

**‘Selling Race and God during GE13: A Discourse-
historical Analysis of Editorials and Columns in
Mainstream Malay and English-language newspapers
during the 13th General Election in Malaysia’**

by

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Abstract

This thesis conducts a critical analysis of editorials and columns in mainstream newspapers during Malaysia's 13th General Election (GE13) campaign. In a country that practises parliamentary democracy but simultaneously observes a 'close cooperation' (Mustafa, 2010, p. 51) between the ruling party and the mainstream press, this study explores the links between the two. The thesis demonstrates the continuing power of the mainstream press in the country. It also explores how a so-called parliamentary democracy can lead to authoritarian rule, as well as the role of the press in this process.

Adhering to Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) principles, the thesis describes and explains how particular relations of power are enacted, reproduced and legitimized within government-owned media, in this case Malaysia where control is institutionalized. This study specifically focuses on the discursive strategies of legitimation in editorials and columns, and how they present particular narratives or arguments in the interests of the powerful. The thesis offers a greater understanding of the deep ideological structures of mainstream newspapers and, in particular, their construction and (de)legitimation of the government and opposition during the GE13 campaign. This investigation draws on various methods, from quantitative content analysis to the Discourse-historical Approach (DHA), and insights from a range of disciplines, to examine the discursive features of mainstream newspapers' discourse during the GE13 campaign.

The main contributions of the thesis are on theoretical, methodological and empirical grounds. It contributes to the body of knowledge on political communication research by focusing on the Asian-Malaysian context and moving away from Western-centric models that often overlook the key element of culture. The application of the DHA provides a novel and valuable contribution to the understanding of Malaysian election communication discourse through its interdisciplinary methods and analyses. The empirical investigation provides conclusive evidence that revolves around the issues of the perversion of developmental journalism, race/ethnicity, Islam and its abuses, as well as change and time. This thesis also reviews and reveals the extent to which the press in Malaysia is controlled, dominated and manipulated, thereby challenging those, including the ruling elite, who have claimed that Malaysia is a democratizing nation state.

For Mus'ab Umayr, my cheeky one year old son.

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Introduction

Malaysia, is a multi-racial, multi-cultural and multi-religion country located in Southeast Asia. It practices parliamentary democracy with elections held once every five years, but since its independence in 1957, it has been ruled continuously by a single coalition, Barisan Nasional (BN) headed by the main Malay party, the United Malays National Organisation (UMNO). Therefore, Crouch (1996a) argues that “elections in Malaysia are really no more than a ritual providing a cloak of legitimacy for what is really authoritarian rule” (p. 114). While Pepinsky (2009, p.155) suggests that ‘electoral authoritarianism’ would be a better fit for Malaysia, how is it possible that a parliamentary democracy has had the same ruling party in power for the last six decades? This thesis focuses on Malaysia’s 13th general election (henceforth, GE13) held on 5 May 2013. Although BN regained its power in the GE13 and the country had witnessed previous battles for political (or personal) supremacy, GE13 was Malaysia’s most crucial election in decades. After the emergence of Pakatan Rakyat (PR) during the 2008 election when PR unexpectedly denied BN a two-third majority in the parliament for the first time, it was unusually difficult to predict with confidence the winner for GE13. Most agree it was very closely and bitterly fought and the margin of victory wafer-thin, unlike in previous general elections (see for instance Lumsden, 2013; Suzuki, 2013).

The Malaysian media have been instrumental in maintaining the government’s hegemony by silencing dissent, supporting the government and closing down any potential alternatives for more than half century (e.g. see Mustafa, 2000; Mustafa, 2005; Mohd Azizuddin, 2007; Tapsell, 2013). After independence in 1957, control was initially implemented as part of the plan for modernization and the socioeconomic development of the country. In 1969, after the race riots on May 13, control was justified in the name of nation stability and ethnic unity. Mohd Azizuddin (2009) hence asserts that: “Malaysia has never applied the concept of freedom of the press as in the West because sensitivities surrounding the race relations have denied the concept to be fully realised”. (p. 68). The multi-ethnic, multi-religious, and multi-cultural nature of Malaysia is used as a convenient justification for the government to autocratically maintain the BN government in power, restricting political opposition and fundamental civic liberties. The slew of legal controls and indirect or direct mass media ownership through privatization during the premiership of Malaysia’s fourth prime minister, Mahathir Mohamad, continues to repress, silence and

curtail freedom of information (See Zaharom & Wang, 2004; Mustafa, 2005; Yeoh, 2010). According to Mustafa (2010):

The pattern of media ownership in Malaysia presents the ruling party with the opportunity to engage in ‘close cooperation’ with the mainstream press and other mass media, particularly in moments when the ruling coalition is confronted with fissures in its political hegemony, a crisis of national magnitude, or the need to boost its public profile in a general election (p. 51).

In the particular case of the Malaysian media, the newspaper sector is one of most controlled in the world, ranked 146 out of 180 countries in the World Press Freedom index in 2016. Yet in 2014 prime minister Najib Razak boasted that Malaysia was “the best democracy in the world” (Lee, 2014). In 2017, in front of American academics and policymakers in Washington, Najib¹ maintained that democracy is very much alive in a country where free speech is celebrated, and elections are fiercely contested (Najib, 2017). Therefore, although theoretically “newspapers are essential for democracy” (see for example Bari, 2003; Doronila, 2000; Muzaffar, 1986), ironically, there is nothing very shocking about their biases. Most of the times, in Malaysia in particular, as Coronel (2002) puts it, they “are used as proxies in the battle between rival political groups, in the process of sowing divisiveness rather than consensus, hate speech instead of sober debate, and suspicion rather than social trust” (p.2). Such abuse would be obvious if the authorities hold a bludgeon over people’s heads (Chomsky, 2002, p.20). But indeed, that would be less effective as in the words of Richardson (2007, p. 181) “[j]ournalism is a powerful genre of communication which, through employing argumentation- predominantly rhetorical move places in the normative framework of objective reporting- can help organise people’s understandings of the world.” While there is an interest in understanding how the press presents a particular view of Malaysia, its politics, political parties and politicians, my project also represents an attempt to expose and help combat such opaque injustice, a reality that ostensibly stands behind the narrative.

¹ This is a Malay name; the name Razak is patronymic, not a family name, and the person should be referred to by the given name, Najib.

The thesis's focus

In this study, I carry out a critical analysis of the discourse and ideology of mainstream newspapers during the GE13 in Malaysia. By mainstream I am referring to the national, traditional print newspapers circulate throughout the whole country as opposed to the local newspapers serving a city or region. My work particularly studies the argumentative discourse and, more precisely, the editorials and columns in mainstream newspapers during the GE13 campaign from 20 April to 4 May 2013. The desire to focus solely on an opinionated genre, i.e. editorial and column rather than news reporting, reflects my interest in argumentation designed to convince readers of a point of view and provoke them to a course of action. The purpose of this study is to establish a greater understanding of the deep ideological structures of the mainstream newspapers and, in particular, the construction and (de)legitimation of government and opposition during the GE13 campaign. Ultimately my interest centres on the role of the editorials and columns – and the broader mainstream media- in sustaining the power of the government. The fundamental aim of my research is to contribute to the limited body of knowledge about political communication in Malaysia. Moreover, it will contribute to the growing body of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) tied to the investigation of the argumentative newspapers discourse in a non-Western context.

Although giant strides have been made throughout the years in the field of political communication, CDA and even journalism; much of this work does not reflect the realities and complexities of many countries in the Asian region, including Malaysia. On the other hand, the existing research output particularly vis-à-vis electoral communication from Malaysia, unfortunately is insignificant in number. They tend to emulate the majority of Western communication research by relying on quantitative methodology alone. While this is helpful, it somehow arguably creates an intellectual passé. All the more, quantitative methodology alone limits research to “problems that can be handled by quantitative measures and statistical tests” (Chu, 1988, p. 206). And since the elements of culture is often ignored in the Western dominated communication research and theory traditions, studies in the Asian region that emulate this perspective to understand non-Western cases and contexts often result in research outputs that are “repetitive and lack a clear focus as they tackle problems that may seem to be trivial or irrelevant, although methodologically

rigorous” (Chu, 1988, pp. 205-6; see also Wilnat and Aw, 200, pp. 2-3; Sandel, Yueh and Lu, 2017, p. 120).

The work described in the following chapters attempts to fill in this gap. It draws on several theoretical traditions to understand mainstream argumentative discourse during Malaysia’s GE13 campaign. Although it subscribes theoretically and methodologically to the tradition of CDA in accordance with the research programme of the Discourse-Historical Approach (DHA), the thesis also draws on literature relating to political communication, democracy and media as well as argumentative theories. The DHA is particularly useful because it is the only CDA approach that explicitly and consistently cites argumentation as a key discourse strategy. Such an approach, drawing as it does on several frameworks, is dictated by the research questions and data analysis requirements. The remainder of this introductory chapter sets the research questions and sheds some further light on my position as an analyst. Finally, I conclude by outlining the thesis structure.

Research Questions

I seek to conduct a historical and evaluative piece of research that addresses a complex socio-political issue. My aim is to go beyond linguistic analysis and attempt to make sense of the social, political, cultural and epistemological contextual elements involved. The key questions underpinning the research are:

- During moments of scrutiny (and political debate) such as the GE13 campaign, what is the mainstream newspapers’ role in providing support to the government?
- What does this support tell us about wider theories of democracy?
- How is such support justified by the mainstream newspapers (and how does this link to Malaysia’s particular history and racial/ethnic make-up)?

