit of nationhood and Malaysian cultural unity

c) Achievement of the students: The claim is the use of English was misleading and it contributed in the fading of the students' achievement.

d) Globalization argument: The claim is that Bahasa Malaysia is not advancing and not parallel with the development and had to borrow too many words from other languages.

e) Pedagogical: The claim is that the government did not conduct adequate research before running the new policies and that is the reason why it failed.

4.4 Conclusion

This chapter discussed the data in relation to the research questions posed in the study. The researcher used the framework of Wodak's discourse-historical method to discuss the contents of the newspaper texts, the linguistic means in the articulation of the contents and finally showed the stances found. Like any other national policies PPSMI policy was also debated in vigorous terms in the country,

however, the media portrayal of the debates followed certain constraints which might be rooted in the political economy of the media. As it is widely discussed in discourse analytical works that discourse maintains a 'dialectical' relation with the society (Chouliaraki and Fairclough, 1999) in which it is debated, it has been invariably revealed in the articulation of PPSMI discourse. The researcher concludes the articulation of the PPSMI debates in the next chapter.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

5.1 Introduction

This chapter lists a summary of the findings based on the research questions posed and discussed in the previous chapter. The research questions posed in this study were: (1) How do the opinion editorials, letters to the editors and the staff reports in the Malaysian English newspapers (i.e., the *Star* and the *New Straits Times*) re-state (i.e., through direct quote and paraphrase) the arguments produced by individual authorities and pressure groups on the issue of PPSMI in order to construct a stance on the issue? (2) What are the rhetorical devices (e.g., metaphors) used by the writers of opinion editorials and staff reporters to represent the views by individual authorities and pressure groups to establish a stance on the issue? Based on the discussion on the findings from the research questions, the researcher suggests some conclusions and recommendations for future research within the domain of medium of instruction studies in general and PPSMI in particular.

5.2 Summary of the Findings

PPSMI policy was expected to prepare students to become more competitive and at par with students from other countries in the higher learning institutes. When the PPSMI policy was introduced, MOE (Ministry of Education) did not intend to negate the ability of Malay Language as the medium of instruction in mastering Science and Mathematics. While the use of Malay language as the medium of instruction has produced many scientists and scholars and also has managed to unite people of different races in the country, as intended by the government, what made a group of people unite against the use of it in the schools as a medium of instruction.

To illustrate, this group of people who are against the use of Malay in schools stood tall and united against the implementation of PPSMI because Gapena argued that it was allocated in the Federal Constitution (2006) that in Article 152 (1) that the national language is Malay and provided by law, that no one can be prohibited and restricted to use (other than for “official purposes”) or from teaching or learning, any other language. It was also stated in Article 152 (6) that language education as the main subjects in the national curriculum and it is under the management of the Ministry of Education for official education

purposes. Based on the requirements of 152 (1) & (6) of the Federal Constitution and Section 17 (1) of Act 550 (Act 1996), it is mandatory for all subjects taught in all schools to use the Malay language.

In order to express their protest, Gapena held special programs for their protest against the PPSMI through poetry readings and speeches by leaders and language activists (NST, 2009), called the "Ratap Ratib Bahasa (Language Weeping Chants)".

An academic study by a group of scholars of seven public universities found that PPSMI was the cause of "generation extinction" due to the increased number of students failing in Mathematics and Science subjects at all levels.

Ungku Aziz claimed that the problem in the education system occurred due to too many compromises made by political leaders. When there were too many compromises, they cannot think rationally. He argued, the government introduced the PPSMI six years ago as "an act of madness" for mathematics used the "language of symbols" in figures, numbers and used certain formulas. He said that the real problem here was that the time allocated for language learning was not enough.

The counter argument revealed through the analysis of the contents in the data that: why is there an issue of the marginalisation of the mother tongue as Malay language is being used in most of the spheres of life including the language of administration in the schools? At the same time, how are Malaysian students going to cope with the contents of technology and science as they are written mostly in English.

