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**The representation of Malaysia in the Philippines media in the Lahad Datu Incident**

Field of Study: **Critical Discourse Analysis**

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## ABSTRACT

This study attempts to investigate how ‘Malaysia’ is constructed in the incident of ‘The Standoff at Lahad Datu’ through the media of an online newspaper in the Philippines, i.e. ‘Inquirer.net’. The Lahad Datu incident, which happened on 11<sup>th</sup> February 2013, involves a territorial dispute between the armies of the Sultanate of Sulu, from the Philippines, and Malaysia. A group that calls themselves the ‘Royal Security Forces of the Sultanate of Sulu and North Borneo’, led by Jamalul Kiram III declared their territorial claim on eastern Sabah (formerly known as North Borneo) and cost the lives of a few men on the battle field. A number of controversial issues arose after the incident, such as arguing the cause of the shootout, the failure of both governments to report the truth via the media, and allegations of human rights abuses. Even the issue of the Philippines’s claim over North Borneo (now Sabah) that started way back at 1962 was argued as one of the causes that sparked off the incident.

In order to achieve the aims of this study, 23 online news articles featured on ‘Inquirer.net’ about the ‘Lahad Datu Standoff’ are analyzed using Wodak’s Discourse-Historical Approach (2009) (henceforth DHA) and van Leuween’s socio-semantic approach (2008) in Critical Discourse Analysis (henceforth CDA). By employing both DHA and socio-semantic approach simultaneously, this study intends to discover the representation of Malaysia through referential and predication strategies, and investigate how it is realized linguistically by uncovering possible underlying prejudices and ideologies. The findings reveal that Malaysia is indeed represented negatively in the media selected for this study through referential and predication strategies (Wodak, 2009), and the representation of social actors (van Leuween, 2008). Results also reveal that Malaysia is represented as the negative-other by referring it to power, religion and

opposition parties, and further predicated as violent, lacking humanitarianism and being deceiving.

## ABSTRAK

Laporan penyelidikan ini bertujuan untuk menganalisa pembentukan imej Malaysia dalam krisis pencerobohan Lahad Datu oleh media suratkhbar internet. ‘Inquirer.net’ di Filipina. Pencerobohan Lahad Datu ini telah berlaku pada 11 Februari 2013. Insiden ini dingaitkan kepada insiden diplomatic yang berlaku di antara sebuah kumpulan yang menggelarkan diri mereka sebagai “Angkatan Keselamatan Diraja Kesultanan Sulu dan Borneo Utara”, yang diketuai oleh Jamalul Kiram III, dari Filipina dan Kerajaan Malaysia. Jamalul Kiram menyatakan bahawa tujuan pencerobohan ini adalah untuk menuntut kembali wilayah mereka di bahagian timur Sabah (bekas Borneo Utara) yang masih tidak dapat diselesaikan. Pertempuran di antara kedua-dua pihak ini telah mengakibatkan pengorbanan nyawa beberapa pengikut Kiram and anggota askar Malaysia. Kejadian ini sejurusnya dikaitkan dengan isu-isu kontroversi seperti tujuan sebenar pertempuran itu, kegagalan media melaporkan kebenaran insiden ini, serta isu pencerobohan hak asasi kemanusiaan terhadap mangsa-mangsa kejadian ini. Punca pencerobohan ini juga dikaitkan dengan penuntutan Filipina terhadap bekas Borneo Utara yang berlaku pada tahun 1962.

Untuk merealisasikan matlamat pengajian ini, 23 artikel suratkhbar versi online daripada “Inquirer.net” telah dipilih sebagai data analisis. Dengan menggunakan Pendekatan Bahasa-Sejarah oleh Wodak (2009) dan Sosio-semantik oleh van Leuween (2009) dalam bidang Analisis Wacana Kritikal, laporan penyelidikan ini bertujuan untuk menyelidik pembentukan imej Malaysia melalui strategi-strategi rujukan and prediksi, serta cara-cara strategi-strategi ini dihasilkan secara linguistik. Penemuan hasil daripada analisis ini menunjukkan bahawa ‘Inquirer.net’ telah menonjolkan negatif-yang lain bagi pihak Malaysia dengan menggunakan strategi –strategi yang telah dinyatakan di atas.

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# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.0 Introduction

Using Critical Discourse Analysis, this study attempts to investigate how 'Malaysia' is constructed in the incident of 'The Standoff at Lahad Datu' through the media of online newspaper in the Philippines, namely 'Inquirer.net'. The Lahad Datu incident involves a territorial dispute between the armies of the Sultanate of Sulu, from the Philippines and Malaysia. On 11<sup>th</sup> February 2013, 'The 2013 Lahad Datu Standoff' between the army of the Sultanate of Sulu and the Malaysian forces was brought to the attention of the world, especially in the said countries. Led by Jamalul Kiram III, a group that calls themselves the 'Royal Security Forces of the Sultanate of Sulu and North Borneo', declared their territorial claim on eastern Sabah, which was formerly known as North Borneo. Eventually, this incident cost the lives of a few men on the battle field and to be specific, on 1<sup>st</sup> March 2013, a skirmish between the two parties cost the lives of 10 men from the Royal Security Forces and 2 commandos from the Malaysian forces. A lot of controversial issues arose due to this battle; arguing about which side started the shootout, the failure of both governments to report the entire truth via the media, and allegations of human rights abuse. Even though this incident does not directly involve the clash of both countries, it indirectly affects their images as well as the rapport between the two states.

This study will look into 23 selected online news articles featured on 'Inquirer.net', an online database for the print newspaper 'The Philippines Inquirer', reporting on the 'Lahad Datu Standoff'. Analyses on the said news articles will be done using the Discourse - Historical Approach (henceforth DHA) in Critical Discourse

Analysis (henceforth CDA) (Wodak, 2009). Another framework employed to further support the objective of this study is the van Leeuwen's socio-semantic approach (2008), which is set to uncover and explore the ways social actors are represented in the collected data. The analysis and discussion of this study will be presented according to the findings found based on the DHA theoretical framework as the main reference, and supported simultaneously with any findings found according to the socio-semantic framework.

By employing both the DHA and socio-semantic approach frameworks, this study intends to discover the representation of Malaysia and investigate how it is realized linguistically by uncovering possible underlying prejudices and ideologies through media coverage in written discourse.

## **1.1 Rationale of The Study**

CDA is common among linguistics scholars, and so is analyzing newspaper articles by employing CDA. However, the main rationale of this study related to the issue of the Lahad Datu Standoff that has raised the interests of many people. From the perspective of a follower of the Lahad Datu Standoff's news and as a linguistics student, it is in my interest as a student and as a Malaysian, to conduct a linguistic analysis of this current issue.

The Lahad Datu Standoff has captured a lot of attention and eventually, received a lot of criticisms from the world, especially through the medium of social media, which allows adverse or derogatory comments from the public against the incompetence of Malaysia in handling the incident. This incident is a sensitive issue because it involves two neighbouring countries, the Philippines and Malaysia which have strong social-political ties. As mentioned in Section 1.0, even though this incident was triggered by the Sultan of Sulu, Jamalul Kiram III, it indirectly relates the government of Philippines

because the group (who called themselves ‘Royal Security Forces of the Sultanate of Sulu’) which started the standoff is based in the Philippines. Undeniably, the root of this standoff is caused by long-historic ties between the two countries (see Section 2. 3).

The motivation to conduct this analysis stemmed from the interest of investigating the stand of ‘Inquirer.net’, the online news of the print media or newspaper of ‘The Philippines Inquirer’, one of the most read and influential newspapers in the Philippines, with 2.7 million nationwide readers daily that tops readership surveys. (“About us”, n.d.). It would be intriguing to conduct such an inquisition on the stand of an opposite party (the Philippines) and how it affects the views of readers by representing the social actor linguistically.

## **1.2 Background**

The ‘Lahad Datu Standoff’ is believed to have taken place as a result of many years of historical events which go all the way back to 1878 (see Section 2.3). In the said year, there was a contract signed between the Sulatan of Sulu and the British North Borneo Company where Sabah (then North Borneo) was leased to the Europeans in a rolling contract with a payment of 5,000 Malayan dollars per year. However, both parties interpreted the deal differently in which the Sultan of Sulu defines the deal as a lease, while The British North Borneo Company defines it as a permanent transfer of the territory (Campbell, 2013). When the formation of the Malaysian Federation occurred in 1963, which eventually lead to the departure of the British from Malaysia, the contract was nullified because the residents of North Borneo (now Sabah) decided and voted to join the Federation of Malaysia (Aning, 2009). However, Malaysia continues to make the payment via the Malaysian Embassy in the Philippines to honor

the agreement. A cheque is issued to the legal counsel of Jamalul Ahlam's descendants as an annual 'cession' payment by the Malaysian government, in which the Jamalul Ahlam's descendants still consider this payment as 'rent' ("What went before", 2013). Two other events that followed after the agreement signed on 1878 are the Madrid Protocol of 1885 and the Peace deal between the government of Philippines and Moro Islamic Liberation in 2012. The details of the incidents mentioned will be discussed further in Section 2.3.

Over the years, the Philippines has maintained its dormant claim over Sabah even though the United Nations has declared Sabah a part of Malaysia. Despite the numerous claims made by the Philippines, Malaysia has consistently rejected them and their calls to resolve the matter of Sabah. Nonetheless, recently, the government of the Philippines has decided to put this claim to be the least of their interest to establish a better relationship with Malaysia in the economy and security sectors (Aning, 2009). With the controversial historical events since 1878 and the recent decision of the Philippines to put this matter on hold to strengthen their relationship with Malaysia, it has caused the dissatisfaction of the Sultan of Sulu's descendants and hence, resulted in an uproar over the incident.

The relationship between the government of the Philippines and the Sultan of Sulu was challenged when the government signed the framework of a peace deal with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (Cruz, 2013). This incident initiated the heirs of the Sultan of Sulu to take matters into their own hands, and they decided to claim the parts of east Malaysia for themselves. This matter has caused a somewhat ambivalent relationship between the government of the Philippines and Sultan of Sulu.

On February 2013, a group of 1000 men from the royal army led by Raja Mudah, Agbimuddin Kiram (the brother of the Sultan of Sulu Jamalul Kiram III) headed to

Tunduaos in Lahad Datu, Sabah from their base at Simunal Island in Tawi to claim what they believe to belong to them. They believe that their act is not an act of intrusion, but instead, a journey back home (Cruz, 2013).

However, the supposed peace deal turned into a tragedy when a skirmish between the royal army of the Sultanate of Sulu and Malaysian forces caused the death of 10 members of the Royal Army of the Sultanate of Sulu and 2 Malaysian commandos (Carcamo, 2013).

### **1.3 Objective**

This study attempts to investigate the discursive construction of Malaysia in the media of the Philippines, namely in an online newspaper. Through the official website of 'The Philippine Daily Inquirer', 'Inquirer.net', this study sets to investigate the possible discursive strategies to construct the negative-other representation of 'Malaysia' in the Lahad Datu Standoff incident and the probable reasons hidden within the media coverage of this incident.

#### **1.4 Research questions**

In order to achieve the objective of this study, below is the list of research questions to be answered by the end of this research:

- 1) What are the discourse structures and strategies used by ‘Inquirer.net’ to discursively construct Malaysia as a social actor?
  - i) How is ‘Malaysia’ named and referred to linguistically?
  - ii) What traits, characteristics, qualities and features are attributed to ‘Malaysia’?
- 2) What do such structures and strategies tell about the underlying prejudices and ideologies regarding ‘Malaysia’?

#### **1.5 Significance of Study**

By understanding hidden elements in news and media, we can decode events which are usually reported to the masses with a bias that benefits certain groups. If the patterns used by particular newspapers or media can be found, in the context of their countries, we can start to understand the structure of a society (Wodak & Meyer, 2009, p. 89.) For example, if a certain news agency, broadcasts news from a more leftist point of view, what does that mean and how would it benefit them? These are some of the questions this study seeks to answer so that we can better understand media discourse and media tactics.

## **1.6 Scope and Limitations**

The first limitation of the study is the scope of analysis. The analysis of this study only focuses on referential and predication strategies. Therefore, the results of this study only reveal the construction of ‘Malaysia’ as a social actor through referencing and how it is given certain attributions according to the references given.

Secondly, only 23 news articles are selected from the same website, which is the ‘Inquirer.net’ to represent the media in the Philippines in this study. Hence, the news articles selected may not precisely present a comprehensive construction of ‘Malaysia’ as other sources of media are not being taken into account.

## **1.7 Summary**

This chapter has introduced the main topic of this study, “The Lahad Datu Standoff”, followed by the rationale of this study, background of the incident, objective, research questions, significance, and scope and limitations of this study. The next chapter will discuss the relevant literature of this study.



## CHAPTER 2

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 2.0 Introduction

The main theoretical areas which inform this study are critical discourse analysis, media and the historical discourse of the Philippines' claim over Sabah. This chapter reviews and discusses the related literature in these areas; however the literature review will only focus on those that are directly relevant to the current study.

#### 2.1 Theoretical Framework - Critical Discourse Analysis

Van Dijk (2001) asserts that CDA is a type of approach or research tool which examines the way social inequality, dominance of power and injustice are executed, reproduced and resisted in text and talk or discourse. With such, CDA does not only conduct an academic investigation of the interlinked and hidden hegemonic ideology in discourse, but also to raise awareness of discriminatory ideologies and opaque ways in which power is legitimated in discourse (p. 352). To realize the objectives in CDA, analysts must be receptive in their position and that includes wanting to understand, being exposed and resisting social inequality.