In order to answer these questions, the analysis starts with a preliminary quantitative content analysis in Chapter 5 to examine the macro journalistic content across the sample texts by exploring these more specific questions:

- What percentage of the content of the editorials and columns analysed was specific to the 2013 GE? How do the Malay- and English language newspapers compare to each other?
- Of the content that was election-centred, was the focus on the campaign or a specific issue?
- Of the content that is focused on specific issue, what issues are covered and what issues were the most frequently covered?

Working within the guidelines of the discipline of CDA and drawing on allied frameworks, the analysis is continued by focusing on three specific research questions. These have been formulated to understand the mainstream GE13 discourse and are answered in Chapters 6 and 7 for the Malay-language newspapers and 8 and 9 for the English-language newspapers:

- What is these newspapers' worldview? In particular, how are the government and the opposition represented in the mainstream GE13 discourse?
- What are the argumentation strategies employed in the newspapers to justify these representations?
- What (de)legitimatory topoi or fallacy are utilised in the mainstream GE13 discourse?

These questions are not mutually exclusive; rather, combined, they seek to explicate and explain the nature of mainstream GE13 discourse. Moreover, they are intended to illustrate the systematic mechanisms of argumentation and (de)legitimation by analysing textual patterns in the data against the general socio-political context in which they were written.

My stance in this thesis

This thesis is not just any social or political research, as in the case in many social and political sciences but is premised on the fact that these 'products' (texts) may be unjust. This injustice in texts may be obvious to many or as they read between the lines, identifying the *what* in texts is easy. But as Richardson (2007) emphasises, "identifying exactly *how* this occurs is a little more difficult" (p.8). It is the point of CDA in this thesis

to show the way social power abuse, dominance and inequality are enacted and reproduced as the mainstream newspapers cooperate closely with the ruling coalition in aiding the BN government to be the longest-serving elected government in the world. And since at the core of CDA lies its emancipatory agenda (see Wodak and Meyer, 2009), as emphasized by van Leeuwen (2006, p.293), my position in this research will be made explicit. In that, instead of merely presenting facts for others to interpret and utilize, this thesis aims to entail greater social and civic responsibilities by challenging authority, acting independently and inviting dissent without the need to apologize for taking a critical stance. While looking to understand the ways in which the press presents a partial view of the elections and those involved, this thesis also contributes to this reasoned debate about the crucial issue of newspapers discourse during the GE13 in Malaysia.

Thesis outline

There are nine chapters in this study exclusive of the introduction and the conclusion. This introductory chapter provides a general background to the project, sets out the research questions and clarifies my stance in accordance with the CDA research programme of the Discourse-Historical Approach.

Chapter 1 of the thesis deals more broadly with political communication, media and elections as well as its relevance to the Malaysian case. It attempts to provide an understanding of Malaysia's political communication through the country's media system and the discussion of the practices of developmental journalism. This chapter emphasises the element of culture that is often overlooked in political communication theories and models. This chapter concludes by presenting previous studies on Malaysia political communication as they relate to elections.

Chapter 2 focuses on the journalistic genre of editorials and columns. It locates the current research within the literature on the genres of opinion journalism in election campaign communication. The chapter starts with an overview of journalists, journalism and newspapers discourse in general before focusing on the more argumentative form of journalism, i.e. editorials and columns. It discusses newspaper editorials and columns in terms of social purpose, generic structure, characteristic patterns of linguistic features as

well as their shared emphasis on argumentation. Following this discussion is a brief discussion on discourse approaches to argumentation.

To understand the GE13 campaign discourse in the mainstream editorials and columns, one must first understand why undemocratic procedures and institutions are sustained in the complex interplay of race and politics in contemporary Malaysian society. Chapter 3 provides this background. It reviews the history of the post-colonial period of Malaysia that is characterised by divisions of Malaysian citizens along racial, ethnic and religious lines. At points, these divisions - what Muller (2014, p. 13) has called 'racially divided lifeworlds' - have revealed their explosive capacity as a source of serious inter-ethnic, racial conflicts which occurred in its most dramatic form on 13 May 1969. This chapter argues that the 1969 communal riots become the basis for the continued government control over the mass media. This chapter concludes by presenting the two ways the government's hegemony is maintained, that are via legal controls and media ownership. The discussion in this chapter reflects the emphasised element of culture discussed in Chapter 1.

Chapter 4 addresses the methodology that underpins the study and the methods that will be used to answer the research questions introduced in this chapter. It lays out the CDA framework and DHA taken in the analysis of texts in this study. It also provides the rationale for the newspapers used in this study. It sketches out the methodologies of data collection, selection and sampling. This chapter also discusses the objectives, assumptions and specificities of the preliminary quantitative content analysis as well as the analytical tools to be employed in the discourse-historical analysis.

The five empirical chapters that follow involve a five-pronged analysis. Chapter 5 discusses the quantitative findings of a systematic content analysis of the print editorials and columns during the GE13 campaign. The findings establish the 'map' or 'big picture' by describing the manifest trends, patterns and absences as the preliminary basis to the critical analysis in the subsequent chapters. The broader trends being propagated during the GE13 are identified in this chapter.

There are four qualitative empirical analysis chapters (6, 7, 8 and 9). The representational analysis concerned with the mainstream GE13 discourse based on two discursive strategies in the DHA, i.e. referential and predication strategies is discussed in Chapter 6 and 8 for the Malay- and English language respectively. Chapter 7 and 9 are specifically concerned

with the persuasive dimension and attempts to critically identify the argumentation schemes and themes of the mainstream GE13 discourse in the Malay- and English language newspapers respectively.

Finally, the thesis concludes with a chapter summarising and discussing the findings and referring to this thesis's contribution, limitation and the potential for future research in this area.

Chapter 1

Political communications, media and elections

Introduction

Many have argued that an open, complex and varied media system is essential for democracy as the media have a key role to play in shaping and framing how we see the world. While the majority of the existing literature and empirical evidence are on western democracies, there has been relatively little work on the complexity and experience of Asian countries, particularly Malaysia. The existing models are not very helpful in helping theorise the relationship between Malaysian media and democracy. Therefore, in this chapter, we will look at wider debates around political communication, assess their relevance to the Malaysian case, offer critiques of current western-inspired approaches and discuss the relevance of examining mainstream newspapers. It attempts to provide an understanding of Malaysia's political communication through the country's media system and the discussion on the practices of developmental journalism. This chapter argues that communication theories and models that often overlook the element of culture, serve the West but do not fit in with the cultural characteristics of Asian societies as they do not reflect the cultural ethos of Asia. This chapter maintains that attending to culture is significant in political communication because culture and communication are inextricably bounded. This chapter concludes by presenting previous studies on political communication in Malaysia as they relate to elections, the number unfortunately, has been insignificant.

1.1 Political communication

1.1.1. Defining political communication

Plato's interest in political communication indicates that the subject area has a long-standing history although the 1950s is generally seen to be the starting point for sustained interest in the topic, at least in Anglo-American circles (Nimmo and Sanders, 1981; Kaid, 2004). Since ancient Greece, the literature on political communication has grown enormously. Its area of research serves as a crossroads to many others as it draws on theoretical, philosophical, and practical foundations of diverse disciplines of study, including communication, political science, history, psychology, and sociology, as well as

from an interdisciplinary perspective. Despite numerous attempts to define political communication (see, for example, Denton and Woodward, 1990; Negrine and Stanyer, 2007), McNair (2011) concludes that the term is notoriously difficult to define as “both components of the phrase are themselves open to a variety of definitions, more or less broad” (p.3), especially given the nature of the political system itself which is dynamic, evolving and unstable (Swanson, 2004).

One focus for classical definitions of political communication concerns the borderline- and overlap between the source (i.e. political sphere) and motivations (i.e. political purpose). But, considering the role of the media, such definitions are no longer appropriate for many modern states. Therefore, the contemporary literature typically focuses on three actors, (1) political institutions, (2) media institutions and (3) citizens public (See for example; Negrine and Stanyer, 2007; McNair, 2011). The first refers to the political sphere itself, i.e. the state and its attendant political actors in which their role is to communicate their actions to society for the purpose of achieving specific objectives, e.g. gaining legitimacy among and compliance from the people. The second refers to the platforms for communication about these actors in (1) and their activities to influence both the political spheres and the third actor, i.e. the citizens public. This tripartite configuration is useful, but more often than not, it overlooks one chief element, culture, an oversight that has become the basis for the Western-centric bias of many political communication theories. Dissanayake (1988) questions the compatibility of Western theories in Asia due to the real and perceived cultural differences while Chu (1988) argues that:

Western perspective of communication research and theory, by and large, ignores the social structure and pays relatively scant attention to the societal functions of communication. In the Western perspective of communication theory, culture is rarely explicitly taken into consideration in the research conceptualization, because culture is usually not regarded as a variable. (pp. 205-6)

The gap is later picked up by Blumler and Gurevitch (1995) who underline the relationship between communications and culture and define the latter as a basic set of shared values and beliefs. As this thesis will demonstrate this relationship of growing significance for an understanding of the political process as a whole (See also chapter 3).