The practice of PPSMI has been found to be different than what has been debated in abstract pedagogical, utilitarian and theoretical terms. The ‘reality’ is, as the data from the two newspapers indicated that despite the presence of the PPSMI policy, teachers of Science and Mathematics taught their students by using a mixture of English and Malay language. The reason provided was that the teachers wanted to help their students because they were “poor” in English; hence, it was hard for them to understand what was being taught.

The disseminated representation of the PPSMI phenomenon in the newspapers underscored the views that most of the rural students found it difficult to understand science and mathematics in English because they were weak in English. In rural settings the languages used in all spheres of life are vernacular languages, i.e., mother tongue, instead of English. While there was an attempt by

the newspapers to establish the view that the students faced problem in learning the subjects in English, it had been left unexplained, whether it was a problem faced solely by the Malays or the other races as well. If it were a mother tongue issue, the reversal of the policy and its discussion should have included the change of the medium of instruction into respective languages of the major ethnic communities in the country. Instead, it appears that the reversal was made in favour of the Malays as Bahasa Malaysia is their mother tongue, and also it happened to be the national language of the country. So the argument that when teachers explain the concepts, information and knowledge of Science and Mathematics in Malay, it is easy for everyone (i.e., members of all the races) to understand them, is hardly logical. If we accept the fact that most of the teachers in the schools are ethnic Malays, then the argument that the teaching in the Malay language is suitable for average teachers in the school can also be accepted. This is because these teachers might find it more comfortable to explain and describe the lessons in the Malay language, rather than in English; hence, more effective teaching-learning atmosphere would have ensued. Isahak's (2008) study shows that the negative impact of PPSMI policy was mainly felt among the Malay students in the national primary schools.

When the PPSMI policy was launched in 2003 under the patronage of Mahathir Mohamad, the former prime minister stressed that English language should be the medium of teaching and learning for Science and Mathematics because both fields were mostly written or published in English. At the same time he hoped that it would help to improve students' mastery of the English language. These were the views which have been disseminated through the media and also Mahathir Mohamad's personal blog at <http://chedet.co.cc/chedetblog/>. This is also the argument articulated by PAGE, the organisation whose views have been reported in the data.

According to PAGE, English is the lingua franca of the world of science and mathematics. Although Malay language is considered the lingua franca in South East Asia, it does not have standard terminologies. For instance, Bahasa *Malaysia* and *Bahasa Indonesia* have different varieties of *Bahasa Melayu*. In addition, even in these countries, the majority of scientists and mathematicians are more likely to use English when publishing scholarly materials.

PAGE was also represented to argue that through PPSMI, students can learn the contents of Science and Mathematics while learning the English language. PPSMI allows the students to learn "scientific English terms" while

providing indirect exposure to the “conversational English.” Later, students who have been through PPSMI will be more familiar with Science and Mathematics terms, which are mostly English.

Contrastingly, the counter argument, also represented in the data, was: whether the local values can be allowed to be ‘eroded’ when it had been confirmed in the constitution through the selection of national language. Hence, rightfully, Malay should be the medium of instruction for teaching science and mathematics. The nationalist arguments have been represented by NGOs such as PEMBINA and GAPENA. A less strong nationalist argument was, the use of English language turned off the interest in the students to study Science and Mathematics. Parents and the community should have played the role in encouraging the interest of students in certain subjects. If the environment of the students did not show that science and mathematics were important in their lives, their interest would have reduced automatically.

Another nationalist argument articulated by GMP was: if the Malay language loses its prestige the students would lose respect for the language. However, according to the Ministry of Education, *Bahasa Malaysia* has still the highest prestige in the schools, as most subjects were taught in *Bahasa*. The

Ministry's announcement (2006) stated that only 40% of the lessons were conducted in English (including the teaching of English itself); while 60% of the lessons were conducted in *Bahasa Malaysia*. Just like in primary schools, all activities in schools and official communication were conducted in *Bahasa Malaysia*. Thus, GMP's worry on the degrading of *Bahasa Malaysia*'s dignity is rather weak.