According to Fairclough and Wodak (1997), below is a summary of the main tenets of CDA:

1. CDA addresses social problems
2. Power relations are discursive
3. Discourse constitutes society and culture

4. Discourse does ideological work
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.

Fairclough and Wodak (1997) also assert that discourse is referred as a large abstract collective mentality or in other words, ideology which is 'socially constitutive and conditioned'. Commonly, the organizations in power will try to position the ideologies to appear 'neutral' holding on to assumptions that are free from any challenges from the society. These ideologies are postulated closer to the mind and practice of the society to be what these organizations want them to be. (Wodak & Meyer, 2009, p. 8).

With the diverse theoretical framework and method of analysis in CDA, all of them have the same aim, which is to question the reliability of the discourse when it is reproduced for the use of social dominance, no matter in what forms they are generated to the social dominance, either as part of conversation, news reports or other genres and contexts. CDA sees language as a system of interactional stimulated signs that helps human beings to construct and construe reality.

### **2.1.1 Discourse Historical Approach (DHA)**

Critique, power and ideology are the three concepts which are essential in CDA, including the DHA. (Wodak & Meyer, 2009). ‘Critique’ means taking a stance by distancing from the data, analyzing the data in the social context, clarifying the political positioning of social actors and constant reflection while conducting analysis. ‘Power’ relates to an asymmetric relationship which differentiates social actors among others in the same context or in other words, to position the social actors in a higher position. There are many ways power is implemented and in this study, power is implemented as actional power, which means utilizing physical force and violence as well as attachment to authority (Reisigl & Wodak, 2005, p.88). Evidently, ‘power’ can be legitimized or delegitimized in a discourse as it is an ideal avenue to manifest ideology and hegemony. ‘Ideology’ denotes bigotry perspective towards an issue which is accepted or shared by a group of members. What is more critical is by utilizing ideology, it can transfer asymmetrical power relations through discourse and hence, influence how the society posits certain issues, shape the mind of the society and eventually, control the outcome of certain issues (Wodak & Meyer 2009).

To simplify the concept of DHA, it aims to unite the investigation of the subject or matter with the analyses of the investigators with transparency and justified theories on the reasons why certain interpretations and readings of the discursive events are more valid than others.

DHA is a three-dimensional analysis, dimensions which are inter-related and require cross-referencing. These components of the analysis include identifying the specific contents or topics of a specific discourse, investigating the discursive strategies embedded and examining the linguistic means and realizations in the similar discourse

or content. (Wodak & Meyer, 2009, p. 93). Hence, DHA has summarized 5 strategies to realize the aforementioned analysis and they are further elaborated in Table 2.1.

**Table 2.1 Types of Discursive Strategies in DHA**

No.	Strategy	Objectives	Devices
1.	Referential/ Nomination	Discursive construction of social actors, objects/ phenomena/ events and processes/action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Membership categorization devices, deictics, anthroponyms etc.</li> <li>• Tropes such as metaphors, metonymies and synecdoches (<i>pars pro toto, totum pro parte</i>)</li> <li>• verbs and nouns used to denote processes and actions</li> </ul>
2.	Predication	Discursive qualification of social actors, objects, phenomena, events/processes and actions (more or less positively or negatively)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stereotypical, evaluative attributions of negative or positive traits</li> <li>• explicit predicates or predicative nouns/adjectives/ pronouns</li> <li>• collocations</li> <li>• explicit comparisons, similes, metaphors and other rhetorical figures.</li> </ul>
3.	Argumentation	Justification and questioning of claims of truth and normative rightness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Topoi (formal or more content-related)</li> <li>• Fallacies</li> </ul>

**Table 2.1 Types of Discursive Strategies in DHA, continued**

No.	Strategy	Objectives	Devices
4.	Perspectivization, framing or discourse representation	Positioning speaker's or writer's point of view and expressing involvement or distance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deictics</li> <li>• Direct, indirect or free indirect speech</li> <li>• Quotation marks, discourse markers/particles</li> <li>• Metaphors</li> <li>• Animating prosody</li> </ul>
5.	Intensification and mitigation	Modifying (intensifying or mitigating) the illocutionary force and thus the epistemic or deontic status of utterances	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Diminutives or augmentatives</li> <li>• (Modal) particles, tag questions, subjunctive, hesitations, vague expressions etc.</li> <li>• Hyperboles, litotes,</li> <li>• Indirect speech acts (e.g. question instead of assertion)</li> <li>• Verbs of saying, feeling, thinking</li> </ul>

*Note.* From “Methods of CDA” by Wodak, R. & Meyer, M., 2008, p. 94

Nonetheless, due to a number of limitations which have been discussed in Chapter 1, only 2 strategies – Referential and Predication are employed for this studies instead of all the 5 strategies mentioned in Table 2.1 Further explanations of the referential and predication strategies will be discussed in the following paragraphs.

To position social actors as in-group or out group, reference is one of the strategies employed in DHA. Social actors can be referred by utilizing membership categorization devices, tropes, as well as verbs and nouns to denote processes and actions as stated in Table 2.1. These social actors are then predicated linguistically positively or negatively depending on the aim of the writers. (Reisigl & Wodak, 2005, p. 45). In the study of Khosravini (2008), he asserts that the Serbs are negatively referred in British newspapers by representing them as perpetrators. His paper proves that British newspapers foregrounded the Serbs by referring to them as violent and harmful to civilians. The Serbs are also predicated linguistically by agentivising their negative actions, such as smashing a civilian's head with a rifle butt, and looting the civilians' homes.

### **2.1.2 Socio- Semantic Approach**

The socio-semantic approach is the secondary framework employed for this study to further support the main framework – DHA. This approach is selected for this study to strengthen the justification of social actor representations in 'Inquirer.net', the online newspaper selected for this study. This approach questions the ways in which social actors can be represented in English discourse (referring to representational choices) and the relevance of social actors represented in an instance of a particular kind of racist discourse (referring to discourse of immigration), (van Leeuwen, 2008, p. 23)

However, this study only focuses on the ways in which social actors can be represented in English discourse because discovering representation of social actors is the main objective of this study.

### **2.1.2.1 Representation of Social Actors**

According to van Leeuwen (2008, p.24), social practices are socially regulated ways of doing things, but the word “regulate” may give the wrong impression here, since “regulation,” in the sense in which we normally understand it, is only one of the ways in which social coordination can be achieved. Social practice is a practice that is constructed by the society. The validity of such social practice is not questioned because it is constructed in a way that it seems factual. In van Leeuwen’s work (2008, p. 38 - 60), he presented a thorough analysis on a text, “Our Race Odyssey” which was published in a conservative broadsheet newspaper, namely “Sydney Morning Herald” on 12 May 1990. In his analysis of the said text, he concludes that the image of immigrants and the reactions of public towards the immigrants are constructed from the newspaper’s particular point of view.

He also further mentions that performed social practices are done through these elements: social actors, actions, performance mode, eligibility conditions of the social actors, presentation styles, times, conditions, eligibility conditions, resources: tools and materials, and eligibility of the resources.

Since this study only focuses on only the social actors, the following literature review will be based on the representation of social actors. A social practice needs a set of social actors to realize its content and these social actors usually play the roles of instigator, agent, affected, or beneficiary.

According van Leeuwen (2008), social actors can be represented or identified through the methods as follows:



i) Role Allocation: Activation and Passivation

Van Leeuwen (2008) states that social actors play a part in representations when their roles are reallocated and the social relations between the participants are rearranged for a purpose. Activation and passivation are the two methods to realize role allocation to social actors. To further elaborate on this, activation happens when social actors are represented as the active dynamic force while passivation happens when the social actors are represented as ‘undergoing’ the process or being at the ‘receiving end’. In addition to this, Haliday’s work (Haliday, 1985, as cited in van Leeuwen, 2008) on grammatical participant roles, such as transitivity structures in which activated social actors are coded as actor in material processes, behavior in behavioral processes, senser in mental processes, sayer in verbal processes, and assigner in relational processes have further strengthened van Leeuwen’s work on activating and passivating social actors. In his book, he provides a simple, but interesting example of how children and television are represented by activation and passivation. (p. 32 – 33)

ii) Assimilation

According to van Leeuwen (2008), assimilation is made up of two components, which are aggregation and collectivization. To simplify the definition of assimilation, it is used to refer social actors as groups. The realization of aggregation can be done by using the definite or indefinite quantifiers to show the function as the numerative or the head of a nominal group. To exemplify such, Van Leeuwen (2008) uses “forty percent of Australians” to illustrate numbers, and “a number of critics” to illustrate the latter. Aggregation plays a very important role in many contexts because the majority always rules in our society. This is not only used in formal democratic procedures to make

decisions, but is also constantly used in methods such as opinion polls, surveys, and marketing research. Aggregation is often used to legalize practice in the society. By using definite or non-definite quantifiers, it manufactures consensus opinion, even though it presents itself as merely recording facts. On the other hand, collectivization is the plurality of individualization, for example “Australians” and “Muslims”. He also explains that a mass noun or a noun denoting a group, such as “this nation” or “the community assimilation are examples of collectivization (p.37).

iii) Nomination and Categorization

Representation of social actors can also be realized by identifying them with their unique identity, which is named as “nominated”, or by the functions that they share with others, which is named as “categorization”. Van Leuween (2008) illustrated the importance of nomination and categorization by stating that how characters in stories without names are only fulfilling their roles as passers-by and functional roles are hardly identified by the readers or listeners. He also further stated and showed proof of such phenomenon in the media, specifically newspapers, whereby only a high-status person is nominated in a middle-class newspaper, while an ordinary person is nominated in a working-class-oriented newspaper, in an article on the same topic. To execute the nomination strategy, proper nouns are used to identify the social actors, for example their surnames with or without honorifications are used for formal context and given names and surnames are used for semiformal context. Other examples include nominating men and women differently by referring to marital status only in the case of women, and honorification is only nominated to for the man when the woman also has the same status (p. 40 -41).

A study by Kabgani (2013) using van Leuween’s socio-semantic approach (2008) to investigate the representation of Muslim women in non-Islamic media using

the van Leuween's socio-semantic approach revealed that Muslim women are generally depicted as active actors who are determined in their beliefs and in search of the resurrection of women's identity; however, what is holding them back is the lack of critical thinking in the community. Another study which is done in Malaysia using the same socio-semantic approach on the representation of migrant workers in the Star Online newspaper also revealed that the migrant workers in Malaysia are represented negatively, as competitors to Malaysians in terms of job opportunities and a threat to the country's social security (Sheren, 2012).

To summarize, this section has discussed the two theoretical frameworks that are used for this study – Wodak's DHA (2009) and van Leuween's socio - semantic approach (2008), and some studies which are relevant to both frameworks. The next section will discuss the related literature on the topic of media.

## **2.2 Media**

Media is a word that is mentioned a lot these days; it is something that provides us with entertainment and information. The question that needs to be answered is whether or not this information that is provided to us via main stream media; TV, the internet, newspapers and others has hidden meanings and is a tool for certain groups to provide certain selected information to the general public.

First of all, what exactly is media? Reich & Solomon (1986) believe that media is the information, all the experiences, and all the things that we consume and share every day (p.1). In their words, media is not only one format; it is not only technology that delivers these things, it is the content, media is virtually anything that we create, consume, and share in our lives.

According to Becker and Schonbach (1989) the term media is defined as all the ways human beings use to convey symbols to one another- from language through various modes of technology such as telefax machines or the TV. They continue their notion by stating that mass media is then regarded as a specific kind of media. These technical instruments and tools spread symbols to a potentially unlimited audience - an audience that, for instance, does not have to gather in one place and at one time. Turow (2009) believes mass media circulates words, sounds, and images that surround us. Too often, we immerse ourselves in media materials without asking where they come from, what meanings they might have, and what their consequences might be. The term mass media signifies media which is meant to reach a large audience such as a nation or state. Furthermore, the term “public media” has a similar meaning: it is the sum of the public mass distributors of news and entertainment via newspapers, television, and radio broadcasting.

Mass media includes internet media like blogs, message boards, podcasts, and video sharing. It is interesting to add these days, with the coming of the internet, individuals now have greater access to media and news which in the past was only restricted to a select group of mass media producers. The media audience is viewed as forming a mass society that is especially susceptible to the influence of modern mass-media techniques such as advertising and propaganda.

It is difficult to describe the influence of media in a few words; however, looking at the descriptions from some renowned linguists will be interesting. Some believe that the influence of media is so great that it can even change human behavior. However, Boyle (1983) states that “it is not possible to prove, conclusively, that a media text, in isolation, causes a human being to behave in particular way.” (p.26)

Fleur (1984) argues that media can have its effects. He states that the first major component of the social system of mass communication is the audience and that audience is stratified, differentiated, and interrelated in many ways. Thus, this interrelated relationship can create patterns of attention, interpretation and response with respect to content of given type of content.

According to Turow (2009), media effects are real and imaginary, impressive and elusive. The Media is unmistakably a part of everyday life in our culture. Some estimates suggest that about one-third of the U.S. population watches TV during the prime time hours, about one-half of the population, wakes up to radio, some 50 million households receive newspapers and magazines, and each week, movie theater box offices ring up millions of dollars in tickets sales. All this participation is itself a “media effect” and is the primer move behind a great deal of social concern and scientific interest. It is also what makes the analysis of media effect so very difficult.

In addition, it is not only media itself that needs to be considered, but also how it is interpreted. People from different backgrounds would get different ideas and impressions because of elements such as politics and culture. A good example of such was a project done at Columbia University’s sociology department in the early 1940s. Turow (2009) states that from that study, a new contribution on people’s different reactions to media materials emerged. It was the idea that social relations and interactions among people influence the way individuals interpret media messages. The basic idea is straightforward: when people watch movies, read newspapers, listen to the radio, or use any other medium, they often talk with other people about what they have seen or heard, and this can affect what they think about that media related experience. To understand how media content affects one person differently from another, it is crucial to know whom they spoke with about the material.