Swanson and Nimmo (1990) highlight the strategic use of communication in their definition that is “to influence public knowledge, beliefs and actions on political matters (p. 9). While Negrine and Stanyer (2007) provide a simpler and more expansive definition that includes “all communication between social actors on political matters- interpersonal and mediated (p.1)”, Denton and Woodward (1998, p. 11) believe that it is the content and purpose that make a communication ‘political’ as opposed to its source and its form. Although these definitions exclude what McNair’s (2011, p. 3) points out as ‘symbolic communication acts’, McNair’s definition echoes Negrine and Stanyer’s (2007) definition more than the one given by Swanson and Nimmo (1990). McNair’s definition of political communication: “purposeful communication about politics (p. 4)” incorporates (1) all political discourse; verbal, written as well as its paralinguistic features of political actors used to achieve intended objectives, (2) all political discourse addressed to these political actors by non-politicians such as the voters and newspapers columnists, (3) all political discourse about these actors and their activities, as contained in news reports, editorials and other forms of media discussion of politics. However, unlike Negrine and Stanyer (2007), interpersonal political communication is absent in McNair’s (2011) definition. Despite its significance for the political process, by their nature, interpersonal communications are done behind closed doors, limited to specific audience and usually obscured from the general public.

However, it is Perloff’s (2014) take on political communication that serves as the point of departure of political communication study of this thesis, that is:

the process by which language and symbols, employed by leaders, media, or citizens, exert intended or unintended effects on the political cognitions, attitudes, or behaviours of individuals or on outcomes that bear on the public policy of a nation, state, or community. (p.30)

The reason behind this selection is because his definition highlights five significant aspects:

First, it emphasizes that political communication is a process. It is therefore an activator, it is not simply a series of the elite’s edicts to the people, it involves persuasion, it allows feedback from the society and it encourages participation.

Second, it also highlights the three main players in the political communication, i.e. (1) political organizations or ‘the elites’ of politics who include elected officials, policy

experts and so on; (2) the media, i.e. the conventional news media, bloggers, citizen-journalists etc. along with the (3) non-state actors or what Perloff (2014, p. 31) calls “the centrepiece of political communication” i.e. the citizenry, the politically engaged and opinionated as well as the indifferent and the ignoramuses.

Third, it focuses attention on the importance of words and symbols. Like Graber (1981) and McNair (2011), Perloff’s definition acknowledges that political communication is not only verbal and written words, but also the fact that it is laden with symbols, that is, “a form of language in which one entity represents an idea or concept, conveying rich psychological and cultural meaning (p.31)” which I will further elaborate in section 1.1.2. below.

The fourth vital aspect of Perloff’s definition is the fact that it also highlights that political communication can produce both intended or unintended effects. For example, a negative political advertisement is intended to cause voters to evaluate the targeted candidate more unfavourably. But a story covered on television can exert an impact that was neither intended nor anticipated by the communicators.

Fifth, since the breadth of political communication is what makes it so significant, Perloff’s definition of political communication also includes its effects which occur on a variety of levels, i.e. micro (individual thoughts, candidate assessments, feelings, attitudes, and behaviour) and macro (public opinion, institutional change or retrenchment, political activism and public policy).

1.1.2. Understanding political communication through culture

The absence of culture in many definitions of political communication does not only overlook the importance of language used politically in communication to culture, it also leaves the broader macro-level effects that occurs on the cultural level unnoticed. Samovar, Porter, McDaniel and Roy (2013) maintain that cultural symbols are the “language that enables you to share the speculations, observations, facts and experiments and wisdom accumulated over thousands of years” (p. 53) or what the linguist Weinberg (1959) called “the grand insights of geniuses which, transmitted through symbols, enable us to span the learning of centuries” (p. 157). The importance of language to culture is then summarized by Bates and Plog (1990): “language thus enables people to communicate what they would do if such-and-such happened, to organize their experiences into abstracts

categories (“a happy occasion,” for instance, or an “evil omen”), and to express thoughts never spoken before” (p.20). While Schudson (1995) emphasizes that:

the news constructs a symbolic world that has a kind of priority, a certification of legitimate importance...When the media offer the public an item of news, they confer upon it public legitimacy. They bring it into a common public forum where it can be discussed by a general audience (p. 33).

Therefore, the question “who says what in which channel to whom with what effect” that forms the basis of Lasswell’s (1950, p.117) model of communication is inadequate if not simplistically generalizing. Attending to culture is significant in political communication because culture and communication are inextricably bounded. They are inseparable because culture does not only dictate who talks to whom, about what, and how the communication proceeds; culture also helps to determine how people encode messages, the meanings they have for messages and the conditions and circumstances under which various messages may or may not be sent, noticed, or interpreted (See also Samovar, Porter and McDaniel, 2012, pp. 9-10).

Apart than Blumler and Gurevitch (1995), the contemporary definitions of culture commonly mention shared values, attitudes, beliefs, behaviours, norms, material objects and symbolic resources (e.g. Gardiner and Kosmitzki, 2008; Martin and Nakayama, 2010; Samovar et al., 2012). Hofstede (1991, p.5) defines culture as “the collective mental programming of the people in an environment” (p. 5). In line with this, the anthropologist Clifford Geertz (1973, p. 44) views culture as a set of control mechanisms- plans, recipes, rules, instructions (what computer engineers call “programs”)- for the governing of behaviour. This thesis will give attention to elements of culture. Although Samovar et al. (2012, pp 39-43) maintain that culture is composed of countless elements (i.e. food, shelter, work, defence, social control, psychological security, forms of governing, social harmony, purpose in life, and so on), there are five that relate directly to this thesis namely religion, race/ethnic, language, history and values. Just as each of these elements cannot be understood in isolation from its cultural (including political) contexts, it is impossible to understand culture without considering its religious, racial, language, historical and values dimensions. In the same way that gender, sexuality, and socio- economic class are always

factors in cultural interpretation and understanding particularly in political communication, so as are these five elements:

Religion: The influence of religion can be seen in the entire fabric of a culture (Samovar et al., 2012, p. 40) as it serves many basic functions which include “social control, conflict resolution, reinforcement of group solidarity, explanations of the unexplainable and emotional support” (Ferraro, 2008, p. 344). In the Southeast Asia, Brass (1974, p. 3) claims that religion have been among the major symbols of group identity and have been used as the means to compete for the loyalties of the people. Religion to Karl Marx, based on his celebrated dictum “*Die Religion ... ist das Opium des Volkes*”, is more than a numbing drug, it is fair to say that religion can be “a force which legitimates’ the social order (See Hamilton, 2001, pp. 93-4). In the similar vein, Calvert and Calvert (2001) argue that religion can be “a mobiliser of masses, a controller of mass action...an excuse for repression [or] ideological basis for dissent” (p.140).

Ethnicity and Race: Like religion, ethnicity and race are another important element of culture in communicating political messages. Boas (2008[1932]) defines ethnicity as “ the cultural characteristics that connect a particular group or groups of people to each other” (p. 2). In Malaysia, the term race is widely used in academic writings as an accepted ‘scientific’ concept to discuss ethnic relations (see for example, Nakamura, 2012; Syed Husin Ali, 2009). The concept of race, with reference to human beings, according to Jacquard (1996) “has nothing to do with biological reality” (p.20 in Reisigl and Wodak, 2001, p. 2). From a social functional point of view, ‘race’ is a social construction as

on the one hand it has been used as a legitimising ideological tool to oppress and exploit specific social groups...On the other hand, these affected groups have adopted the idea of ‘race’. They have turned the concept around and used it to construct an alternative, positive self-identity; they have also used it as a basis for political resistance and to fight for more political autonomy, independence and participation. (Reisigl and Wodak, 2001, p.2).

Bonilla-Silva (2013) notes that ‘race’ along with other social categories, is a social reality, “producing real effects” (p. 9) in which according to Buggs (2017), it is due to these real consequences of race that racialized social structures exist, for example, awarding privileges to whites and denying them to other (non-whites).

Language: Samovar et al. (2012, p. 42) maintain that language is yet another feature that is common to all cultures. Haviland, Prins, Walrath and McBride (2011, p. 331) regard language as the core to the functioning of human culture. It involves values, emotions and symbols that make up a picture's narrative in communicating hegemonic social and political concepts in the targeted audience(s). In the case of this thesis, symbolic words such as *Ketuanan Melayu* (Malay supremacy/dominance), *bumiputera* (sons of the soil, native, i.e. the Malays), and *hudud*, for example generally connote different meaning to different social groups in Malaysia. While *ketuanan Melayu* and *bumiputera* are designed to invoke the sense of nationalism among the Malays (see for example Yahaya, 1986; Rustam, 2004), to non-Malays, they are more like to generate a sense of disgust, prejudice and alienation (e.g. Ker, 2005; Khoo and Loh, 2014). Just like the word 'hudud' could convey the sense of liberation of Muslims (e.g. Tarmizi, 1995; Mohamed Hanipa, 2003), at the same time to the non-Muslims it could simply mean oppression (e.g. Rose, 1995; Hooker and Norani, 2003). As Perloff emphasizes "political messages inevitably call up different meanings to different groups, an inevitable source of friction and conflict in democratic society" (p.31).

History: Every culture is historically rooted. It has stories about the past that serve as lessons on how to live in the presents. These stories are communicated from generation to generation and help cement people into what is called "a common culture". This common culture then creates a sense of identity where people begin to perceive their belonging, sense of loyalty, values and rules for behaviour, distinguishing what is important and taking pride in the accomplishments in the culture. For example, the Arab Spring and the events of September 11, 2001 are perceived differently in different culture and used to explain contemporary perceptions held by members of those culture- "the study of history links the old with the new while serving as a pointer for the future (Samovar et al., 2012, pp. 40-1).

Values: Values are guidelines (Samovar et al., p. 42). They are "culturally defined standards of desirability, goodness, and beauty that serve as broad guidelines for social living" (Macionis, 1998, p. 34). Bailey and Peoples (2011) also emphasize the role values play in culture

Values are critical to the maintenance of culture as a whole because they represent the qualities that people believe are essential to continuing their way of life. It is

useful to think of values as providing the ultimate standards that people believe must be upheld under practically all circumstances (p. 26).