The fear that the use of English might help "erode local identity" is a fear articulated in ethno-nationalist terms. Most Malaysians or rather the Malays who align with the cause of GAPENA and GMP worried that the local identity will be neglected and lastly forgotten when their descendants were westernised by the English language and the culture and the values that comes with it. Invariably, the national language is *Bahasa Melayu*, and without any reasonable doubts, the identity that they are referring to is Malay identity. GAPENA and GMP comprised mostly of the Malays who are concerned with the matter. These NGOs invariably articulated the concerns raised by political parties like PAS and PKR for the mother-tongue-cum-national language argument. While PAS is a Malay Muslim political party, PKR is a partially multi-ethnic political party with more Malay members.

The data shows that political parties such as Gerakan, MCA and DAP articulated the PPSMI issue in a similar way as the Malay nationalists did. MCA and DAP aligned with Chinese organisations, such as Dong Jiao Zhong. It appears that their main goal was to preserve Chinese culture, and their claim was to teach the primary education in their mother tongue (Mandarin), while the secondary in English. In the case of Dong Jiao Zhong, they have been involved in the education and socio-cultural controversies of this country since its inception, that is, since the early 1950's. The Government has expressed it openly that Dong Jiao Zhong 'aggravated' political tensions in the country many a times by supporting the opposition, especially, DAP. To put it succinctly, this is the very nature of the plurality of struggles as defined by Laclau and Mauffe (1985): in this case, a Chinese rights-based organisation joins a platform populated by political parties in order to advance a national debate towards a common direction.

5.3 Conclusions

In the matter of the expertise of the teachers, it is hardly possible to use the lack of teachers' competency in conveying the science and mathematics subjects in English as an argument for repealing the policy. The attempt to repeal the policy can be interpreted as a manifestation of parochial ethno-nationalist sentiments. Nevertheless, the media portrayal of the phenomenon invariably directs one's attention to the fact that PPSMI policy in Malaysia or medium of instruction in general are the phenomena which not only involve pedagogy but also touch on issues of national identity and global acceptance of the contemporary capitalist nation-states.

Taking a parochial ethno-nationalist stance, perhaps, *Bahasa Malaysia* could have been the language of science and technology, if and only, the technology belonged to the Malaysians. When Malaysians have understood and mastered a technology, and internationally recognized for their leading technology, the national language of the country could be selected as a prestige language to disseminate such knowledge. It is only then the other nation would have needed to learn *Bahasa Malaysia* in order to learn and master the technology that Malaysians produce. But till the day comes, as PAGE and Mahathir

Mohamad often argued, Malaysians will have to master the technologies in English, which is currently the lingua franca.

Since Mahathir Mohamad launched PPSMI, many Malaysians alleged that Mahathir was not interested in the issues of Malay nationalism as he preferred English (Shaharir Mohd Zain 2009). He was accused of distorted the meaning of ‘race’ because he did not appreciate the popular Malay slogan that says: *Bahasa jiwa bangsa* (tr. language is the soul of the nation). Mahathir’s so-called Indian origin has only been referred to as a reason why he became more concerned with the content rather than the language in which the content was taught (Shaharir Mohd Zain 2009). In his *Che Det* blog Mahathir had a lengthy conversation with Shaharir Mohd Zain on the issue of PPSMI that relates to Mahathir’s (non)allegiance to Malay nationalism as opposed to pragmatic choice of medium of instruction.

To acquire the best advantage of PPSMI policy as it was highlighted by Raja Nazrin Shah, the heir of Sultan of Perak; and Hishamuddin Hussain the former education minister of Malaysia, it was necessary to see the ‘wrongs’ in the implementation of the policy. On the other hand, Muhyideen Yassin, the current education minister who reversed the PPSMI policy into Malay, has been

represented by the media to proclaim that the PPSMI policy went against the ‘continuity’ in education policy discourse in Malaysia since Razak Report (see Section 2.7.2) in 1956 and the subsequent national education policies constructed after the independence in 1957. The education minister also referred to people as a signifier, that is, the policy should be scrapped in the name of students, rural people and the *rakyat* (tr. Citizens) in general. The minister referred to the results of 2007 UPSR examinations and provided statistics to show how deep the results sank in negative directions due to the medium of instruction policy. He was also of the opinion that most teachers in rural schools use Malay despite the directive issued by the Ministry (The Star 21 July 2009, Malaysia-Insider 21 July 2009).