Based on the above, the most basic question that is frequently asked about mass media in society is basically who uses it or who is affected by it? How and to what degree are they affected and why?

For example why do people like such programming as radio soap operas and quiz shows? The term means that individuals are not just passive receivers of messages. Instead, they make conscious decisions about what they like, and they have different reasons for using a particular media more frequently, depending on different social relationships as well as on individual social and psychological differences.

A great deal of literature explains how people use a variety of media and why. It is useful to know for example, what percentage of poor families have been connecting to the internet compared to the percentage of middle-class and wealthy families. The findings show that there are sharp differences in income between families that are online at home and those that are not, has sparked discussion of a “digital divide”; a separation between those who are connected to the future and those who are being left behind.

Until now, we have discussed what is generally meant by the terms media and mass media. We have also looked at how and to what extent media can be influential on a society. Now, considering this fact that was previously mentioned, it is clear why media can be such a good tool for political persuasion and ideology. Media is a tool that is controlled from the top. At least most forms of media are now controlled by the elites except for media forms that exist on the internet such as “Youtube”, “Facebook” or “Twitter”. These sites are controlled from the bottom and are not as limited or dogmatic as newspapers or television.

However, media is undeniably a tool which even today has deep linkages to politics. Certain groups tend to argue for measure to be taken in relation to media to promote a political cause. For instance, demands for banning of certain songs or the labeling of obscene albums which is usually promoted from a more conservative political point of view. Media is also often used as a tool of representation by the people in power. Wenden's study (2005) on the politics of representation in Aljazeera's English website reveals the linguistic perspective in interfering social and ecological peace of the al-Aqsa Intifada, the second Palestinian uprising against the Israeli occupation.

Media in fact, does have the power to influence the culture industry to move audience members toward certain ways of looking at the world. In all forms of media, it is believed by researchers that there are certain messages or certain hidden sociological power relations that can be found in all aspects of media content, even if typical audience members do not recognize them. For example, "co-optation" is a well-known term that the media analyst Marcuse coined to express the way capitalism takes potentially revolutionary ideas and tames them to express capitalist ideals. For an example of co-optation, consider how advertisers take expressions of rebellion such as tattoos and colored hair and turn them into the next money-making fashions or trends.

Today, with the media generating information with a network of relations and influences and with the individual interpretations and evaluations of the information provided, as well as generating information outside of media contexts. The consequences of the mass media relates not only to the way newsworthy events are seen and understood, but also to a multitude of cultural influences that operate through the media.

The media has a strong social and cultural impact upon society. This is predicated upon its ability to reach a wide audience with a strong and influential message. McLuhan (1964) uses the phrase “the medium is the message” to explain how the distribution of a message can often be more important than content of the message itself. It is through the persuasiveness of media such as television, radio and print media that messages reach their target audiences. These have been influential media as they have been largely responsible for structuring people's daily lives and routines. Television broadcasting has a large amount of control over the content society watches and the times in which it is viewed. This is a distinguishing feature of traditional media which new media such as the internet which has challenged norms by changing the participation habits of the public. Furthermore, the internet creates a space for more diverse political opinions, social and cultural viewpoints and a heightened level of consumer participation.

The discussion on the media selected for this study will be presented on the next section.

### **2.2.1 The Philippines Daily Inquirer**

The Philippine Daily Inquirer is one of the main news providers in the Philippines and also has a long history of serving the readers in the country since 27 years ago. The official website for this newspaper is ‘Inquirer.net’, where the corpus of data for this study is retrieved from. This newspaper has over 2.7 million nationwide readers daily according to the Asia Research Organization's (ARO) tri-media survey and this proves the status of this newspaper in the said country. This is further supported by another source stating that The Philippine Daily Inquirer is a national newspaper and



the most influential national newspaper in the country with readers consist of all social classes.

Furthermore, the website of this newspaper, 'Inquirer.net' was the most visited news website in the Philippines in early 2012 according to the internet traffic analysis. ("Print Overview," n.d.). This number of readers on a daily basis presupposes high influence among the Filipinos. With such support and influence on the readers, the Philippine Daily inquirer plays a very crucial role in shaping the mind of the readers. Hence, this newspaper has been selected as the source of corpus for this study and is believed to be the best avenue to reflect the Filipino readers' mind.

After having discussed the literature available in the field of media and media studies, as well as the media selected for this study, let us now examine the correlation between CDA and media, and some relevant studies done on the same topic.

### **2.3 CDA and Media**

Language is not powerful on its own as it only gains power by the use of powerful people who make use of it, specifically in new public spaces or new genres provided by globalized media (Wodak & Busch, 2004, p. 109). In other words, people in power, in particular, stake holders of news makers have exclusive access and control over news that is disseminated to the public. Van Dijk (2001) further explained the above by illustrating how people have active control over what they say with the people around them on daily basis, but have passive control over media.

Kress (1990) came up with the term "political economy" of representational media, an attempt to understand how various societies value different modes of representation and how the societies use these different modes of representation.

Subsequently, he collaborated with Theo van Leeuwen and developed a taxonomy that allows the precise description and interpretation of visual data, and their work has influenced the research on new media (Kress & van Leeuwen, 1996; Lemke, 2001; Scollon 1999 in Wodak & Bursch, 2004). From the above studies on representation, it is evident that mass media is a site of power and social struggle, where language only ‘appears’ to be neutral.

One of the key research topics for CDA and media is the representation of the “Other” group. A study by Stuart Hall (2000) shows the British media are biased when the minorities and migrants are depicted negatively by associating them with crime and drug abuse (in Wodak and Busch, 2004). Another study done on the representation of the “Others” also reveals how migrant workers in Malaysia are represented negatively by the mainstream media in Malaysia as violent and lawless (Widyawati, 2005).

Generally, the negative “other” representation is employed by the dominant groups to negativize the less-powerful agents. In this study, the negative-other, “Malaysia” is negativised by the media in the Philippines. “Malaysia” is not a weak agent in general because it is a country and has the power as an authority; however, in the media of the Philippines, in which the Philippines is in control, the result is otherwise.

#### **2.4 Historical Discourse of the Philippines’ Claims over Sabah**

According to the work of Boncales (n.d.), the root of the dispute over the ownership of Sabah was the deed signed between the Sultan of Sulu and a British Company, represented by Gustavus Baron de Overback and Alfred Dent, in 1878. A significant provision from the deed is stated as below:

We, Sri Paduka Maulana Al Sultan Mohammad Jamalul A’lam, son of Sari Paduka Marhum Al Sultan Mohammad Pulalum, Sultan of Sulu and of all

dependencies thereof, on behalf of ourselves and for our heirs and successors, and with the expressed desire of all Datus in common agreement, do hereby desire to lease of our own free will and satisfaction, to Gustavus Baron de Overbeck of Hong Kong, and to Alfred Dent, Esquire, of London, who act as representatives of a British company, together with their heirs, associate, successors, and assigns forever and until the end of time, all rights and powers which we possess over all the territories and lands tributary from the Pandasan River on the east, and thence along the whole east coast as far as Sibuku on the South, and including all territories, on the Pandasan River and in the coastal area, known as Paitan, Sugut, Banggai, Labuk, Sandakan, China-Batangan, Murniang and all other territories and coastal lands to the south, bordering on Darvel Bay and as far as the Sibuku River, together with all the lands which lie within nine miles from the coast (Boncales, 2007).

This deed eventually sparked off a long history of dispute over the territorial claim of Sabah between the Philippines and Malaysia. When the formation of the Federation of Malaysia occurred in 1963, Sabah (which was called North Borneo then), together with Sarawak and Singapore, were united under the jurisdiction of the United Kingdom. However, this agreement was not recognized by the government of the Philippines due to a few reasons, and one of them is the abovementioned deed (Fernandez, 2007). The deed was eventually used as one of the bases for their claim over their rights on Sabah. The deed was interpreted as “pajak” or lease by the Sultan of Sulu, while “cession” by the British Company. The claim over Sabah by the Philippines has been going on over the years, however it has been neutralized between the two countries due to political reasons. This was nevertheless unacceptable for the Sultan of Sulu and after many years of battles, it ultimately caused the ‘Lahad Datu Standoff’ in 2013.

On the other hand, some scholars have some contradicting arguments on the same issue. In Ariff's work, he mentioned that Jeffrey Kitingan, the chairman of United Borneo Front, disputed the validity and reliability of the four-month referendum conducted prior to the formation of Federal of Malaysia (which joined Malaya, Singapore, Brunei, Sarawak and Sabah). The results of the referendum, which was presented in the Cobbold Commission report, revealed that the Sabahans desired to be part of Malaysia; however, according to Jeffrey Kitingan, the so-called referendum was merely a sampling survey of less than four percent of the Sabahan population (as cited in Boncales, n.d., p. 4; Rintod, 2013). Another author, Fernandez also questioned the content of the deed signed in 1878 based on the historical and legal interpretation of the same deed. His argument was that the act of the British North Borneo Company to transfer the sovereignty of North Borneo (now Sabah) to the British Crown of Sabah was illegal and he named the move as "an act of naked political aggrandizement.....". Therefore, Fernandez argued that the transfer of sovereignty from the British Crown of Sabah to the Federation of Malaysia was unwarranted because the Philippines had its rights on Sabah as well (Fernandez, 2007).

## **2.5 Summary**

This chapter has discussed the relevant literature review for this study which consist of the theoretical framework used for this study: Wodak's DHA (2009) as the main framework, and van Leuween's socio-semantcic approach (2008) as the supporting framework, the role of the media and the media selected for this study, the Philippines Inquirer, and the historical discourse of the Philippines' claim over Sabah which is linked to the cause of the Lahad Datu Standoff. The next chapter will discuss the research methodology of this study.

## CHAPTER 3

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

#### 3.0 Introduction

This research aims to utilize CDA to analyze how ‘Malaysia’ is discursively constructed in the mass media of the Philippines. The context of this analysis will be the recent fighting that has been going on in Lahad Datu which is located in Sabah, Malaysia. The incident in Lahad Datu, in the east of Sabah, has sparked the rationale of this study, which mainly focuses ‘Malaysia’ as the social actor in the mass media of the Philippines. This chapter describes and explains the research design, research instrument, data collection, and theoretical framework.

#### 3.1 Research Design

This study employs the qualitative method, which means analysis of the data collected is only based on interpretation using Wodak’s DHA (2009) as the main framework and is further supported with van Leeuwen’s Socio-semantic approach (2008). Besides that, Wodak’s referential strategy has also been adapted with van Leeuwen’s system network of construction of social actors (Reisigl & Wodak, 2005, p. 46). Both the DHA framework and socio-semantic approach are employed concurrently to investigate the strategies employed to position ‘Malaysia’ as the ‘negative-other’, and the possible hidden agenda or motivations behind such construction.

The media that is selected for this study is the official website for the newspaper ‘The Philippine Daily Inquirer’, namely ‘Inquirer.net.’ As one of the main newspapers

in The Philippines with 2.7 million readers daily, it is apparent that ‘The Philippine Daily Inquirer’ is highly influential to the Filipinos. The influence of ‘The Philippine Daily Inquirer’ is also further supported by an internet analysis whereby its results revealed that its website ‘Inquirer.net’ was the most visited news website in the Philippines in early 2012 (see Section 2.2.1). With such influence on the readers, specifically the Filipinos, it plays an important role in passing information and possibly even forming readers’ opinions.

### **3.1.1 Reasons for using news report**

News report is chosen for this study because this media tool is the best avenue to disseminate news to people or readers, especially since it is now available online or in paperless form in addition to the conventional newspaper (see Section 2.2 for extensive discussion on news report as media). However, what readers of such papers or media outlets do not realize is that ideologies can be planted in the news that they read every day or every other hour. Even people who are highly educated are blinded by the fact that news is a social, cultural and ideological construction depending on the owner(s) of the newspaper that they read. Wodak also argues that the media coverage is an avenue for representations and constructions of social actors (Wodak & Meyer, 2009, p. 48 & 99) (see Section 2.3). Hence, it is evident that news report is an undeniable tool which has deep linkages to politics.

## **3.2 Theoretical Framework**

Theoretical framework is an analytical tool used as guidance throughout an analysis. A theoretical framework comprises of concepts with its definitions and existing theories that are used for a particular study. With a theoretical framework, analysts must demonstrate an understanding of theories and concepts that are relevant to the topic of their research. The following sections are the theoretical frameworks employed for this study.

### **3.2.1 Discourse Historical Approach (DHA)**

The main framework chosen to be employed for this study is DHA (Wodak & Meyer, 2009). According to Wodak (2009), this framework is centralized to 3 dimensions of analysis which include the content of data, the discursive strategies employed and the linguistic realization of these contents and strategies. To further elaborate DHA's 3-dimensional analysis, the content of data must be first enacted according to a specific discourse, (the online news articles for this study), the discursive strategies employed for the said study must then be employed or examined based on the corpus collected, the linguistic realizations based on the content and strategies emerged are finally presented or investigated (p.93).

Discursive strategies are a set of plans or methods used to achieve a particular social, political, psychological or linguistic goal (Wodak & Meyer, p.94). In other words, the discursive strategies are systematic ways of using language which can be located at different levels of linguistic organization and complexity. The "Meta strategy of Us vs. them" is one of the main discursive strategies employed to highlight the positive-self and negative other representations in discourse and to identify the mentioned positive-self and negative other representations, Wodak proposed 5

strategies in her work of DHA (as cited in Sheren, 2012). However, due to the limitations of this study, only two strategies are employed: the referential and predication strategies (see Section 1.6). The descriptions of both strategies are as follows:

### **3.2.1.1 Referential Strategy**

As mentioned in the preceding section, referential strategy is one of the five strategies used to construct the positive-self and negative-other representation in a certain discourse. Reisigl & Wodak (2005) assert that the objective of the referential strategy is to label social actors either positively or negatively using many sub-strategies, for example the categorization of in-group and out-groups. There are many devices used to construct the in and out groups: the membership categorization, references to the social actor's physical attributed identification or construction of the social actor in relations to their personal, social or work life, all of which carry prejudices that criticize social actor (see Section 2.1.1 and Table 2.1). Since the social actor for this study is 'Malaysia', the first device 'membership categorization' is more relevant compared to the latter two.