Values are what determined how people are ought to behave and under similar circumstances, people in different culture will behave differently. For example, while all cultures value the elderly, according to Samovar et al. (2012, p. 42), the elderly are highly respected and revered particularly in the Asian cultures where they are even sought out for advice and counsel in contrast to the United States, where the emphasis is on youth.

These elements of culture, i.e. religion, race/ethnicity, language, history and values will reflect the discussion on the socio-political context of Malaysia in Chapter 3.

1.2. Political communication, media and elections

In this thesis, I focus primarily on political communications as they relate to elections in general and to general elections in particular. This is because, elections are the core and conversation of democracy (Toner, November 13, 1994). Elections allow us freedom to actively participate in selecting our leaders, provide us with the opportunity to determine how our own interest can best be served and also allow those elected legitimacy with which to govern (Trent and Friedenber, 2000, pp. 3-4). Election campaigns, at heart, according to scholars including Strömbäck and Kioussis (2014) are “nothing but political communication” (p.109); and election campaign communication, despite a massive research effort especially after every election² remains a rather fragmented field³. The merit of seeking to redeploy the term, ‘election campaign communication’ in critical discourse studies (see chapter 4) such as in this study does it duty as a sensitizing concept, as opposed to being ‘definitive’. According to Jupp (2006, p.279) this does not involve

² See e.g. among others: Deacon et al. (2015); Perloff (2014); Wring, Mortimore and Atkinson (2011); Deacon and Wring (2011).

³ Esser and Strömbäck (2012, p. 289) point out five reasons for this. First, its research is multidisciplinary (as opposed to interdisciplinary). Hence, second, the absence of a more comprehensive theories that can be used as a guidance to integrate this multidisciplinary research on political communication in election campaigns. Third, its research usually bent to focus in single election campaigns in single countries, offering rich descriptions of singular cases but less theory-driven research. Fourth, most literature is from (and about) the West such as the United States, a quite atypical country. Fifth, the lack of longitudinal and cross-national research on political communication in election campaigns.

using ‘fixed and specific procedures’ to identify a set of phenomena, but instead it gives ‘a sense of reference and guidance in approaching empirical instances’.

During an electoral campaign, the media are not the sole source of information for voters, but they are the *primary* source of information, especially “in a world dominated by mass communications, it is increasingly the media that determine the political agenda” (ACE Electoral Knowledge Network, 2013, p. 12). Therefore, at least in theory, any democratic election cannot happen without media, as the media are indispensable to democracy as the citizens need media to make well-informed decisions in an election. The media must be more than free, it must be reliable, it must be trusted, and it must have opportunity to form independent and diverse views (Coronel, 2002, p. 5). This idea of free media is closely associated to John Stuart Mill’s (1982[1859], pp. 19-66) political theory in *On Liberty*, “the marketplace of ideas”⁴ and James Curran’s (2000, p. 121) idea of ‘free market’ in which the media is regarded as a public space for citizens to have different voices, contradicting views and debates without the interference from the state. Mill (1982[195]) maintains that it is through this public exchange of argument and counter-argument that ‘truth’ competes and eventually wins out over falsehood (Mill, 1982 [1959], p.20) in the same vein how Habermas’s (1989) theory of ‘public sphere’ invites us to reflect closely on the nature of public deliberation and the democratic process in a democracy. He argues that genuine public debate which does not distract the laity from political action is fundamental to the functioning of a public sphere. This is particularly important in elections as in the simplest sense, election campaigns, interest group conflicts, and policy battles involve exchanges of political language for political support.

In the *Elections Reporting Handbook*, Ross (2004, p.9) list three important subjects that must be the focus of the press during the campaign period:

1. *The political parties and candidates*

The media should provide voters with some information about *every* party.

2. *The issues*

⁴ However, in Mill 1982[1859]’s *On Liberty*, he does not use the exact term ‘marketplace’. The theory is best known from the argument in his second chapter (pp. 19-66), in which according to Haworth (1998, p.3) the theory is “recognised as the ‘classic version of the classic defence’ and the source for practically every subsequent discussion of freedom of speech” (p.3).

Each political parties' own views (i.e. policies, party platform or manifesto) about what is most important, their promises and why voters should elect them.

2. The voting processes

Information about the election rules and processes are necessary to assist people in participating. This information includes defining how voters can register; the length of the campaign; who will count the votes; how much money parties can spend on their campaigns; rules on advertising and media coverage; and who will impose penalties on parties or the media who violate the rules. The media must watch the process to see how well or if the rules are followed without corruption or favouritism to any one party, or abuse of any group of voters.

The discussion of the media's role within electoral contexts often focuses on their "watchdog" role, i.e. in providing a check on candidates, governments as well as electoral management bodies (See e.g. Francke, 1995; Coronel, 2010). But the ACE Electoral Knowledge Network (2013, pp. 11-2) asserts that the media have other roles in enabling full public participation in elections:

- by educating voters on how to exercise their democratic rights;
- by reporting on the development of an election campaign;
- by providing a platform for the political parties and candidates to communicate their message to the electorate;
- by providing a platform for the public to communicate their concerns, opinions and needs, to the parties/candidates...the government, and to other voters, and to interact on these issues;
- by allowing the parties and candidates to debate with each other
- by reporting results and monitoring vote counting;
- by scrutinizing the electoral process, itself, including electoral management in order to evaluate the process's fairness, efficiency, and probity;
- by providing information that as far as possible avoids inflammatory language, to help prevent election-related violence.

At this point, it is worth noting that political communication, therefore, does not always carry negative semantic prosody; in theory as well as in practice, it could be a force for positive as much as negative. But, the reality of the latter is not novel; democracy and

manipulation have been bedfellows since the origin of democracy (See Ball, 2011, pp. 41-56). This thesis has been motivated by the attempt to expose and help combat such opaque injustice which has been often taken as the reality that ostensibly stands behind opinionated narrative during elections from a critical discourse perspective.

Against this background, however, it should be made clear that it is not one of the thesis's objectives to provide the effect of the mass media towards the attitude change in electoral campaign, as that itself from McCombs and Shaw's (1972) era to van Rooyen and Marais's (2007), is still far from conclusive. Rather, this thesis is more interested to illustrate how the mainstream newspapers represent the political actors and how the representations are justified in their editorials and columns during the GE13 campaign. This is because, as Lang and Lang (1966) observe; "the mass media force attention to certain issues. They build up public images of political figures. They are constantly presenting objects suggesting what individuals in the mass should think about, know about, have feeling about" (p. 468, see also chapter 2 for the discussion on argumentative journalistic genre such as editorials and columns). As Norris (1997, p.2) states the media tend to report the news that cue the reader to put events, issues, and political actors into contextual frameworks of reference. As Lippmann (1997[1922]) puts it in his classic *Public Opinion* "the world that we have to deal with politically is out of reach, out of sight, out of mind. It has to be explored, reported and imagined" (p. 18). Therefore,

what we know about the world is largely based on what the media decide to tell us. More specifically, the result of this mediated view of the world is that the priorities of the media strongly influence the priorities of the public. Elements prominent on the media agenda become prominent in the public mind (McCombs, 2011, p.1).

This is particularly important when we know that the pledges, promises and rhetoric encapsulated in secondary sources, i.e. news stories, columns and editorials constitute much of the information upon which a voting decision has to be made (See Lang and Lang, 1966, p. 466; Perloff, 2014, p. 284). Therefore, Strömbäck and Kioussis (2014) remind us that "political campaigning and campaign communication never take place in a vacuum...[they] are always dynamic and shaped by the contextual conditions formed by the political system, the media system, laws and regulations [as well as] the political culture" (p. 118).

The next section, therefore, provides an overview of political communication in Asia before focusing the discussion in regard to the Malaysian case. In contrast to the majority of work in political communication, which tends to deal with Western case studies, I will discuss Malaysia's different political and media system, laws and regulations as well as its unique political culture while critically engaging with Western models.

1.3. Political communication in Asia

The tradition of communication research in Asia is comparable to what has been established in the West, however, research focusing on *political* communication is fairly scarce and relatively new (See Willnat and Aw, 2004, p. 479; Ezhar Tamam and Govindasamy, 2009, p. 144; Hino and Jou, 2015, p. 1042). Kluver (2004) believes that the limited literature on Asian experiences and frameworks signifies Western theories, Western experiences and Western contexts as normative for the rest of the world. These Western frameworks are usually adopted to generate analysis. If adapted, they are most of the time incompatible. Zhou (2009) for instance, claims that "the integration of Western political communication theories into China's political reality has not been easy. Because there are no genuine elections in China above the township level, many Western theories involving elections and voting behaviour are not applicable" (p.50). Therefore, Kluver (2004) contends it is a struggle to find a quality scholarship examining political communication in the Asian context.

Downing (1996) pours scorn on attempts to universalize the experience of Britain and the United States, "as if these affluent, stable democracies with their Protestant histories and imperial entanglements are representative of the world." (p. xi). While Curran and Park (2000) state that "there are growing signs that US-and UK-based media academics are beginning to feel embarrassed about viewing the rest of the world as a forgotten understudy" (p.1). Undeniably, the calls to de-westernize the field of political communication has been brought to the forefront of the field. In more recent writings, Wang (2011) and Tapas (2012) for example, have proposed an epistemic shift of the field and invited scholars to de-westernize the field by reflecting upon the broad conditions of intellectual production. But, as Waisboard and Mellado (2014) put it, while "de-westernize knowledge is in, parochial and Eurocentric research out [,] many may remain unmoved, but hardly anyone would say de-westernization is a bad idea or unnecessary at a time when the field has become increasingly globalized". (p.361).