5.4 Recommendations

The knowledge of Science and Mathematics is getting too advanced each day indeed. It is perhaps then necessary for the scientists in Malaysia to understand in contemporary terms which they cannot master on their own. Having said so, it is necessary to explore the pedagogical and nationalist implications of the medium of instruction in contemporary light. It is widely known that

knowledge is traded by developed countries whose products we buy and caused us continue to be “poor” in knowledge. More pertinent questions to be asked is: for how long should we become “purchasers” and “followers”? These were the questions which we must answer for the survival of our children.

5.4.1 Independent and Self-Access Learning

It is often argued that the learning of Science and Mathematics at this age needs to be done by students independently. For formal learning, such as attending classes, lectures and tutorials are no longer sufficient. This is because currently, the world is having a spill over of knowledge such that the time and space are no longer in favour of teachers and lecturers for their subject knowledge in general (and supplemented by limited knowledge of teachers and lecturers themselves as discussed above). This self-study requires PPSMI to be continued.

The reality is that the scientific and math reference books were far less written by local academics. In fact, the numbers of publications in vernacular languages are too little, and are mostly written in English. In the manners of reading, we should select reading materials that have been established. These

books were usually written by the renowned professors in the field of the relevant areas.

There will be a move to translate these books. If that should happen, we ought to consider that the translation process would cause the loss of meaning of the original idea and genuine expression. Besides, translation often adds to confusion because the word translated in sentences itself is not used daily. We need to insert here that language of Mathematics and Science is not necessarily about the technical contents of the subjects only, but it also includes the description of the contents. For example, the word ‘integrasi’ is used to replace the word ‘integration’ is not even once we use in everyday affairs. What is the need for translation if ‘trivial solution’ is replaced by the ‘penyelesaian trivial’? What is the Malay word for trivial? It is also testament to the fact that Science and Mathematics at this time were designed to be “mentioned anywhere” in English because the grammar for such disciplines were coined by the creators themselves. Furthermore, we need to realize that to understand some knowledge through reading, is not enough to just read a book. We have to read many books “simultaneously” and make comparisons on the facts in the books. This is because, only by identifying the similarities and differences between the facts and

formulas, then we can get a real understanding of the subject we are studying. So, it is a fact that we need to translate dozens of books in the same genre and it will take a long time. Thus, in the context of the above discussion, we may need to support PPSMI.

5.4.2. Higher Education

The higher education institutions in Malaysia are undergoing the process of internationalisation. Among the processes involved were attracting more international students to come and study in this country. In achieving this objective, it is the need for faculties to provide lectures and notes in English. There will be a question “why do we not charge foreign students to learn the Malay language before starting their studies in our country?” To this question, it can be stated that our universities are not quite strong enough and we were renowned for insisting on these matters. Indirectly, this response also is another testament to how much of our own knowledge we need to produce before we insist on matters of sentiment and romance and the right to use our own language of instruction and so forth.

There may be denials, saying that the arguments only involve a high level study and is only relevant for research and graduate studies or PhD levels in universities. To extend the argument and to include the scenario of a more general level, and industry professionals, we should be aware that in developed countries, people never stop learning. An engineer in developed countries will continue to read journal papers, just to make sure he does not miss the tide of change. In addition, the learning industry is ongoing in conferences, conventions, seminars and round tables. And would not these events, which are attended by individuals and international organisations, take place in the English language? And what are the inputs that can be digested and effectiveness that can be obtained by our professional engineers and if the debates that take place but they could not follow them merely because they lack the understanding of technical matters that have been submitted in English.

5.4.3 Future Research

Based on above discussion it is necessary that further research should be conducted in the understanding of the needs for mother-tongue education which

confirms not only the primacy of vernacular language but also some nationalist agenda currently formed in the country. While media portrayal of the phenomenon of medium of instruction policy is studied attention should be given towards understanding the political economy of news media and especially, to what extent the issue of a pedagogical concern like PPSMI is also rooted in the matters of nationhood and ethnic politics.