### **3.2.1.2 Predication Strategy**

Predication strategy is the second strategy used for this study. The objective of this strategy is to label social actors positively or negatively. Such can be realized by predicating the social actor linguistically, which are commonly with "stereotypical, evaluative attributions of negative or positive traits in the linguistic form of implicit or explicit implications" (Wodak, 2003, p. 140) (see Section 2.1.1 & Table 2.1).

Predication strategy is executed via lexicalization where the social actors are given certain negative attributes as identity markers in relation to either the in group or



out group. In Vaclav Klaus's 'Answers to Questions from the House of Representatives of the U.S. Congress, Committee on Energy and Commerce, on the issue of mankind's contribution to global warming and climate change', the environmentalists, who are the social actor in the context, are predicated as irrational, arbitrary, similar to old Marxists, illiberal, centralist, protectionist, wasteful and detrimental to the country's economy (Wodak & Meyer, 2009).

### **3.2.2 Socio- Semantic Approach**

Van Leuween's (2008) socio-semantic approach is the secondary framework employed for this study to further support the main framework – DHA. This approach is used simultaneously with the main framework – DHA whenever the representation of the social actors is evident.

This approach is selected for this study to strengthen the justification of social actor representations in this study. Van Leuween's (2008) socio-semantic approach questions the ways social actors can be represented in English discourse (referring to representational choices) and the relevance of social actors represented in an instance of a particular kind of racist discourse (referring to discourse of immigration) (see Section 2.1.2.1).

The list of strategies employed in the van Leuween's approach (2008) which are found in this study are listed as follows:

#### **i) Assimilation**

Since assimilation is a method used to refer social actors as groups, it is very useful for representation of Malaysia as a powerful agent as a group (even though Malaysia is also

referred to as in individual). Assimilation is also important to refer the opponent, the Sultan of Sulu's troops, as a weaker group (see Section 2.1.2.1)

ii) Nomination

Nomination is also employed to support the reference of power owned by Malaysia in this context, whereby the social actor, Malaysia is often nominated (see Section 2.1.2.1). However, the purpose for nominating Malaysia in this study is for the purpose of highlighting Malaysia abusing its power to manipulate the Lahad Datu Standoff.

iii) Role Allocation: Activation and Passivation

Role allocation strategy is applied in this study to examine the predication of Malaysia as a violent social actor, which is presented as the predication strategy of Wodak (2009). Malaysia is often activated and passivated as an agent to inflict violence to the victims of the incident. On the other hand, the Sultan of Sulu's fighters and the victims are often passivated as the receiving end of violence. Examples found for activation and passivation strategy are presented in a table (see Section 2.1.2.1).

### **3.3 Data**

The data for this study is derived from the 'Inquirer.net' website, which as stated earlier, is the official website of 'Philippines Daily Inquirer'. The list of online news articles selected or filtered for this study is listed in Table 3.1 on page 37, and the actual online news articles are compiled in Appendix B. The selected online news articles are labeled with a letter and number, which means 'A1', which represents 'Article 1' and so forth. Hence, the labels from A1 to A23 (the 23 articles selected for this study) are constantly made reference to in the extracts presented in Chapter 4 for analysis and discussions.

**Table 3.1 List of Online News Articles Selected (Data)**

Label	Article Title	Date Published
A1	Gov't intel eyes 3 groups abetting Sulu sultan's claim	01/03/2013
A2	Sulu gunmen call for ceasefire	01/03/2013
A3	Sulu gunmen open fire on Malaysia forces—officials	01/03/2013
A4	14 dead in Sabah assault	02/03/2013
A5	Malaysian ceasefire monitors in Mindanao advised to lie low	02/03/2013
A6	Palace still hopeful Kirams will soften	02/03/2013
A7	PH humanitarian team banned from Lahad Datu	03/03/2013
A8	289 Filipinos deported from Sabah arrive in Zamboanga	03/03/2013
A9	12 confirmed dead in Saturday ambush-clash in Sabah	04/03/2013
A10	Sabah shootout: Timeline to slaughter	04/03/2013
A11	Only an intervention can end Sabah conflict, says Kiram wife	04/03/2013
A12	Sabah 'intrusion' triggers political fight in Malaysia	05/03/2013
A13	Malaysia attacks Filipinos to end Sabah siege	05/03/2013

Table 3.1 **List of Online News Articles Selected (Data), continued**

Label	Article Title	Date Published
A14	'Royal Army' to fight on, will make last stand – Sultanate spokesman	05/03/2013
A15	Filipinos survive attack	06/03/2013
A16	Filipino killed in fresh Malaysian assault – report	06/03/2013
A17	Consequences	06/03/2013
A18	Kin say Agbimuddin Kiram is safe but hungry in Sabah	06/03/2013
A19	KL asked: Give PH team access to Filipino gunmen held in Sabah	08/03/2013
A20	KL reports 32 more dead	08/03/2013
A21	KL rounds up 79 suspects	09/03/2013
A22	'We're treated like animals'	10/03/2013
A23	PH mission, media barred from Sabah evacuation center	16/03/2014

### **3.3.1 Reasons for using ‘Inquirer.net’**

As mentioned in the preceding section, ‘Inquirer.net’ is the official website for the newspaper ‘Philippines Daily Inquirer’, the most widely read newspaper in the Philippines in terms of circulation and readership. Online or digital news is a more convenient and practical way to read news for most people and hence, it outreaches print newspapers in providing news for readers. Therefore, the corpus for this study is derived from the said website, which is accessible conveniently to further expedite this study.

### **3.3.2 Data Collection Method**

The data collection for this study started from the ‘Lahad Datu Standoff’ incident which happened on 11<sup>th</sup> February 2013 until the date this study started, which was on 1<sup>st</sup> June 2013. The data collection persisted during the study and any relevant data found was used for this study. The data is collected by entering the keyword ‘Lahad Datu’ in the search column of ‘Inquirer.net’. The results from the search column reveals 120 news articles which are relevant to the keyword ‘Lahad Datu, they are then filtered by further reading at the relevance of the news articles towards the study. The articles are scrutinized through a close reading by searching for the social actor for this study, which is ‘Malaysia’. The social actor ‘Malaysia’ can be represented in many forms in the data and for the purposes of this research, the following terms are found referring to Malaysia both specifically and generally)in the selected news articles:

- 1) Malaysian/ Kuala Lumpur authorities
- 2) Malaysian/ Kuala Lumpur government

- 3) Malaysian forces
- 4) The Prime Minister (Najib Razak)
- 5) Home Minister (Hishammudin Hussein)
- 6) Malaysia's National Police Chief (Ismail Omar)
- 7) Barisan National / UMNO (the ruling party of Malaysia)
- 8) Malaysian officials

### **3.3.3 Data Analysis**

The data collected for this study are analyzed based on the 2 types of discursive strategies in DHA (Wodak, 2009), referential and predication strategies, further supported with the socio-semantic approach (van Leuween, 2009) (see Section 3.2.). To be precise, the abovementioned frameworks are employed to investigate the linguistic items used to realize the negative-other representation of 'Malaysia' in the Lahad Datu Stand-off incident (see Section 2.1.1). Hence, it is crucial to unravel the hidden agenda behind these linguistic items so that the media do not manipulate the readers' opinions towards the incident, especially as this incident involved two neighbouring countries: Malaysia and the Philippines.

As mentioned above, the analysis on the data which is conducted based on the 2 types of discursive strategies: referential and predication strategies, is to answer the 2 main research questions (see Section 1.4). Both the discursive strategies are employed to answer the first research question: "What discourse structure and strategies does 'Inquirer.net' use to discursively construct Malaysia as a social actor?" However, this research question is further divided into 2 supporting research questions: "How is

‘Malaysia’ named and referred to linguistically?” which will be answered by the results revealed from the referential strategy analysis, and “What traits, characteristics, qualities and features are attributed to ‘Malaysia’?” which will be answered by the results revealed from the predication strategy analysis. Both these research questions will be supported by some results revealed by van Leeuwen’s socio-semantic approach (2008). The discussion and analysis on the linguistic means and the specific, context-dependant linguistic realizations of the discriminatory stereotypes in the data will answer the second research question: “What do such structures and strategies tell us about underlying prejudices and ideologies on ‘Malaysia’?” (see Section 1.4).

### **3.4 Summary**

This chapter has discussed the research design, theoretical framework employed: Wodak’s DHA (Reisigl & Wodak, 2009) as the main framework, and further supported by van Leeuwen’s socio semantic approach (2008) as the secondary framework, and data which consists of corpus of selected online news article. The next chapter will discuss the analysis and results of this study.

## CHAPTER 4

### ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

#### 4.0 Introduction

In this chapter, the online articles that have been collected from the website ‘The Daily Inquirer’ are analyzed according to the DHA theoretical framework focusing only on two of the 5 strategies in the mentioned framework which are the referential and predication strategies. This analysis aims to investigate the linguistic realization by the use of discourse and to find the factors these strategies may produce to affect the view of the readers of this newspaper, this is especially crucial because ‘The Daily Inquirer’ is the national newspaper or news portal of the Philippines. This study also explains the rationale behind the strategies employed to position ‘Malaysia’ as the ‘negative-other’. Another framework employed to further support the objective of this study is van Leeuwen’s socio-semantic approach, which is set to uncover and explore the ways social actors are represented in the mentioned English newspaper. By utilizing both DHA and socio-semantic frameworks, the aim of the study to unravel the hidden agenda and ideology planted in media coverage through written discourse will be more evident.

The analysis and discussion of this study are presented according to the findings found based on the DHA theoretical framework as the main reference and supported simultaneously with any findings found according to the socio-semantic framework. The categories emerged from the analysis using the socio-semantic framework includes assimilation, which is made up of aggregation and collectivization, role allocation, which is made up of activation and passivation; and finally nomination and categorization.



## 4.1 Referential Strategy

The first strategy employed in this study is the referential strategy. The objective of the referential strategy is to label social actors either positively or negatively, using many sub-strategies, for example the categorisation of in-groups and out-groups. In the data analysis presented below, it is evident that the articles collected associate ‘Malaysia’ with an array of negative references (Wodak & Meyer, 2009) (see Section 3.2.1.1).

### 4.1.1 Malaysia is referred as a ‘Powerful’ agent

To begin with, Malaysia is referred to negatively by relating Malaysia with ‘power’. The power that Malaysia owns as an authority of the country is delegitimized by the media selected for this study, ‘Inquirer.net’ by constructing Malaysia as a ‘bully’ in the Lahad Datu standoff. (see Section 3.2.1.1)

Power denotes an asymmetric relationship among social actors who assume different social positions or belong to different social groups. The execution of power can be in the form of actional power, which means utilizing physical force and violence as well as attachment to authority (see Section 2.1.1). As a country, Malaysia owns military and police forces which can be utilized anytime, however in this context, such authorized power delegitimized Malaysia when it is constructed that Malaysia is a “bully” who oppresses the weaker party, i.e. the followers of the Sultan of Sulu.

A3, Line 19 – 21: *Scores of followers of Jamalul Kiran III, the self-proclaimed heir to the Filipino Muslim sultanate of Sulu have been facing off with Malaysian forces in the village for more than two weeks.*

In the extracts above, the quantifier used to measure for the number of Jamalul Kiran's supporters is 'scores' while for Malaysia, 'forces' is used instead. The word choice of 'scores' denotes less legitimacy than the word 'forces' and hence, foregrounded the number of Jamalul Kiran's supporters as the weaker opponent compared to Malaysia. Moreover, according to the online Oxford dictionary (n.d.), "scores" means a group or set of twenty or about twenty, or a large number of something. On the other hand, "forces" means an organized body of military personnel or police, or troops and weaponry. Therefore, in this context, "scores" denotes only supports and belief, while "forces" denotes force or violence, armed personnel and weapons. In other words, Malaysia is related with power in this context as a country to go against a small troop of people who are only labeled as 'followers' and hence referring 'Malaysia' a 'bully' abusing its power. Moreover, the word 'forces' denotes having the power or ability to utilize weapons. In short, it indirectly connotes that an armed forces (Malaysia) is going against an unarmed group of followers (Jamalul Kiran's troops).

Similar discursive construction found from the data collected for this study will be presented in the following extracts:

*A7, Line 1-2: Malacañang, after learning Saturday that all the **224 remaining followers of the Sultan of Sulu** in Lahad Datu were gearing up for a bloody confrontation with **Malaysian forces**, remained hopeful that Sultan Jamalul Kiram III would still soften his position.*

The extract above shows a similar discursive construction when the phrase, "224 remaining followers of the Sultan of Sulu" is used against the "Malaysian forces". As mentioned in the previous extract, "forces" denotes force or violence, armed personnel and weapons, while "followers" denotes a group of people who believe in somebody or

something, and in this case, they believe that the Sultan of Sulu fights for them, and hence went to the battlefield for what they believe in. What is constructed here is the Malaysian forces are going against 224 people who are just followers, who may not be skillful in combat or have proper defense training.