The difference in the political system of the West and in Asian countries is real. As pointed out by scholars including Willnat and Aw (2004), these differences explain the paucity of election communication studies compared to in the UK or the US (See for example Wring et al., 2007), particularly because the Western scholars from the Western countries focus on what they are familiar with. Someone who understands the press in the West may be baffled in making sense of the press in Malaysia (See Mohd Safar, 1998, p. 59). Power relationships have been unfortunately assumed to exist similarly in all times and places. Pye (1985) argues: “in different times and places people have thought of power in very different way... Of all social phenomena power is one of the most sensitive to cultural nuances; its potentialities and its limitations are always constrained by time and place” (p. vii). In other words, different cultures have different presumptions on how fundamental political concepts such as authority and power are granted and operate, what it means and how it is expressed.

These differences could not be explained through what Chu (1988, p. 206) claims tend to be the focus of Western communication research- that is, quantitative measures and statistical tests alone. Theories that are tailored to fit Western political systems are most of the time unfit for Asian systems- the procedures of how political candidates are chosen and elected, the way people participate in politics and how political information is discussed in the media, to highlight a few, are significantly different. Therefore, political communication scholars including Dissanayake (1988) and McQuail (2000) opine that, instead of just producing research that replicate western theories in different Asian countries, there is a need to construct specifically ‘Asian’ theoretical frameworks. However, the effort to construct specifically ‘Asian’ theoretical frameworks so far, “often end up helping to legitimize repressive regimes, undemocratic practices and tightly controlled media systems whose *raison d’être* is to uphold and help perpetuate these regimes” (Zaharom, 2000, p.149). Dixit (1999, p. 55) divides Southeast Asia media models for ownership and control into three broad categories:

1. Direct State Control (e.g. Burma, Vietnam and Laos):

The media are monopolized by the state and serve as propaganda arm of the ruling party, reflecting its concerns. The media are used as a crude public-address system to disseminate party doctrine, to run down dissidents or detained leaders, lash out at human rights groups, exhort workers and peasants to greater heights of achievement. There is no need for

censorship here, since everyone knows what is untouchable. Outside of Southeast Asia, another example of this is China.

2. *Licensing control of private media (e.g. Singapore and Indonesia and to some extent, Malaysia)*

Although the television and radio are largely state-owned, the print media are in the hands of the private sector. However, strict license laws, and the uncertainty of annual renewal makes more media companies careful not to ruffle official feathers for fear of losing their profitable media businesses. Satellite dishes are banned, and the government has privatized one of its domestic channels to give people an alternative. Even so, competing power centres have used the print media for exposés that have usually been quashed by the government.

3. *Free-for-all Press (e.g. Thailand and Philippines)*

The freedom enjoyed by these countries has sometimes been called ‘the freedom of the wild ass’ but it was strongly opposed by Lee Kwan Yew [Singapore’s first prime minister] who argued that, it was keeping these countries backward. Tabloid journalism thrives not just in print but on television and radio, which show signs of extreme commercialization. But there are also indications that profitable media ventures are averse to rocking the boat, and if they do critical exposes, it is usually of a rival business house. The Thai press has maverick media tycoons whose eyes were set on going regional, but these dreams have been shattered by the economic crisis (Dixit, 1999, p. 55).

1.3.1. Understanding political communication in Malaysia through its media system

Hallin and Mancini (2004) argue that, “media systems are shaped by the wider context of political history, structure, and culture” (p.47). Therefore, they “reflect the prevailing philosophy and political system of the society in which they operate” (Curran and Park, 2000, p. 4). Media outlets in liberal democracies such as the UK and the US are better able to report without influence, and to publish information about society or the government as they are protected by certain legislation. However, it is not the case in Malaysia.

Malaysia’s media system is different from the West, politically, culturally and economically. One difference that cannot be ignored is the multi-ethnic dimension, particularly when Malaysia’s development has been predominantly shaped to meet the needs of a multi-ethnic population (See Chapter 3 for a more thorough discussion). For

instance, in countries like the US, Canada and many European nations, asking for compulsory official disclosure of one's race or religion in any official form is viewed as a form of discrimination and against the law. But in Malaysia, a person's ethnic group as well as religion are officially documented in his/her national identity card. Therefore, instead of being known solely as 'Malaysian', a citizen is identified based on his/her ethnic and religion. This matters particularly where special privileges are concerned. As stated in the Constitution of Malaysia Articles 153 (1), the special position of the Malay; and Article 160, 'Malay' means a person who professes the religion of Islam (See Nagaraj et al., 2015, pp. 144-5). In other words, in the case of the news media, as Hallin and Mancini (2004) put it: "one cannot understand the news media without understanding the nature of the state, the system of political parties, the pattern of relations between economic and political interests..., among other elements of social structure" (p.8).

Therefore, while the newspapers in the West can overtly be ideologically differentiated (e.g. *The Guardian*- centre left, *The Times*- centrist and *The Telegraph*- centre right); in the case of Malaysia, newspapers are racially and ethnically targeted. In the prime minister Najib Razak's (2010) words:

Malaysia is a very complex society. The spectrum is very wide. You don't have the normal left-right political division in this country. You have a quite complex division in terms of ethnic division and then you've got backgrounds of rural, urban. A rather disparate society.

Malaysia has different idea of press freedom than in the West especially after the riots of May 13, 1969 (See Chapter 3). The tragedy, according to Mahathir Mohamad (1971) implies that "democracy was but a thin veneer which needed but minimal pressure to break" (p. 6). Therefore, while Rosenfeld (2000) emphasizes that:

In the Western democracies' competitive journalistic market, newspapers are ready to share different perspectives on issues. Diversity, rather than consensus, is seen as a value worthy enhancement in the public discourse. Many op-ed pages have gone beyond proving space for the occasional contrary columnist and have systematically broadened the spectrum, abandoning the prerogative showcase for one favoured set of views (p. 45).

Malaysian media market, on the other hand is controlled, particularly after the riots of 13 May 1969 (see chapter 3), the mainstream presses have been openly supporting the

government policy through what seem to be ‘development journalism’⁵ (see Mustafa, 2000; Pang, 2006; Mohd Azizuddin, 2009) which will be discussed in the next section.

1.3.1.1. Developmental journalism and the toothless election watchdog

Development journalism began as “an inspiration of professional journalists” (Sussman, 1978, p. 76), designed to serve “the ordinary people and not the elite” (Chalkley, 1980, p. 215). The practice existed even before it had a name in the 1960s (See Ali, 1980; Chalkley, 1980). Recognizing a nation’s need for economic development, the journalists in the developing region were concerned about the inadequacy of the traditional western model of reporting. Ali (1980, p. 154) asserts that “following the western concept, the press was still preoccupied with reporting events, thus disregarding the processes which produced the events”. Therefore, rather than treating issues as merely episodic, there was a need for journalists to commit to playing a more active role in actually pressing for change, discussing solutions especially when dealing with issues such as famine or disease for instance (McKay, 1993, p. 239). In ‘*A Manual of Development Journalism*’ widely used to train developmental reporters, Chalkley (1970) wrote:

A journalist’s main task is to inform, to give his readers the facts. His secondary task is to interpret, to put the facts in their framework, and where possible to draw conclusions...But you have a third task, a positive one. Perhaps the best word for it is ‘*promotion*’. It is your job not only to give the facts of economic life, and to interpret those facts, but to *promote* them, to bring them home to your readers. You must get your readers to realize how serious the development problem is, to think about the problem, to open their eyes to the possible solutions- to punch a hole in the vicious circle (p. 2) [emphasis mine].

This idea of development journalism, broadly speaking, according to Kokkeong (2004) “is to have journalism play a central role in disseminating governmental or national policies to inform and educate the masses as well as mobilize them for the concerted effort at bringing

⁵ Although in many literature, the terms ‘developmental journalism’ and ‘development journalism’ are used interchangeably (See for example Seng and Hunt, 1986). In some, according to Yusuf et al. (2016, pp. 577-8) the former denotes the overall philosophy of the framework while the latter expresses the practice, equivalent to ‘development(al) reporting’. In this study, it will be used interchangeably.

about economic development” (p. 26). Xiaoge (2009, p. 358) outlines five key components of development journalism:

1. to report the difference between what has been planned to do and what in reality has been achieved as well as the difference between its claimed and actual impact on people (See Aggarwala, 1978);
2. to focus not “on-day-to-day news but on long term development process” (Kunczik, 1988, p.83);
3. to be independent from government and to provide constructive criticism of government (Aggarwala, 1978; Shah, 1992; Ogan, 1982);
4. to shift “journalistic focus to news of economic and social development” while “working constructively with the government” (Richstad, 2000, p. 279) in nation building;
5. and to empower the ordinary people to improve their own lives and communities (Romano & Hippocrates, 2001).

While Downing (2002) acclaims development journalism as “the pursuit of cultural informational autonomy” and “support for democracy” (p.22), Hatchen (1999) claims it as “rationale for autocratic press control” and a “guided press” (p. 32). In Malaysia, Kokkeong (2004) highlights the consensus-oriented Asian value system reflected in the country’s *Rukunegara* (Articles of Faith of the State, See Chapter 3) provides the underpinning of the country’s development journalism, in which, it:

[emphasizes] the importance of providing news and view to serve the larger good of society. Journalists take their cue from the government on what constitutes the larger social good because the ruling political party represents the majority of the citizens who elected them through regularly held elections. Instead of the watchdog, adversarial role, [Malaysian-based] development journalism emphasizes media’s partnership with the government, equating press freedom with press-government harmony (p. 28)

Perhaps, considering the race riots of May 13 that happened after Malaysia had its only third general election, it may be true that the concept of freedom in the West for the country during that time was not pragmatic due to the still-thick sensitivities surrounding

race relations and with the need to promote and maintain racial harmony and economic prosperity. As Lent (1977a) argues:

[B]ecause Third World nations are newly emergent, they need time to develop their institutions. During this initial period of growth, stability and unity must be sought; criticism must be minimised and the public faith in governmental institutions and policies must be encouraged. Media must be cooperating, according to this guided press concept, by stressing positive, development-inspired news, by ignoring negative societal or oppositionist characteristics and by supporting government ideologies and plans. (p.18)

However, almost five decades after the May 13 incident, the Malaysian media landscape is still dominated by developmental journalism practices which the BN government justifies restrictions “under the responsibility of guarding national stability and promoting harmony and unity” (Chinnasamy, 2017, p. 56). These reasons have become *vieux jeu*, more seen as used to excuse the government’s restrictions on the press to safeguard their hegemonic and ruling power (See Loh and Mustafa, 1996; Mohd Azizuddin, 2009), undemocratic and most of the time intellectually insulting the people. In fact, developmental journalism as practiced in Malaysia is an oxymoron. Ali (1980, p. 153) states:

press coverage of development issues should not be made at the expense of the high professional standards of journalism. In this respect, some of the staunchest defenders of development journalism may well be its worst offenders.

Development, if seen as a continuing process, should be reported as such and not as events happening in isolation of each other (p. 153)

While Sussman (1978) observes “for development journalism, like deferred political liberty, presupposes -- erroneously, we must assume – that citizens of developing nations cannot be trusted to examine competing viewpoints, but must hear only a single voice (p. 25). As Mustafa (2005) puts it:

Over the years...this normative concept of development journalism has been corrupted to serve the interests of the ruling elites, thereby giving rise to news

reports that only present a glowing picture of the state while steering clear of in-depth analysis of failed government projects or public corruption (p.65)

This kind of manipulation of the media in ‘Third World’ countries by the political elites, masked behind the concept of development journalism is “a failed concept” and a “backward idea whose time has come” (Sussman, 1978, p. 25) as the social and political actors and agencies seek to manipulate and control the media (See, for example, Herman and Chomsky, 2002). In Malaysia, with the government harnessing the ‘power of the press’, it becomes imperative for them to work towards ‘national unity’, to respect ‘national security’ and to eulogise the government. Conversely, they are expected to downplay negative criticism of the government and its supporters and of ‘sensitive issues’ that “may tear [the] nation apart, especially one that is multi-ethnic and multicultural” (Mustafa, 2005, p. 64).

The monopolization of Malaysia’s mainstream media by the ruling government which will be discussed further in Chapter 3, is an indication that their existence is not to hold the state’s public servants and private overlords to account; rather, they are the ‘development tool’ of the government, articulating the ‘common goals’ of ‘nation building’ and ‘national economic development’ (See Pye, 1985). This has been criticized by many scholars including Zaharom (2002), Zaharom and Wang (2004) and Mustafa (2000; 2005). Yet again, Mahathir (2011) defends the status quo:

[M]any of them (the West) think that we (Malaysia) should uphold liberal democracy modelled on their own national practices, forgetting that our social, cultural, religious, ethnic and economic composition is completely different from theirs...we (Malaysia) stubbornly prefer to adhere to our own cultural traditions and moral codes and to practice democracy not as a reckless free-for-all, but in a form, that we consider suitable for a potentially unstable multi-ethnic country. (p. 35)^{6, 7}

⁶ Mahathir (1981, July 19) says: “So long as the press is conscious of itself being a potential threat to democracy and conscientiously limits the exercise of its rights, it should be allowed to function without government interference. But when the press obviously abuses its rights by unnecessarily agitating the people, then democratic governments have a right to control it”. (p. 19).

⁷ Mahathir’s successor, Abdullah in his first speech to the parliament on assuming his appointment as the prime minister in November 2003 expressed his conviction that democracy is the best system of

Unlike Malaysia's counterparts in the Southeast Asia, most Malaysian journalists have bent over backward to toe the government line. The media then become the mouthpiece of ruling elites or their "watchdog" who "is free to bark...so long as it knows its role, and does not bite too hard, it is allowed to roam around the compound of the house" (Loo, 2005, October). A Malaysian journalist, the late Rehman Rashid (1993) in his memoir, *A Malaysian Journey* for instance writes:

I began to see the Malaysian journalist as one of the saddest creatures in the nation. Our readers dismissed us as lapdogs of the government; the government considered us instruments of policy...For the journalist *knew* things; he saw and heard things. He knew first, and he knew more than those who read his newspapers and magazines. His readership would know only what he told them, while he would know from source. The masses only saw what the journalist described while he was there to see it for himself. To not *know* is bad enough, but at least there is this axiom of ignorance being bliss. To know and be unable to *tell* is much, much worse...Malaysia's journalists would be among those most personally damaged by Mahathir years, and their tragedy was that it was their idealism that kept so many of them going as long as they did. (p. 188-89)

The control of the press leaves the journalists with no choice but to work professedly for the people. This is not surprising because there are no [mainstream] media that are free from the shackles of the government (Doris, 2003, p. 142), they are just different in degree. Since there is a tight relationship between the press and the political parties in the ruling coalition, according to Wang (2001), during elections, the mainstream newspapers,

get their cues from the power that be. The allocative control of the media by political parties allows them to decide on the scope and nature of the media

governance, but "democracy does not mean absolute freedom. Issues that inflame religious, racial (ethnic) and cultural sentiments should not be sensationalised, while attempts to undermine national security must be dealt with firmly". (SUARAM, 2004, p. 21). On 27 May 2008 he argued that there is no such thing as absolute freedom and the media should not be ashamed of "self-censorship" to respect cultural norms. He clearly accepts the argument of permitting the practices of self-censorship by the media. In an interview with the CNN on 16 October 2006, he admitted that the Malaysian press practices self-censorship and said that if Malaysia allows total freedom of the media and rejects self-censorship, it could lead to mistrust and tension in society (Mohd Azizuddin, 2009, p. 67).

content. This is particularly blatant during periods of crisis of hegemony. The press in a situation of control becomes inept in playing the adversarial role of watchdog. Consequently, this situation makes it difficult for citizens to exercise their right to information and their right to making informed choices (p.74).

The incumbent Barisan Nasional (BN) control and have unprecedented access on an everyday basis to huge audiences, providing both opportunities for them to shape opinion and win support particularly during the elections to gain and retain power, rebuilding consent, legitimacy and support. Newspapers in its reporting for example, typically presents only one discursive construction of reality to the audience, whereas objective reporting classically requires more than one position.

1.3.1.2. Examining mainstream newspapers

Newspaper companies have been facing a mortal threat from the triumphal march of the Internet revolution in newspaper journalism as they have lost advertisers, readers and market value at a pace that is barely imaginable⁸. Bill Keller (2007), the executive editor of the *New York Times* in a memorial lecture at Chatham House in London said: “At places where editors and publishers gather, the mood these days is funereal. Editors ask one another, “How are you?” in that sober tone one employs with friends who have just emerged from rehab or a messy divorce”. This is nothing new, that has always been the case as it is “easy to be pessimistic” according to Picard (2014), “if one equates journalism with the fortunes of legacy news enterprises and institutions” (p. 283). For him, these changes; historical, social and economic contexts which are happening in journalism today is a *transition*, not the demise of journalism neither it is the incarnation of a new type of journalism.

Although Shaker (2014) agrees that there is a transition, for him, the transition is rocky and as newspapers struggle, he shares Starr’s (2009) worries about the pivotal roles of journalism in the United States: “More than any other medium, newspapers have been our eyes on the state, our check on private abuses, our civic alarm systems. It is true that they

⁸ See among others van der Wurff, 2011; McChesney and Pickard, 2011; Franklin, 2014; Fortunati, Taipale and Farinosi, 2014

have often failed to perform those function as well as they should have done. But whether they can continue to perform them at all is now in doubt.” (p. 28). Starr believes that the Internet has not and cannot wholly fill the traditional democratic roles of the American press as the watchdog of government and corporate misconduct. And Starr is not the only one. Sparks (1996) earlier asserts that online newspapers cannot provide the same “public enlightenment function” as print media due to the accessibility gaps between classes and differences in the content the online newspaper offer.

While many available academic findings show that the decline of the newspapers narrative is mostly Western centric (See among others Fortunati, Deuze and de Luca, 2014; Nossek, Adoni and Nimrod, 2015), none takes regional variations, and the fact that in many emerging countries, print newspaper sales are robust and growing, on board. In Malaysia, although there has been a decline in readership and a subsequent drop in their circulation, newspapers like the *The Star*, for example, seem to be bucking the trend. At one point in 1993, *The Star* had a circulation of only 180,043, but it distributed 354,058 daily using the free paper concept for both print and online versions, while growing their advertising revenue in 2016 (See Mohd Safar, 2003; Audit Bureau of Circulations Malaysia, 2016). Shortly after the 2008 elections, Media Independence Survey conducted by Centre of Independent Journalism (CIJ) reveals that most Malaysians still rely on print newspapers for news⁹. Citing the 2014 Deloitte report on media consumption in the UK, although there are huge generational differences, “half of Britons still buy print newspapers and a further 10% read papers bought by others”. This echoes further in many recent studies (Thurman, 2014; Nielsen, 2016; Thurman, 2017); reading print newspapers remain the backbone of the news world as those who were in the past most likely to read print newspapers are still doing so today regardless of all the social, cultural and especially technological changes over the last couple of decades¹⁰.