A10, Line 22-25: *Zulkefli said this was the reason why the military decided on deploying **two army battalions**. Amid the **heavy deployment of Malaysian security** against the Sulu “royal army” number just over **200**, Foreign Minister Anifah Aman said Putrajaya would try its best “to avoid (more) bloodshed.”*

A10, Line 5 – 6: *In their first encounter in the morning of Friday, **12 of the 235** men led by the brother of Sultan of Sulu Jamalul Kiram III were killed when superior **Malaysian forces** attacked them.*

A14, Line 6 -7: *The estimated **200 supporters** of the Sultanate of Sulu in Lahad Datu, led by Rajah Mudah Agbimuddin Kiram, were fighting back against the **Malaysian forces**.*

When social actors are referred as groups, it is named as ‘assimilation’ (van Leuween, 2008, p.37). According to van Leuween (2008), the two methods in which assimilation can be realized are aggregation and collectivization. The realization of aggregation can be done by using the definite or indefinite quantifiers to show the function as the numerative or the head of a nominal group. To exemplify such, van Leuween (2008) used “forty percent of Australians” to illustrate numbers, and “a number of critics” to illustrate the latter (p. 37) (see Section 3.2.2). Similar manifestation can be found in the four extracts with phrases, such as “224 remaining followers of the Sultan of Sulu”, “ Sulu royal army number just over 200”, “12 of the

235 led by the brother of Sultan of Sulu” and “200 supporters of the Sultanate of Sulu” to represent the strength of the sultan of Sulu’s group.

Referring to van Leuween’s work (2008), collectivization is the plurality of individualization and some of the examples of collectivization are “Australians” and “Muslims”. He further explained that a mass noun or a noun denoting a group, such as “this nation” or “the community assimilation are examples of collectivization. In the extracts above, it can be observed that the social actor “Malaysia” is collectivized via “army battalions” and “Malaysian forces”

In the examples given above, the social actor “Malaysia” is collectivized with a strong supporting system, and to be specific, a military system when associated with phrases, such as “army battalions” and forces and on the other hand, the opponent of Malaysia are only associated with quantifiers of more than 200 people. It is apparent that Malaysia is associated with the military or army power to control the whole situation and eventually victimized the opponent, i.e. the Sultan of Sulu’s troops. As stated by van Leuween (2008), the majority rules in the society and hence, aggregation is critical to highlight this phenomenon and it is proven in the examples given above (p.37). In summary, Malaysia is referred as a powerful social actor which victimized the weaker opponent and hence, Malaysia is constructed as the negative-other representation

In the next section, Malaysia will be referred as a powerful social actor which possesses the power to manipulate others.

A12, Line 5 – 13: *Media reports from Kuala Lumpur indicate that this has become a reality, with the ruling coalition **Barisan Nasional (BN)** and **the opposition** accusing each other of **orchestrating the Sabah situation for political gains** after Philippine intelligence sources said a Malaysian opposition*

*stalwart allied with **Anwar Ibrahim** had met with Kiram days before the Sabah entry.*

The extract above shows that there is an internal (in Malaysia) commotion between Barisan Nasional (BN), representing the government of Malaysia and the opposition party. Both parties are foregrounded here to manipulate the situation in Sabah for their own political gains.

*A12, Line 9 – 12: Progovernment TV3 and Utusan Malaysia even ran a commentary by an unidentified author, which listed “10 indications that **Anwar Ibrahim** had architected [sic] the land grab by the sultan of Sulu.” The article accused **Anwar** of being a “manipulator par excellence and so skilled that he convinced several hundred fighters from Philippines to hide out in Lahad Datu and die for his cause.”*

In the extracts above, the leader of the opposition party, Anwar Ibrahim is alleged to manipulate the political situation in Lahad Datu. Adjectives, such as “par excellence” and “skilled” are used to describe Anwar Ibrahim’s skills in manipulating the situation in Lahad Datu. In this section, Malaysia is referred to through the leader of the opposition party, Anwar Ibrahim. Anwar Ibrahim once belonged to the ruling Barisan Nasional (BN, National Front) coalition, but a falling out with some top leaders resulted in being beaten, jailed and disgraced. However he made a comeback in 2008 and now, an influential leader of a political party, namely Parkatan Rakyat alliance in Malaysia (“Profile: Anwar Ibrahim,” 2001). Anwar Ibrahim is indicated as the cause of this standoff and is related with power to manipulate a standoff between the country and Jamal Kiran’s followers which has caused the life of many people, especially from the Filipinos.

From the perspective of the readers, (who are mostly Filipinos), whether it is the government or the opposition party, they are all Malaysians. In this case, it is portrayed that the Filipinos have been sacrificed entirely to feed the dispute between the government of Malaysia and its opposition parties. Again, Malaysia is related with power which is abused by both the government and the opposition parties. Malaysia is constructed as owning the power to manipulate the relationship between the government of Philippines (lead by President Aquino) and the troops of the Sultan of Sulu (lead by Jamalul Kiran III).

A12, Line 41 – 50:

*In retaliation for dragging **Anwar** into the Sabah bloodbath, **Tian** was reported by the Borneo Post as having said that on the contrary, **Umno orchestrated** the gun battle “with armed intruders” in Lahad Datu.*

***Tian** said it was a “planned conspiracy of the **UMNO government** to divert attention and intimidate the people,” especially in Sabah, which is fast becoming opposition territory.*

***The PKR** is being helped in Sabah by another opposition leader, **Jeffrey Kitingan**, a brother of Prime Minister Najib Razak-ally Joseph Pairin Kitingan.*

***Azmin Ali**, another party stalwart, was also quoted by Borneo Insider as saying “the allegations were made in an attempt to weaken the growing support of Sabahans for the opposition.”*

*He challenged Anwar’s accusers to “produce proof.”*

Further data that posits the government of Malaysia as owning the power to manipulate the standoff in Lahad Datu is found in the extract above. It shows that the

government of Malaysia has orchestrated the gun battle ‘with armed intruders’ in Lahad Datu and the rationale behind this orchestrated gun battle is to infuse pressure to Sabahans for their lack of support towards the government and to intimidate those who are leaning towards the opposition parties.

A10, Line 32 - 37:

*Meanwhile, the Islamist political party **Parti Islam Se-Malaysia (PAS)** asked the **Najib government** to provide Malaysians with “**a real explanation of the incident in Lahad Datu.**”*

***Mustafa Ali, PAS secretary general**, said the problem has now become serious with people getting killed.*

*“It should not be regarded as a thing that is not serious but the government is not even telling us the truth,” he told Malaysian newspaper Haraka Daily.*

*Mustafa also said because the Sabah situation has become so serious, police elements should already be withdrawn and that the military should now take over.*

Another opposition party, namely Parti Islam Se-Malaysia (PAS) is quoted in this article to blame Malaysia for not revealing the truth behind the standoff. PAS was formed in 1951 when members of the religious bureau of the United Malays National Organization, UMNO, broke away from the main party. PAS today is the second largest political party in Malaysia and is well-known for its objective to emphasize Islamic principles and values to governance and politics in Malaysia due to its constant

promotion of adherence to Islamic law and strictures, PAS has often been described as a proponent of the Islamic state.

The accusation of Malaysia hiding the truth of the Lahad Datu incident is manifested in this extract by demanding Malaysia to provide the 'real' explanation of the situation. In other words, Malaysia is accused of not providing the real truth of the incident and hence, the demand to tell the truth. It is also further iterated the seriousness of the incident that had caused some loss lives, yet the government is hiding the truth.

The occurrences of nomination by van leuween (2008) are also found in the extracts above. Nomination is a strategy employed to represent the social actor in terms of their unique identity and hence, the social actors are identified with proper nouns, and to be precise, using their names (see Sections 2.1.2.1 and 3.2.2).

The nomination of the leader of the opposition party, Anwar Ibrahim, in extract A12, Line 12- 13, as quoted above emphasizes his role in manipulating the standoff by convincing the followers of Sultan of Sulu to hide out in Lahad Datu and thus trigger the stand off. A few occurrences of nomination also can be observed in extract A12, Line 41-47 as quoted above when they nominated the social actors, such as Anwar Ibrahim, Tian and Jeffrey Kitingam and Azmin Ali who are from the opposition parties. As mentioned above, there is a dispute between the Malaysia's opposition parties and its government over the issue of who should be blamed for instigating and manipulating the stand off. Again, from the perspective of the readers (mostly Filipinos), the opposition parties and the government represent 'Malaysia' as one.

The next extracts shows the inability of Malaysia, which possesses the power as an authority, administer the incident.



A10, Line 27 – 32 :

*Anifah, commenting on Sultan Jamalul Kiram III's call for negotiations, said what Putrajaya wants now is for the "intruders" to lay down their firearms before fresh talks could take place.*

*He, however, clarified that Wisma Putra, the other name the foreign affairs ministry is known, **was not the correct agency to negotiate with the Kirams.***

***"My ministry is not directly involved. It is the Ministry of Home Affairs,"** he said.*

The extract above shows that there is confusion within the government of Malaysia because the department in charge of dealing with the situation is not clear. Anifah who claims that his department is not supposed to deal with the Kirams and points out that The Ministry of Home Affairs is supposed to take charge of the incident shows the incapability of Malaysia to administer the situation. Line 32 –“My ministry is not directly involved. It is the Ministry of Home Affairs” demonstrates that a ministry department from the government of Malaysia is pushing the responsibility of dealing with the matter to another department. Again, it is posited that Malaysia owns power as the authority to administer this incident, however it is not handled well. It is implied that while the citizens of Lahad Datu are struggling due to the standoff, the departments of Malaysia are still trying to figure out who should take charge of the situation. The data depicts that Malaysia has the upper hand of the situation, but this power of authority is not handled well within the administration of the country.

Once again, the representation of Malaysia as an authority which abuses its power on the victims is found in the extract below.

A8, Line 1 - 4: *At least 289 Filipinos arrived here from Sabah early Sunday after they were deported by Malaysian authorities.*

*The deportation occurred amid the “homecoming” of the followers of the Sultan of Sulu to Sabah.*

The issue that Malaysia (as an authority) sent home 289 Filipinos is being scrutinized in this context. This is especially obvious in the last sentence – “The deportation occurred amid the “homecoming” of the followers of the Sultan of Sulu to Sabah”. It is implied that deportation is an avenue for Malaysia to ‘flex his muscles’ and exhibit its power to the Filipinos. As a matter of fact, the issue of deportation of illegal migrants from Sabah to the Philippines has been an on-going operation for years. According to the Human Rights Advisory issued by Commission on Human Rights of the Philippines (2013), it is estimated that an average of 3000 to 6000 deportees are sent back to the Philippines from Sabah annually. It is also reported in the same advisory that the number of deportees sent home in 2012 was 7532, and in March 2013, just before the standoff, was 289. Hence, it is apparent that the issue of deportation is being exaggerated in the extract above. Both issues may be genuinely irrelevant; however, it has been constructed that one is a result of another.

A8, Line 8 – 11: *But Arasid clarified the deportation had nothing to do with the tension in Lahad Datu.*

*“They are Filipino workers or Filipinos without proper working papers previously arrested in Malaysia, jailed and their papers are completely processed for deportation to our country,” Arasid said.*

*But she could not explain why Malaysian authorities only decided to send them home in the aftermath of the “homecoming.”*

In Line 8 – 10, although a representative from the Social Welfare Department of the Philippines, Arasid explained that the deportation has no relation with the Lahad Datu stand off, she also mentioned that she was not aware of the reason for the Malaysian authority to send them home at this particular time (after the standoff) in line 11.

*A8, Line 15 – 22: Manaloza, a native of Sindangan in Zamboanga del Norte, had lived in Lahad Datu for 10 years before his arrest. His wife was also arrested and is now jailed somewhere in Sabah. He is worried that his 16-year-old daughter was left behind in Lahad Datu.*

*He said he would immediately process his passport so he can return to Sabah.*

*Adzlina Sibung, 26, surrendered to the Malaysian police to escape from her abusive husband. To her dismay, she and her five children were also arrested and jailed for two months. Now she wants to return to her home to Tawi-tawi.*

*“I really wanted to go home. My children do not deserve to grow up in jail,” Sibung said.*

Quotations from the above extracts are taken from the ‘victims’ of the standoff. The second quotation from, Manaloza stated that he had lived in Lahad Datu for 10 years until he and his wife were arrested. Not only were they arrested, the family members were also separated due to this incident. The reason for their arrest is backgrounded in the report. Information on whether they overstayed or were staying in Malaysia without proper passes was not provided to the readers and hence, the readers

only pay attention to the fact that this poor man and his family were victimized by the incident or the authority in power. The same method applies to the second quotation as the poor lady, Adzlina Sibung surrendered to the police of Malaysia to run away from her abusive husband, however the situation got worse when she and her five children were arrested due to her act of surrendering to the authority of Malaysia. The last quotation by the same lady seeks for empathy from the readers that she has an abusive husband with 5 children, however, the authority of Malaysia still jailed her even though she surrendered to the authority.

A12, Line 33 – 36: *Fatima reiterated that since Agmibuddin and their followers arrived in Lahad Datu, their family had always been open to negotiate with Malaysia.*

*“But the problem is ... Malaysia [is] not on our side. We want to negotiate and talk with them but they are firm in their decision (not to negotiate),” she said.*

Fatima, wife of Sulu Jamalul Kiram III, is quoted here that they are always open for negotiation, however Malaysia is the one which refused to negotiate the current situation. Malaysia utilized its power as a stronger opponent to set an ultimatum for the weaker opponent, and hence, not open to any negotiation, despite lives being sacrificed due to the standoff.

From the analysis and discussions above, it is evident that Malaysia is referred as a powerful agent which executes its power on a weaker opponent. Such representation is legitimized through a few mediums as presented in this section.

#### 4.1.2 Malaysia is referred to as an Islamic Country (Religionisation)

In this section, Malaysia is persistently referred as an Islamic country and hence highlighting the need for it to be peace making and showing compassion towards the victims of this incident. According to Reisigl & Wodak (2005), social actors are made as an out-group by referring them according to religionyms (p.50, fig. 2.5) (see Section 3.2.1.1).

A1, Line 70 – 71: *“They are all **Muslims** and they know that if there is violence, it would go on forever. There are 800,000 Filipinos in Sabah. It would be a huge problem in Sabah if violence erupts. The Malaysian security forces may end up dealing with guerrillas or a rido,” the source said, using a Muslim term for **clan war**.*

A2, Line 4 -6: *“Malaysia is a **Muslim nation** so they should understand that we need to bury our dead,” said Abraham Idjirani, secretary-general of the Sulu Sultanate and spokesman for Sulu Sultan Jamalul Kiram III.*

In both the extracts above, the strategy of collectivization is employed by using ‘deitics’ to realize the linguistic means of it. (Reisigl & Wodak, 2005, p.48). The deitic used in the extract above is ‘they’ and it is to refer to Malaysia as the negative-other. The function of such representation is to propagate the idea that as a Muslim nation, Malaysia should be aware that the consequence of the standoff would be on-going violence, which can be uncontrollable. Here, in this extract, it is also mentioned that the consequence that Malaysia may face is dealing with ‘guerrillas or a rido’ should Malaysia be persistent with its moves in Lahad Datu. In this extract, it depicts violence with the identity of an Islamic country, in other words, Malaysia’s decision would eventually spark off a clan war with the Muslims. However, in fact, it is unnecessary to

relate Malaysia to the term 'Muslim' as the situation will be dealt the same way by the government of Malaysia regardless of any religious affiliations. In the second extract above (A2), it depicts that Malaysia, as an Islamic nation, is not compassionate to let the followers of the Sultan of Sulu, who were sacrificed in the standoff, to be buried. Malaysia is made reference as the negative-other by the use of 'deitics' - 'they' to represent Malaysia and the emphasis of being unsympathetic, especially as an Islamic nation.

#### **4.1.3 Malaysia is constantly related with the Opposition Party (Party Political Alignment)**

The third referential strategy which emerged in this study is the party political alignment strategy. In this strategy, social actors are made as an out-group or negative-other by referring them according to party names (Reisigl & Wodak, 2005, p.51, fig. 2.5). In this section, the data collected will reveal how the social actor, 'Malaysia' is often referred and made relevant to the opposition parties with negative connotation.

A1, Line 12 – 14:

*Another source added: "There are a lot who can gain from this, not just in the Philippines **but in Malaysia as well.**"*

*These "external factors," as an Inquirer source described the groups, are one small faction that is in it for the money, an anti-Aquino administration group, and the **Malaysian political opposition.***

In the first extract above (A1, Line 12 – 14), Malaysia is represented as a party which gains benefits from this standoff, whether as a government or opposition parties. Van

Leuween (2008) asserts that a passivated social actor can also be the object of a sentence and be beneficialized. He also illustrates how social actors can be beneficialized by passivation with an example - “[Twenty-two thousand] Hong Kong Chinese arrived last year, bringing bulging wallets to cities like Vancouver.” His justification for this sentence is the portrayal of how “cities like Vancouver” are beneficialized in relation to “bringing in” (p. 33 -34) (see Section 2.1.2.1 & 3.2.2). Similarly, the passivation of the opposition party in Malaysia is beneficialized with the phrase “money”, however it is represented negatively here because the beneficiary of the “money” in the extract is gaining its reward from the suffering of the people involved in the Lahad Datu standoff.

A1, Line 27 – 32:

*The third group is allegedly the **Malaysian political opposition**, which is gearing up for general elections that may be called before June.*

*The intelligence officer said that one member of the Malaysian political opposition allied with **Anwar Ibrahim** was running for a post in Sabah.*

*“Apparently, this politician was one of those who spoke with the Kirams. He supposedly gave the opposition’s support to the Kirams’ claim to Sabah,” the source said*

The opposition leader, Anwar Ibrahim is again mentioned in this extract as the beneficiary of this standoff because at that time of the incident, there was an upcoming general election and hence, Anwar Ibrahim is alleged as a supporter of the Kirams’ group to secure more support from the voters in the said area.

A12, Line 20 - 26:

*The Bahasa daily Utusan Malaysia went even further when it printed a blog that claimed a “member of the **Malaysian political opposition allied with Anwar Ibrahim**” had met with Jamalul and promised the opposition’s support for his claim on Sabah.*

*TV3 used 30 minutes of its “Buletin Utama” program to discuss Anwar’s supposed links to the Lahad Datu “intrusion.” It also dedicated a similar period to demolish **Tian Chua, vice president of the Parti Keadilan Rakyat (PKR)**, for claiming the intrusion was a political play by leaders of Umno, the dominant party in the BN.*

A12, Line 41 - 50:

*In retaliation for dragging **Anwar** into the Sabah bloodbath, **Tian** was reported by the Borneo Post as having said that on the contrary, Umno orchestrated the gun battle “with armed intruders” in Lahad Datu.*

***Tian** said it was a “planned conspiracy of the UMNO government to divert attention and intimidate the people,” especially in Sabah, which is fast becoming opposition territory.*

***The PKR** is being helped in Sabah by **another opposition leader, Jeffrey Kitingan**, a brother of Prime Minister Najib Razak-ally Joseph Pairin Kitingan.*

***Azmin Ali**, another party stalwart, was also quoted by Borneo Insider as saying “the allegations were made in an attempt to weaken the growing support of Sabahans for **the opposition.**”*



*He challenged Anwar's accusers to "produce proof."*

The opposition parties in Malaysia are constantly indicated and made relevant as part of the contributing factors to spark off the incident. The opposition parties as highlighted above include Anwar Ibrahim, the President of PKR, Tian Chu, the Vice-President of PKR and Jeffrey Kitingan, a politician leader from Sabah.

As mentioned previously, Anwar Ibrahim is an influential opposition leader in Malaysia and was once belonged to the ruling Barisan Nasional (BN, National Front) coalition, but a falling out with top leaders resulted in him being beaten, jailed and disgraced. ("Profile: Anwar Ibrahim," 2001). Hence, his alleged involvement in this Lahad Datu incident would result in uninvited attention. The Vice-President of PKR, Tian Chu is another influential politician from PKR. He has been with the opposition political party since 2004 and has been in the headlines for a number of times due to some events, including being accused of biting a policeman during his arrest outside the Parliament with a series of court orders which subsequently; was contested and he won the Batu Parliamentary constituency in Kuala Lumpur; being charged in court again over comments he allegedly made pertaining to UMNO's supposed involvement in the Lahad Datu crisis. ("Chronology: Tian Chu." n.d.). The third opposition politician mentioned is Jeffrey Kitingan. He is another controversial politician as a result of his attempt to secede Sabah from the Federation of Malaysia and eventually, caused him to be detained under the Internal Security Act. ("Jefrey Kitingan." n.d.). By foregrounding these three controversial opposition political leaders, it is meant to construct 'Malaysia' as a country which is highly powered by the oppositions and hence, constructing weak control of the government.

A13, Line 63 – 66:

*It also could affect public confidence in **Malaysia's long-ruling National Front coalition**, which is gearing up for general elections that must be held by the end of June. **The coalition requires strong support** from voters in Sabah to fend off **an opposition alliance** that hopes to end more than five decades of federal rule by the National Front.*

The extract above states that the government political party is in need of support from the voters or public from Sabah to battle against the opposition party. What is constructed in the extract above is the government political party, National Front coalition is weak and hence, the support of the voters or public is crucial for them to remain their ruling in this upcoming general election. With this, it further supports the claim that the government has orchestrated the whole incident to gain back the support of the voters or public, especially those in Sabah.

A17, Line 34 – 41: *The massive air-ground offensive itself was probably **a consequence of political calculations** regarding the coming election in Malaysia; both the **government** and the **opposition (led by Anwar Ibrahim, so-called friend of Filipinos and self-proclaimed admirer of Jose Rizal)** have tried to outdo each other in striking nationalist postures and calling for the most aggressive action possible. The result: military aircraft dropping bombs on **a band of men (and women) armed only with handguns and rifles**. In other words, the politics of a close vote may have forced Kuala Lumpur's hand. The display of **military power** may have been made, then, to shock and awe not the Sultan's "intruders," but Malaysians soon to head to the voting booths.*

The extract above mentions that the decision to attack the Suluks is a result derived from the confrontation between the government and opposition political parties in Malaysia. To further elaborate the military power of Malaysia, the extract highlighted

that military aircraft have been deployed to attack the army of the Sultan of Sulu. However, the army of the Sultan is only referred as '*a band of men (and women) armed only with handguns and rifles*', and in this case, the reference of the army of Sultan Sulu has been mitigated and eventually, 'Malaysia', being represented by both the government and opposition parties in this extract, is portrayed as a bully who flexes its muscles on the weaker opponent. The last sentence also emphasized that Malaysia continued with their election as though nothing has happened.

From the results of the analysis for referential strategy, it is identified that the social actor, "Malaysia" is constructed based on 3 references, which posit Malaysia as the negative other: Malaysia is referred as a powerful agent, an Islamic country (religionisation strategy), and related to the opposition party (party political alignment strategy).

#### **4.2 Predication Strategy**

This section discusses the findings of the other significant strategy employed for this study; i.e. the predication strategy. This strategy is used to construct a negative image of the social actors by linguistically assigning negative qualities to them (Reisigl & Wodak, 2005, p. 54) (see Sections 2.1.1 & 3.2.1.2). The objective is to position them as part of the out-group community.

#### 4.2.1 'Malaysia' as 'Violent'

As discussed in section 4.1.1, 'Malaysia' is referred to the notion of 'power' in a negative context. In this study, it is found that 'power' is legitimized through the discourse of the collected data from the 'Lahad Datu Standoff' incident by constructing Malaysia as a 'bully' which violates its power. The data will be presented in this section of the study.

In this section, 'Malaysia' is predicated as violent and evidently, the image of bully is eventually related with words and phrases that carry negative connotations. The online Oxford Dictionaries (n.d.) defines violence as behaviour involving physical force intended to hurt, damage, or kill someone or something.

Numerous words and phrases that connote violence are made relevant to 'Malaysia' and some of the words and phrases are shown in the data below.

A3, Line 16 - 18:

*However, a spokesman for the self-proclaimed Filipino Muslim Sultan who sent the men to Sabah to stake their territorial claim, alleged **the Malaysian authorities had shot dead 10 members of the group.***

A 5, Line 6 – 8:

*At least 10 members of the "homecoming" party of the Sultanate of Sulu and two Malaysian commandoes were reportedly **killed when Malaysian police forces stormed their encampment in Felda Sahabat 17 in Lahad Datu***

A13, Line 1 – 3:

*Malaysian security forces using fighter jets attacked nearly 200 Filipinos in Sabah on Tuesday to end the armed group's three-week occupation of a Borneo village that has left 27 people dead.*

The three excerpts above are examples of how Malaysia is constructed violently by predicating violent related verbs and word choices to it. All the excerpts above use the verbs and phrases, such as “had shot dead”, “killed”, “stormed their encampment” and “attacked nearly 200 Filipinos” to connote the brutal actions that Malaysia had taken on the Filipinos in Lahad Datu. Furthermore, in excerpt A13, the phrase “using fighter jets” suggests excessive violent and forceful action by Malaysia against a group of 200 Filipinos.

A14, Line 3 – 7:

*Sulu Sultanate spokesman Abraham Idjirani was quoted as saying in a radio report that the group in Lahad Datu, **which is under heavy fire from Malaysian forces**, will continue to fight and will make their last stand.*

*The estimated **200 supporters of the Sultanate of Sulu** in Lahad Datu, led by, were **fighting back against the Malaysian forces** Tuesday, Idjirani said.*

***Bombs dropped by Malaysian jets** struck the area but did not hit the Sulu gunmen, Idjirani said quoting Agbimuddin.*

In the excerpt above, Malaysia is further represented as a violent social actor by being predicated with instruments or devices used for combat against their opponent. Related phrases, such as “heavy fire” and “bombs” show the weapons that Malaysia used against the Sultan of Sulu’s supporters. Line 5 – 6 also denotes Malaysia as the

aggressor, and the supporters of Rajah Mudah Agbimuddin Kiram as defenders when the phrase “fighting back against” is used on the supporters. With such, the supporters are legitimized while Malaysia is delegitimized in this section.

Besides that, another strategy which is evidently found from the data above is the activation and passivation strategies. According to Van Leuween (2008), activation and passivation of social actors can be realized in a specific activity. In other words, activation can be realized when the social actor is represented as the active dynamic force while passivation, on the other hand, can be executed when the social actors is represented as ‘undergoing’ the process or being at the ‘receiving end’.

A3, Line 17 – 18: *Malaysian authorities had shot dead 10 members of the group.*

Van Leuween (2008) asserts that activation occurs when the actors are represented as active dynamic forces in an activity. The excerpt above (A3, Line 17 – 18) shows the social actor, Malaysian authorities, is activated in a violent context. This is realized by employing the verb - ‘had shot dead’ to the social actor and this eventually connotes violence to the social actor. ‘The 10 members of the group’, on the other hand, is passivated in this statement and acts as the receiving end of the verb ‘shot dead’. Passivation occurs when a social actor is represented as “undergoing” the activity, or as being “at the receiving end of it.” (van Leeuwen, 2008). In this case, ‘the 10 members of the group’ is represented as the receiving end of the activity of being shot dead.