Therefore, in this age of digital media, quoting Picard (2014), even though “many commentators cling to an idealized and illusory vision of journalism in days past and are now dancing in circles beating their chests, and chanting that the end of journalism is nigh...that does not make it so” (p.273). According to a recent Nielsen Scarborough study

⁹ See also Ali Salman, et al. (2011).

¹⁰ For examples Fortunati, Deuze and de Luca, 2014b; Nossek, Adoni and Nimrod, 2015

(2016), 69% of U.S. population still reading newspapers while in a study by Thurman (2017) that uses industry data from the UK National Readership Survey (NRS), 89 per cent of newspaper reading is still in print. Likewise, Aini et al. (2017) assert that in the case of Malaysia, “the newspaper is still [...] one of the main platform[s] that the political parties utilise for election campaigns. Concomitantly, newspaper plays a significant role to influence people’s voting decision” (p.14) as will be explored in further detail in subsequent chapters.

1.3.1.3. Previous studies on Malaysian election communication

There has not been much research carried out in this area to date. At this point, the fact that for the most part, at least during the 12 years after independence, there was a high level of freedom, with media and the intelligentsia openly criticizing the government and its policies should not be left unsaid. The general election in 1959 for example was relatively open and fair as the media were not yet dominated or controlled by any individual or political group. In fact, most of the information presented in the traditional newspaper election coverage in conjunction with public rallies and door-to-door campaigns during the 1959 campaign was geared toward educating the public about the election process and the importance of political participation (Tamam and Govindasamy, 2009, p. 140). The 1964 election marked the emergence of partisan political coverage as most were biased towards the governing Perikatan party, as by then according to Abu Bakar (1998), most newspapers were owned and controlled by individuals or groups linked to the government. But Mohd Azizuddin (2009, p. 36) points out that, at least, the opposition parties were still permitted freedom of the press through print and electronic media as tools for campaigning.

Coverage of the opposition was suppressed in 1969 election and after the riots, all publications were banned and limited solely for official announcements. This affected political communication in the country and resulted in less open campaigns in subsequent elections. The ruling Barisan Nasional heavily controlled the news coverage in the mainstream media and because of its close ties to media owners, left little, if any, room for dissenting opinions. This dominance then helped BN retain its political legitimacy and their two-thirds in parliament for at least eleven elections held between 1957 and 2004 (See Zaharom and Wang, 2004, p. 248-9; Ezhar Tamam and Govindasamy, 2009, pp. 140-5; Mustafa, 2005; pp. 32-5).

Mohd Azizuddin (2009) studied the newspapers reporting in the 2008 general election. Using quantitative content analysis, the results demonstrate that Malay-language daily newspapers (*Utusan Malaysia*, *Harian Metro* and *Berita Harian*) with their Sunday editions (*Mingguan Malaysia*, *Metro Ahad* and *Berita Minggu*), English-language dailies (*New Straits Times*, *The Star*) with their Sunday editions (*New Sunday Times*, *Sunday Star*) and Chinese dailies (*Sin Chew Jit Poh* and *China Press*) dominated the public sphere of the printed press. Central issues about the strength of BN, the issues of economy and development, the race relations and the opposition were foregrounded. Alternative (or parties') newspapers (*Harakah* and *Suara Keadilan*) and political tabloids (*Buletin Rakyat*, *Mingguan Wasilah* and *Siasah*) with much lower circulations, had little capacity of discourse circulation in their reporting to gain political support and votes in the election. However, the loss of five states: Kelantan, Kedah, Penang, Perak and Selangor to the opposition PR, and BN being denied its two-third majority for the first time in the parliament during the GE12 was credited to the emergence of new media. This shift left Abdullah Ahmad Badawi (2008), the then prime minister, to admit that it was "a serious misjudgement" to underestimate the power of the Internet.

Azahar and Mohd Azizuddin (2016) conducted another quantitative content analysis study on mainstream (*The Star Online*, *Berita Harian Online*, *Bernama Online* and *Utusan Online*), alternative (political parties' publications; *the Harakah Daily*, *Roketkini* and *Keadilan Daily*) and independent (*the Malaysian Insider* and *Malaysiakini*) online news portals during the GE13. Their results showed that the coverage and reporting of the mainstream and alternative media reflected their respective ownership, while the independent news portals provided a rather more neutral coverage for both government and the opposition. Lumsden (2013) also conducted a quantitative content analysis study to investigate how independent are the online news portals' (*Malaysiakini*, *The Malaysian Insider* and *Free Malaysia Today*) coverage of the GE13. The results showed that while they were proven to offer a diversity of news and views about all parties and candidates that generally support their claim of editorial independence, their news reporting was not absolutely neutral. But they still provided critical (both positive and negative) coverage not only about the government but also the opposition and that was significant. The findings also revealed the opening up of political discourse in Malaysia which had contributed to

participatory democracy, which inextricably bound to the diversity of news and views to inform voters.

However, in a study done by Aini, Malia and Kamaruzzaman (2017), it shows that the issues concern by the Malaysian mainstream newspapers were different than the issues of concern by the public during the GE13. Using quantitative content analysis and survey, they found that the agenda that the media set is not parallel with the public agenda. Both the media and the public indicated the level of importance among the issues differently. These results echo the findings in similar studies conducted by Syed Arabi and Kee in 2008 and 2011 that although the issues of politics and religion were set to be the most important ones, Malaysians tend to regard issues that directly affect their personal, i.e. national security, crime, health and immigrants issue as the most important ones.

Until this point, it is significant to note that the majority of the election communication studies of newspapers in Malaysia are based on content analysis as the dominant methodological approach. While content analysis of election coverage research did show that the mainstream newspapers provided biased coverage of national elections, tended to positively gravitate towards the ruling coalition and gave less and more negative spotlight towards the opposition coalition; such descriptive research is always a beginning. The lack of studies in explaining and understanding the dynamic of political communication during election in Malaysia itself is pervasive. Therefore, this thesis, along with its critical discourse analysis principles, endeavours to describe and explain how such power abuse is enacted, reproduced and legitimized in the government-owned media such as Malaysia where control is institutionalized.

The next chapter will continue the discussion on the media by focusing on newspaper discourse and its contemporary relevance before focusing on the journalistic genre of editorials and columns as argumentation.

Chapter 2

Newspapers and argumentative discourse

Introduction

This chapter offers a critical overview of the theoretical framework that fits into the overall research project. First, it defines and provides a discussion on newspaper discourse and its contemporary relevance (Section 2.1) before focusing on the journalistic genre of editorials and columns as a specific form of argumentation (Section 2.2.) as well as argumentative persuasion (Section 2.3). Second, I aim to describe Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) and evaluate how it can provide a theoretical/methodological platform from which I can critically investigate the hidden/explicit ideological and argumentative loading of the argumentative GE13 campaign discourse (Section 2.4). Here, I also review the principal concepts of CDA (Section 2.4.1.) and sketch out its different approaches before focusing on Discourse Historical Approach (DHA) that will be brought to bear on subsequent analyses (Section 2.4.2). Finally, I present an overview of other existing discourse approaches to argumentation and set out the position I intend to take in my own work (Section 2.5).

2.1. Newspapers discourse

Kress (1985) defines discourses as “systematically-organised sets of statements which give expression to the meanings and values of an institution” (p. 7). In the same sense, newspaper discourse as Richardson (2007) puts it is “the system (and the values upon which it is based) whereby news organizations select and organise the possible statements on a particular subject” (p. 76). In other words, it has “some very specific textual characteristics, some very specific methods of text *production and consumption* [i.e. social setting] (Richardson, 2007, p.1, italics mine). However, the picture of newspaper discourse as dialectic relationship between producer and consumer is only partial. This is because, even though they are dialectically related in the sense that journalistic language, its production and consumption and the relations of journalism to social ideas and institutions are different elements, “they [still] affect each other and inflect each other” (Fairclough, 2000. p. 144). Therefore, newspapers discourse is also defined by “a particular set of relationships between itself and other agencies of symbolic and material power”

(Richardson, 2007, p.1). In other words, journalism is not produced in a vacuum; newspapers discourse is a social practice where activity and context within social situations are inextricably linked and dialectically related but are still different. It “reflect(s) physical and social qualities of communicating agencies (publishers) and their relationships to other systems” (Gerbner, 1958, p. 488). With that in mind, our discussion in this thesis examines newspapers discourse, particularly editorials and columns, as a social practice that is related to other social institutions and wider social factors.

Since language is used to *mean* and *do* something, newspaper discourse, as a (social) practice cannot be isolated from the immediate context of speaker-text-audience and the wider socio-political context which bounds the communicative act in which the language is produced and interpreted. On a metatheoretical level, it echoes Ludwig Wittgenstein’s notion of ‘language game’ and ‘forms of life’:

utterances are only meaningful if we consider their use in a specific situation, if we understand the underlying conventions and rules, if we recognize the embedding in a certain culture and ideology...if we know what the discourse relates to in the past (cited in Fairclough and Wodak, 1997, p. 276).

As such, its analysis, as Brown and Yule (1983) go on to point out, “cannot be restricted to the description of linguistic forms independent of the purposes or functions which those forms are designed to serve in human affairs” (p.1).