A summary of the occurrences of activation and passivation in the collected data is presented in Table 4.1 below:

**Table 4.1: Occurrences of Activation and Passivation**

Source	Activated Social Actor	Verb	Passivated Social Actor	Justification/ Observation
<p>A 5, Line 6 – 8:</p> <p><i>At least 10 members of the “homecoming” party of the Sultanate of Sulu and two Malaysian commandoes were reportedly killed when <b>Malaysian police forces stormed their encampment</b> in Felda Sahabat 17 in Lahad Datu.</i></p>	<p>Malaysian police forces</p>	<p>stormed</p>	<p>‘their’ encampment</p>	<p>The Malaysian police forces as a social actor is activated with the verb ‘stormed’. The online Oxford Dictionaries (n.d.) defines storm as an action to move angrily or forcefully in a specified direction. Again, this verb ‘storm’ connotes that violence is triggered by the social actor. The receiving end of the action of being stormed is the members of Sultan of Sulu who are encamped in that area.</p>

**Table 4.1: Occurrences of Activation and Passivation, continued**

Source	Activated Social Actor	Verb	Passivated Social Actor	Justification/ Observation
<p>A13, Line 1 – 2:</p> <p><i>Malaysian security forces using fighter jets attacked nearly 200 Filipinos.</i></p>	<p>Malaysian security forces</p>	<p>attacked</p>	<p>nearly 200 Filipinos</p>	<p>The Malaysian security forces as a social actor is activated with the verb ‘attacked’. And, the receiving end of the action of being attacked is the 200 Fillipinos.</p>
<p>A12, Line 24 -25: <i>Malaysian police have allegedly been rounding up and “shooting men without documents.”</i></p>	<p>Malaysian police</p>	<p>rounding up and shooting</p>	<p>men without documents.”</p>	<p>The Malaysian police is activated with the verbs ‘rounding up’ and ‘shooting’. ‘Men without documents’ is the receiving end of the action mentioned. In this context. ‘men without documents’ are those Suluks/ Filiponos</p>



**Table 4.1: Occurrences of Activation and Passivation, continued**

Source	Activated Social Actor	Verb	Passivated Social Actor	Justification/ Observation
<p>A14, Line 1 – 2: <i>The “Royal Army” of the Sultanate of Sulu has no plans to surrender despite <b>being bombed by Malaysian security forces</b> in Lahad Datu, Sabah Tuesday morning.</i></p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>being bombed</p>	<p>by Malaysian security forces</p>	<p>The social actor ‘Malaysian security forces’ is passivated in this sentence and portrayed as the social actor who is undergoing the action.</p>

Another obvious method of predicating violence to the social actor, Malaysia is by citing quotations from the so-called “victims”. From the readers’ perspective, “victims” always successfully acquire their sympathy and hence, putting the blame or accusing the party that causes the pain on the victims. Most readers would not only question the reliability of the “victims” quoted in news but also be more inclined to show their sympathy towards them.

A 21, Line 1 – 4: *“They **dragged all the men outside the houses, kicked and hit them,**” 32-year-old Amira Taradji said on Friday as she recounted her family’s ordeal in Sandakan, which started when Malaysian security forces launched a crackdown on suspected supporters of Sulu Sultan Jamalul Kiram III in Sabah.*

A22, Line 72 – 73: *“Our people **are treated like animals** there and this has to stop because they are no longer hitting the Kirams,” Amin said.*

In the extract above, a quotation by a victim named, Amira Taradji is cited on how they (the police force) inflict violence to the civilians by physically abusing them. Descriptions on how they are abused, such as being dragged out of the house, kicked and hit by the security forces further feed the imagination of the readers on the type of violence inflicted to the victims. The metaphor – “treated like animals” is used to connote inhumane treatments given by the Malaysian security forces.

A22, Line 5 – 6: *Taradji said Malaysian policemen **ordered Filipino men to run as fast as they could and shot them.***

A22, 7 – 12:

*Some of the arrested men, who showed immigration papers, **were shot dead**, she said, recounting reports by other Filipinos who fled Sabah with her.*

*“Some of those arrested did not see jail because **they were shot and killed,**”*

*Taradji said.*

*She said those who had been locked up were also unlucky, as the Malaysian authorities **were not feeding them.***

In the sentences above, the same victim, Taradji claims that more serious violence is inflicted on the civilians from the Philippines by the Malaysian policemen by ordering the civilians to run as fast as they could and shot them or even torturing them by not feeding them if they are caught. The Malaysian policemen are represented here as taking advantage of the situation by satisfying their own pleasure through toying with the lives of innocent civilians.

However, all the above is baseless claims from the so-called ‘victims’ from the Lahad Datu incident and should not be taken into consideration. The validity and reliability of the stories from the ‘victims’ can not be ensured. Also, according to Wodak & Busch (2004), stories of bad experiences from “one victim” should not be generalized and accepted as whole (p. 114).

A18, Line 14 – 17: *“I was able to speak to one woman (in Tawi-Tawi) who kept on crying because she said **children and women were being shot**. While there was a call for maximum tolerance, there is **indiscriminate firing** (by the Malaysians). Maximum violence is what is happening,” Princess Jacel said in Filipino.*

Another quotation from the daughter of Jamalul Kiram states that the Malaysians were shooting at victims, especially at children and women. The lexical item - ‘indiscriminate firing’ used by Princess Jacel is referring to the army of Malaysia, describing how they fired and hurt the victims of the affected areas, and ignored the fact that some of them were children and women, or innocent.

#### **4.2.2 ‘Malaysia’ as ‘Lacking Humanitarianism’**

Another predication found in the news articles collected is the depiction of ‘Malaysia’ as lacking humanitarianism in dealing with this Lahad Datu incident.

A7, Line 1 – 3: *Malaysian authorities have **barred the humanitarian team sent by the Philippine government from entering Lahad Datu, stopping the group at Kota Kinabalu, a member of the team told the INQUIRER on Saturday.***

A6, line 8 – 13: *“We have to respect that **they** are in control of the situation there,” said Cabinet Secretary Almendras of the Malaysian government, when asked at a press conference about **the failure of the Aquino administration to convince***

*Prime Minister Najib Razak to allow the entry of what Malacañang described as a ship carrying “humanitarian” help—social workers and medical personnel—to aid the sultan’s followers.*

As depicted in the extracts above, Malaysia is blamed for barring or not allowing the entrance of humanitarian aid given by the government of the Philippines. It is also cited in the second extract that the government of Philippines has done what they could to convince Malaysia to allow the humanitarian help to enter the affected area to provide humanitarian help, however Malaysia denied the entrance of their humanitarian aids ship. In line 13, it is cited ‘- to aid the sultan’s follower’ which refers to the humanitarian aid is also intended to assist the followers of Agbumuddin. In this case, not only Malaysia is blamed for denying the humanitarian help to the victim, but also the possibility of neutralizing the tension of the incident by providing humanitarian help to the followers of Agbumuddin. Ironically, the reasons for the denial of the entrance of the humanitarian aid are not mentioned or brought up in the respective articles.

A7, Line 10 -11: *“Our mission didn’t materialize because of the **restrictions imposed by the Malaysian authorities,**” Abdurahman said.*

A7, Line 19 -2 1: *Ardo said the **military wanted to help Filipinos in Sabah,** including those from the group led by Agbimuddin, to come home, but it **could not do anything** because the ship sent to bring them home **could not get through border security.***

The two extracts above show the results of Malaysia barring the humanitarian team from entering Malaysia. Malaysia is blamed for the failure of the humanitarian team to provide assistance to the victims and the intention of the group led by Agbumuddin who want to surrender.

A15, Line 54 – 56: *Del Rosario had requested that Malaysia establish a “safe corridor for women and children and other civilians not involved in the conflict” and allow a Philippine Navy vessel in the area to conduct a humanitarian mission.*

The depiction of ‘Malaysia’ as lacking humanitarianism in dealing with this Lahad Datu incident is again foregrounded by portraying constant pleading to Malaysia to allow humanitarian aid to the affected areas in Lahad Datu. In the extracts above, ‘Malaysia’ was demanded by the home minister of the Philippines, Del Rosario to provide a place or area for the government of the Philippines to provide humanitarian mission for the victims. It depicts that the Malaysian government has not given sufficient humanitarian assistance to the victims and hence, the need for the home minister of the Philippines to request for such. Phrases such as ‘safe corridor’, ‘women’ and ‘children’ are used to further emphasize that the weak parties are being victimized by Malaysia.

A19, Line 8 – 9: *The note verbale also called on the Malaysian government to “give humane treatment to the Filipinos under their custody,” he said.*

Another portrayal is found in the sentence above stating a note verbale was sent to the government to give humane treatment to those caught and under the custody of the

government. The phrase “humane treatment” has negative connotation and is very vague. According to online Oxford Dictionaries (n.d.), the word ‘humane’ means having or showing compassion; and inflicting the minimum of pain. The definitions portrays that either Malaysia has been unkind or is torturing those under custody.

A22, Line 58 – 59: ***The New York-based Human Rights Watch** also wants to know what is really happening in Sabah.*

A22, Line 64 – 66: *Robertson said the **Malaysian authorities** should “**ensure the protection** of all civilians in the area, and allow **humanitarian access** for the provision of emergency assistance to those affected by the violence.”*

The extract above again depicts that the Malaysian authorities are being demanded to assure the safety of the civilians at the affected areas. Furthermore, ‘***The New York-based Human Rights Watch***’ is quoted in this extract to show the necessity for an international humanitarian organization to be involved and deal with the lack of humanitarianism in Malaysia. Human Rights Watch is an organization which is a non-profitable and a non-government linked organization, run by a group of professionals with diverse backgrounds and nationalities. With its influence, Human Rights Watch is constantly active in promoting human rights and justice around the world. (“Who we are” n.d.). A representative from Human Rights Watch, Robertson is quoted in the paragraph above urging the Malaysian Authorities to ensure the civilians are protected and allow ‘humanitarian access’. Indirectly, it entails that Malaysia has neither been protecting the civilians nor allowing the humanitarian access to the affected areas.

However, it is found that other newspapers have reported that Malaysia has given support and humanitarian aids to the civilians. A local newspaper, New Strait Times reported that the Putera 1Malaysia Club's (KP1M) is on a humanitarian aid mission and has provided some daily necessities such as food and toiletries to the villages at the affected area in Lahad Datu. (“Lahad Datu” 2013). Whilst, another news report states that the Civil Defence Department of Malaysia has helped to organise humanitarian efforts in areas affected by the intrusion in Lahad Datu. The assistance that is provided includes opening of relief centres to provide shelter and food for 1,500 people who had been displaced from their homes. (“Civil Defence” 2013). As for the claim that the humanitarian team is prohibited from entering the affected areas in Lahad Datu, a report from the Philippines’ local news portal has disavowed such claim. According to a news report by ABS-CBN from the Philippines, the Philippine Embassy officials are already in Lahad Datu in Malaysia to conduct a humanitarian and consular mission to Filipinos affected by an ongoing standoff. This is also further supported by a statement from the Foreign Affairs Undersecretary Jose Brillantes who is a representative from the Department of Foreign Affairs. (“PH Officials” 2013).

Another predication that emerged in the collected data under the theme of humanitarianism is the violation of human rights that is committed by the social actor, ‘Malaysia’. A controversial bill, namely Security Offenses Special Measures Act (SOSMA) in Malaysia has been raised as an issue and is used against it in this section. This new act functions to replace the Internal Security Act (ISA) which has long been criticized for allowing preventive detention for indefinite periods without trial. With SOSMA, it allows the government to detain suspects who breach the law relating to



security offences for the purpose of maintaining public order and security and for connected matters, and also removes the government's option to detain without trial and providing a maximum detention of 28 days for the purpose of investigation. (Chooi, 2012). However, due to the government of Malaysia's decision to detain the suspects who are involved in this incident, Malaysia has been criticized and has been scrutinized by the media for its action.

A22, Line 65 – 69: *“We’re concerned about the Malaysian government’s use of the Security Offenses Special Measures Act to detain reportedly more than 50 individuals, and call on the government to either charge them with a recognizable criminal offense or release them. All parties to the conflict should heed the call of UN Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon to ‘act in full respect of international human rights norms and standards,’ Robertson said.*

A23, Line 43 - 44: *Malaysia’s Security Operations Act, widely criticized by the international community, allows the government to detain suspects for 28 days without trial.*

A21, Line 12 – 15: *But a radio broadcast monitored by the Inquirer from Digos City indicated that those arrested were Tausug and Orang Suluk (people originally from Sulu) and they were arrested under the Security Offenses (Special Measures) Act of 2012 that human rights activists in Malaysia had criticized as unconstitutional and Amnesty International had described as an “oppressive law.”*

In the extracts above, the violation of human rights by Malaysia is being foregrounded by emphasizing Malaysia as abusing SOSMA to detain suspected individuals. Lexicalisation is also employed to describe the act, such as ‘unconstitutional’ and ‘oppressive’. However, the act was gazetted in 2012 and did not intend to be specifically employed to detain the suspects from the ‘Lahad Datu’ incident. The act of foregrounding the issue of SOSMA has predicated Malaysia as violating human rights and hence, creating a perspective in the mind of the readers of such predication.

#### **4.2.3 Malaysia as ‘Deceiving’**

In this section, ‘Malaysia’ is predicated as a deceiving agent in a few occasions. The examples that will be presented allocate ‘Malaysia’ in an agentive role as a deceiver when reporting the situation of the ‘Lahad Datu’ incident. This also insinuates that ‘Malaysia’ has something to hide from the public or media and hence, leads to conspiring acts.

A 5, Line 21 – 22: *Meanwhile, despite **claims by Malaysian authorities they have ended the stand-off, tension remains high in Lahad Datu.***

In the sentence above, Malaysia is represented as the active agent of for the act of ‘deceiving’ and this serves to paint a negative picture of Malaysia which words cannot be trusted.

A10, Line 32 – 37: *Meanwhile, the Islamist political party Parti Islam Se-Malaysia (PAS) asked the Najib government to provide Malaysians with “a real explanation of the incident in Lahad Datu.”*

*Mustafa Ali, PAS secretary general, said the problem has now become serious with people getting killed.*

*“It should not be regarded as a thing that is not serious but **the government is not even telling us the truth,**” he told Malaysian newspaper Haraka Daily.*

The opposition party, PAS once again is quoted in the extract mentioned above. This time, Malaysia is demanded to provide the real truth of the situation and it is further emphasized the criticality of revealing the truth as people’s lives and safety are at stake.

A20, Line 11-14: *But the number of casualties could not be confirmed independently as there **appears** to be a news blackout regarding the incursions into Sabah in Malaysia’s state-controlled media.*

*As **foreign correspondents are barred** from Lahad Datu, there is no way to independently verify the police information*

According to the extracts above, it is claimed or the lexical used is ‘appears’ that the local and foreign media have been barred by Malaysia from disclosing the news of the standoff. They named it ‘news blackout’, which means a situation in which a

government or other authority imposes a ban on the publication of news on a particular subject (Collins online English dictionary, n.d.).

It insinuates that there is a hidden agenda for this incident and hence, the need to bar the media from reporting the incident. It is unjustified to report that Malaysia imposed 'news blackout' on the Lahad Datu incident when there is no solid evidence, even though the lexical 'appear' is used to justify the situation. From the perspective of readers, Malaysia would be regarded as manifesting hidden agendas of the incident and this will cause the feeling of resentment among them.

In short, the analysis above shows that "Malaysia" is constructed based on 2 predications: "Malaysia" is predicated as a violent, lacking humanitarianism and deceiving.

### **4.3 Discussion**

From the findings presented in this chapter, it is evident that Malaysia, as a social actor in this study, has been represented as the negative-other in the Lahad Datu incident. The media selected for this study, "Inquirer.net" has clearly constructed Malaysia as the negative-other as revealed by the results of the analysis by using the frameworks of Wodak (2009) and van Leuween (2008). Looking at the results from this chapter, "Inquirer.net" seems to be tool for certain groups to provide certain selected information to the general public. It is obvious because in order to manipulate others through text and talk, one needs to have access to some form of public discourse. These certain groups

undeniably own the power to access these resources, such as the mass media and public discourse, which is resource shared by members of ‘symbolic’ elites, specifically governments, politicians, journalists, scholars, writers, teachers, and so on (Van Dijk, 1996). Hence, the groups which own the power to control “Inquirer.net” are the ones liable to manipulate the mind of the readers.

Nonetheless, what is of more concern in this study is certain messages or hidden sociological power relations that can be found in all aspects of media content is not recognized by the mass audience members. This is due to the fact that they tend to immerse themselves in media materials without questioning the possible hidden agendas (see Section 2.2). The results of the analysis revealed that the more dominant representation of Malaysia in this study is the notion of power. The power that is owned by Malaysia as a country and authority is delegitimized when Malaysia is represented as abusing its power as a more dominant group in this “Lahad Datu” incident, and manipulating the standoff (see Section 4.1.1). The possible reason behind such representation is to emphasize that Malaysia has the upper hand to this incident and portrays the others as being victimized. In fact, the power that is owned by Malaysia as a country has put Malaysia in a very complicated position because every move that is made by Malaysia is being scrutinized by the media. In other words, “Inquirer.net”, in the reporting of this incident, actually decides the consequences of every move made by reporting it the way they want it to be represented in the eye of the public. The second reference of Malaysia as an Islamic nation mainly serves to foreground the absence of compassion by Malaysia as an Islamic nation. As a matter of fact, it is unnecessary to bring up the religious status of Malaysia because it is irrelevant to the incident. The way

Malaysia deals with the incident is based on the decision of the government, not religion. The possible reason for the media to constantly relate Malaysia to 'Islam' is to indicate how Malaysia failed to show empathy to the victims. Such reference has the intention to relate religion with politics and manipulate the readers to believe that Malaysia has not served its duty as an Islamic state (see Section 4.1.2). The last reference of Malaysia in this study is to its opposition parties. The analysis shows Malaysia is represented as not being able to control its opposition political parties and hence, resulted in them taking advantage from this standoff. The possible reason for such representation is to influence readers to believe that Malaysia again failed to control the situation of its own country and hence, caused the lives of those Filipinos residing in the area of the incident (see Section 4.1.3).

In the second part of the findings, "Inquirer.net" successfully manipulates the mind of the readers by further represented Malaysia with degrading predications, i.e. as a violent, lack of humanitarianism and deceiving social actor (see Section 4.2). Such representation influences the readers to believe that Malaysia has abused its power to the victims of this incident. On the other hand, the government of the Philippines has not been brought up or highlighted in the reporting of this news compared to Malaysia. One of the possible reasons for such representation could due to the fruitless Philippines' claims over Sabah since 1963. The Philippines' unsuccessful claim over the years on Sabah may have caused it to hold grudges against Malaysia. The claim that Sabah (then North Borneo) joined Malaysia as a country without the full consent of the Philippines could also be the rationale for such representation (see Section 2.3).

Media is supposedly the avenue to report news to the public, however it has been abused by people in power to manipulate or control the public's interpretations and evaluations of the information provided. Representation of Malaysia in this study actually skews readers' perceptions about an entire nation through the use of language as discourse. Media by right should only relay information and facts, and should not manipulate the content for whatever reasons.

#### **4.4 Summary**

This chapter has discussed the detailed analysis of discursive strategies that are employed by "Inquirer.net" to represent Malaysia as the negative-other. The next chapter will present the conclusion of this study.

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **CONCLUSION**

#### **5.0 Introduction**

The objective of this study is to investigate the discursive constructions of Malaysia in the media of the Philippines, namely the online newspaper of “The Philippines Inquirer”. This study sets to investigate the possible discursive strategies employed to construct the negative-other representation of ‘Malaysia’ in the Lahad Datu Standoff incident and the probable reasons hidden within the media coverage of this incident. In order to do such, 23 online articles are selected for the corpus of this study from 11<sup>th</sup> February to 1<sup>st</sup> June 2013 from the official website of the said newspaper, “Inquire.net.” The data is then analyzed using the framework of Wodak’s DHA (2009) and van Leuween’s socio-semantic approach (2008).

This chapter presents a summary of the results formed on the research questions. A discussion of the implications of the study follows. Finally, recommendations for future research are discussed.

#### **5.1 Summary of the Results**

Two main research questions, with 2 sub-questions to support the first research questions are asked in this study. An analysis of the data revealed the following results:



### **5.1.1 Research Question 1**

**What discourse structure and strategies does ‘Inquirer.net’ use to discursively construct Malaysia as a social actor?**

The discourse strategies, referential and predication derived from Wodak’s DHA (2008) are used for this study. The first discourse strategy, referential is chosen for this study because the objective of the strategy is to label social actors, either positively or negatively using many sub-strategies, for example the categorization of in-group and out-groups. Hence, it is appropriate to adopt this strategy to investigate the discourse construction of Malaysia as the social actor of this study. Predication strategy is chosen for as the second strategy of this study because it is used to label social actors positively or negatively and this can be realized by predicating the social actor linguistically, which are commonly with “stereotypical, evaluative attributions of negative or positive traits in the linguistic form of implicit or explicit implications. As such, predication strategy is suitable to be used to analyze the data for this study. Finally, to further strengthen the validity of the results for this study, van Leuween’s socio-semantic approach is chosen. As mentioned in sections 3.2.2, this approach is used concurrently with the referential and predication strategy to question the ways the social actor of this study, Malaysia is represented by “Inquirer.net” in the online newspaper English discourse.

### **5.1.1.1 Research Questions 1.1**

#### **How is ‘Malaysia’ named and referred to linguistically?**

The referential strategy as mentioned in section 5.2.1 is the first discourse strategy used to analyze the data collected for this study. The analysis of the data revealed that the social actor, Malaysia is referred and associated with an array of negative references under three major themes (see Section 4.1).

To begin with, Malaysia is referred to as a powerful agent in the context of this study, but at the same time, is used by “Inquirer.net” to position Malaysia as the negative-other by constructing it as a ‘bully’ in the Lahad Datu incident. The power that is owned by Malaysia is delegitimized when it utilizes its military and police forces to oppress the weaker opponent. Van Leuween’s (2008) assimilation and collectivization strategies are used to refer the strength of the troops from Malaysia and the Sultan of Sulu. Results show that the troops of Sultan of Sulu are assimilated through quantifying them, while the army and police forces of Malaysia are collectivized and labeled as large quantity, such as battalions. Aggregation is critical in the examples above to highlight that the majority rules in the society (see Section 4.1.1).

Malaysia is also represented as a social actor to have the ability to manipulate the Lahad Datu incident. This includes manipulating the followers of Sultan of Sulu to spark off the Lahad Datu incident, and the internal manipulation between the government and the opposition parties in Malaysia that caused the incident. Under the same theme, van Leuween’s nomination strategy is found to nominate the leaders of the opposition parties to foreground their significant roles to manipulate the whole incident.

Other references of Malaysia in the negative-other representation through power that is authorized to Malaysia can be found in its inability to administer the incident, deportation of illegal immigrants back to the Philippines, and foregrounding the stories of victims resulted from this standoff (see Section 4.1).

The second reference emerged from the results is religionisation. The fact that Malaysia is an Islamic country is used against itself when Malaysia is constructed as not being compassionate enough to the incident. The lack of peace making nature and sympathy towards the Sultan of Sulu's troops and the affected Filipinos are constantly referred in the collected data (see Section 4.1.2)

Party political alignment is the third strategy used to refer Malaysia as the negative-other. van Leuween's (2008) passivation strategy is found in this section to construct Malaysia as a beneficiary of the incident. The commotion between the government of Malaysia and its opposition party are also constructed as one of the factors to spark off the incident. By foregrounding the power of the opposition parties in the articles, it is made to seem that the government of Malaysia is unable to control its country (see Section 4.1.3).

### **5.1.1.2 Research Questions 1.2**

#### **What traits, characteristics, qualities and features are attributed to ‘Malaysia’?**

The predication strategy as mentioned in section 5.2.1 is the second discourse strategy used to analyze the data collected for this study. The analysis of the data revealed that Malaysia is predicated negatively by assigning negative qualities to it. Three main predications are found from the results of the analysis; Malaysia as violent, lacking humanitarianism and being deceiving.

The predication of being violent to the social actor is realized by assigning words and phrases which connote violence. The frequent occurrences words or phrases such as bombed, dragged, fired and shot dead will construct Malaysia as the negative-other. Van Leuween’s (2008) role allocation strategy once again is found in this section. In the occurrence of activation, Malaysia is represented as active dynamic forces in inflicting violence. And, in passivation, the victims of the incident are represented as the receiving end of the violent act (see Section 4.2.1 and Table 1). The final strategy used to predicate violence to Malaysia is by quoting statements from the victims. By employing the sympathy strategy, readers will put the blame to the doer the action and in this case, it will be Malaysia.

The second predication emerged from the study is the depiction of Malaysia as lacking humanitarianism. Barring humanitarian assistance from entering the affected areas has been mentioned several times in the data collected, stating that Malaysia has some hidden agenda. The involvement of international human rights further organizations support depicts the lack of humanitarianism in Malaysia. Malaysia is also accused of

violating human rights when they detained the suspects. However, all the above are baseless claims (see Section 4.2.2).

Predication as a deceiving agent is the final construction of Malaysia found in this strategy. The activation of Malaysia of a deceiving agent is realized by relating Malaysia with words and phrases with such connotation, for example “claim”, “requested for real explanation”, “not telling the truth” and “news blackout” (see Section 4.2.3).

### **5.1.2 Research Questions 2**

**What do such structures and strategies tell us about underlying prejudices and ideologies on ‘Malaysia’?**

It is evident that Malaysia, as a social actor in this study, has been represented as the negative-other by the media selected for this study, “Inquirer.net”. It has clearly constructed Malaysia as the negative-other by employing the referential and predication strategies. “Inquirer.net” seemed to be a tool for stakeholders of the company. The hidden ideologies for such representation are certainly not recognized by the audience and hence, this study sets to investigate the strategies and unravel the possible hidden agenda. As mentioned in Section 2.3, the probable reason could be due to the historical socio-political relation between both countries. However, this is only an assumption derived from the results of the study.

## **5.2 Implications**

Although the analysis on negative-other representation in media is not a common field of study, the context selected for this study, the Lahad Datu Standoff, is quite current and interesting. This is due to the complicated social-political relations between the Philippines and Malaysia (see Section 2.2).

It is revealed from the results of this study that the social actor, Malaysia is represented as the negative-other by using the referential and predication strategies. Readers who are not aware of such term as negative-other representation and hence, they will believe and practice what they read. This study is very useful for readers to realize that negative construction of social actors exists in print or online newspapers. Hence, more studies on similar themes must be made available for public to promote realization of constructed ideologies in discourse practices.

## **5.3 Recommendations**

There are a number of limitations in this study on terms of data selections and scope of studies. Further comprehensive studies on the areas mentioned may reveal more appealing results. The recommended areas for future studies are as follows:

- 1) Expanding the corpus for more in-depth analysis according to the same theme, as the number of articles collected for this study is only 23 articles.

2) Examining the other discursive strategies from Wodak's DHA (2009) framework may reveal more solid evidence of negative-other representation of Malaysia, as this study limits itself to only referential and predication strategies.

3) Conducting qualitative in-dept studies on the reception and perception of readers could further justify the validity of the results of this study.