To imagine a practice in a neutral social setting (context) is mystifying, because it does not exist: the sourcing routines and the newspapers guides are the manifestation that context *frames, structures, shapes* and *controls* the language used, hence “enabling certain people to speak and restricting others; certain words or phrases will be obligatory, or considered more suitable, and other words or phrases will be prohibited” (Richardson, 2007, p. 220)¹¹. This thesis therefore views a free press (social function, see Habermas, 1989) as a paradox for at least three reasons. First, as discussed previously on the concept of developmental journalism, journalists are fettered, their hands are tied; they work within a range of constraints and influences; structural factors that affect their output¹². Second, newspapers

¹¹ See also Fairclough and Wodak, 1997, p. 258; Fairclough, 2001, pp 231-242; Carlson and Franklin, 2011

¹² See van Dijk, 1998, p. 5; McQuail, 2000, p. 240; Richardson, 2006, p. 103; Richardson, 2007, p. 220; Lewis, Williams and Franklin, 2008, p. 202

are businesses- they are not solely designed to *tell* (let alone to educate) but to *sell*; this marketplace forces (profit) hence works against the objective of supplying the public sphere with reasoned discourse¹³. Third, as McQuail (2000, p. 249) notes: the relations between media organizations and their operating environment are governed not solely by naked market forces or political power but also by unwritten social and cultural guidelines.

Alternatively, Richardson (2007) argues that “these social practices do not ‘write the news’... [and that] journalists enjoy a degree of autonomy in their work (albeit of a relative kind) (p. 44)”-they retain the power in choosing between sources, deciding whether to include or exclude certain perspective even within the context of constraints. And although there are “journalists who fly the flag for freedom of information and for the right of citizens to be informed, even at the cost of embarrassing the state” (Harcup, 2002, p. 102), Larsson (2002) asserts that “they [journalists] are forced, in a sense, to choose between the dishes offered on the municipal buffet table. Only rarely do they venture into the kitchen to see what the host may have hidden in the cupboard ... [The] media stay within the news selection frames determined by the organisations they report” (p. 29). As the classic dance metaphor that Gans (1980) famously put it: “Although it takes two to tango either sources or journalists can lead, but more often than not, sources do the leading” (p. 116). In the case of Malaysia, it is the owners who, “through their wealth [and/or power] determine the style of journalism we get” (Foley, 2000, p.51). Malaysia’s press is controlled and left with no choice but to work professedly for the *rakyat*¹⁴ (See Chapter 3 for discussion on media ownership in Malaysia).

As much as discourse cannot be reduced to a second-class material reality, nor to the notion of ‘false consciousness’ or a ‘distorted view of reality’ as it is viewed by some orthodox Marxists (See Jäger and Maier, 2009; Carvalho, 2010), for Gieber (1964) and Fowler (1991), news is a *product*. It “does not have an independent existence” (Gieber, 1964, p. 223). And it is “not a natural phenomenon emerging straight from ‘reality’...It is produced by an industry, shaped by the relations between the media and other industries and... by relations with government and with other political organizations...it reflects, and in return shapes, the prevailing values of a society in a particular historical context”

¹³ See McQuail, 2000, p. 249; Lewis, Williams and Franklin, 2008, p. 204

¹⁴ Malaysian people.

(Fowler, 1991, p. 222). And in this mechanical and bureaucratic processes is where “[the] reporter’s individuality is strongly tempered by extra personal factors” (Gieber, 1964. p.223).

2.2. Examining editorials and opinion columns

According to McNair (2008, p. 112), journalism stopped being only about the reporting of events (the ‘*what-s*’, facts, though this remained central) and started to be about *making sense* of them (the ‘*why-s*’, meanings construction). And although the history of opinion journalism is as old as the history of the press itself, it is not until the 20th century that the English newspapers make the distinction between news and opinion; between reporting the day’s events ‘as they happen’¹⁵ and analysing, commenting on and/or (re)interpreting them from a certain subjective viewpoint (McNair, 2000, p.61; McNair, 2003, p.54; McNair, 2008, p. 112). The latter includes editorial and op-ed (opposite editorial, i.e. columns, commentaries¹⁶) as distinctive journalistic writing genres that are central to a newspaper’s identity where expression of opinion is expected, although often guided with an axe to grind, the aspiration for “balanced forum”, within certain ideologies parameters, still celebrated (See Page, 1996, p. 21; Day and Golan, 2005, p. 62).

Editorials (or leaders, leading articles¹⁷) are “the heart, soul and conscience of a newspaper” (Santo, 1994, p. 94) as it tells a newspaper’s position on political and social issues. Even more than the news reports on which they are based, they ‘inform and explain’ (Richardson and Lancendorfer, 2004, p.80) and offer “such practical, common

¹⁵ Balanced, impartial account of any event ‘as they happen’; Lawrence Gobright, the AP Chief in Washington once explained the philosophy of objectivity to Congress in 1856. He said “My business is to communicate facts. My instructions do not allow me to make any comments upon facts which I communicate. My dispatches are sent to papers of all manner of politics, and the editors say they are able to make their own comments upon the facts which are sent to them. I therefore confine myself to what I consider legitimate news. I do not act as a politician belonging to any school but try to be truthful and impartial. My dispatches are merely dry matter of fact and detail” (cited in Daly, 2012, p. 81). However, Gobright’s credo left me a bit sceptical about the notion of journalistic objectivity because “discourse is *always* representation from a certain point of view” (Fowler, 1991, p. 208, my emphasis, see also van Dijk, 1998, p. 124) and “anyone who simply collects facts and sets them down is not a reporter. Unless you also weigh the evidence, you’re not a journalist, you’re a stenographer” (Sunderland, September 10, 2015). On the same issue, McNair also asserts (2003) “journalism is not, and never can be, neutral and objective, but is fundamentally interpretative, embodying the dominant values and explanatory framework of the society within which it is produced” (p. 54).

¹⁶ Also includes editorial cartoons, opinion surveys, reviews, advice columns, letters to editor and so on

¹⁷ van Dijk (1989)

sense frameworks for making sense of [a] social situation (van Dijk, 1989, p. 252). Editorials are the “institutional expression of opinion...the [anonymous] voice of the editor, publisher and owner seeking to inform, influence, stimulate and motivate readers” (Hynds and Martin, 1977, p. 776) usually about “a single event or issue per day...[which] implicitly signal that the newspaper attributes particular social or political significance to such an event” (van Dijk, 1989, pp. 230-1). In other words, the editorial is a collective viewpoint- the content and position are generally institutional and impersonal as they are often the outcome of the newspaper’s editorial board decision (the editorial gatekeepers, see Ciofalo and Traverso, 1994), which explains why they are unsigned, or only signed in the name of the newspaper. With that being the case, they are also the space where a newspaper’s ideology is ‘formulated’ (van Dijk, 1989, p. 252), “clarified and re-established, reasserted... [and where they present the newspaper’s] perception of ‘reality’ in the form which it regards as most suitable for its readership” (Hodge and Kress, 1993, p. 17). Therefore, van Dijk (1996) reminds us that “whatever specific events are being formulated they will tend to be derived from social representations, rather than from the personal experiences or opinions of an editor” (p.45).

Columns (or commentaries), on the other hand, are not “merely analytical and interpretative, but opinionated and often partisan” (McNair, 2008, p. 113). They are “a more distinctive, personalised journalism” (McNair, 2000, p. 62) that reflect the personal views of the columnists, usually freelance writers, guest opinion writers or regular or syndicated columnists who write within their field of expertise but do not necessarily share the same opinions, values, assumptions with the newspaper’s board is a Western-centric argument (Hynds, 1984; See also Ciofalo and Traverso, 1994; Golan and Wanta, 2004). MacArthur (2004) insists that the best definition of a column is “surely that it is a good read...set us up for the day, help to define our views”. Liefer (1990) visions columns and commentaries aptly as the

vehicle for an intellectual transaction between writer and reader...a place where a wide range of voices can speak to the issues of the day; where controversy can blossom or consensus wilt; where a marginal crackbrain can make a reader sputter over morning coffee; where four polished paragraphs can bring tears...Moreover, the freelance work of local and national figures...emphasizes the page’s accessibility as a meeting place of minds that depends for success on the

substantive, variegated, abundant and articulate views of others. It also establishes [their] identity as an entity with a particular mission, not just an extension of the editorial page (p.9).

The New York Times was the first to introduce op-ed page in 1970 with the aim to “afford greater opportunity for exploration of issues and presentation of new insights and new ideas by writers and thinkers who have no institutional connection with The Times and whose views will very frequently be completely divergent from our own” (New York Times, 1970, p.42). This ‘marketplace of ideas’ that is open to non-journalist/public contributors break what Ciofalo and Traverso (1994) call as ‘the professionals’ monopoly of journalistic discourse’ because when all discourse in the paper is monopolized, “the reader is induced into a passively receptive relationship” (p.53).

The following sections offer a further discussion on editorials and columns as argumentative journalistic genre; i.e. editorials and columns as argumentation and editorials and columns as argumentative persuasion.

2.3. Editorials and columns as argumentation

Belmonte (2007) argues that editorial and columns are “the most genuine examples of written argumentation” (p.2). They provide “forums for the exchange of information and ideas about government and community life... [hence] enable readers to reinforce existing ideas, crystallize ideas that are not yet clear, and ...consider a very different viewpoint” (Hynds and Archibald, 1996, p.15)¹⁸. Editorials and columns “may function as a critique and advice to specific (often elite) groups or institutions, and hence involve (power) relations between the media, media writers, politicians, business[people] and readers” (van Dijk, 1998, p.62). Through these editorials and columns, meanings are negotiated, public opinion is formed, shaped, articulated and altered- influencing debate and promoting social interacting among journalist and audience (See van Dijk, 1996; Le, 2004; Wahl-Jorgensen, 2008, p. 70). This pro-active, opinionated journalism, according to McNair (2000) has

¹⁸ See Hynds and Martin, 1977; Stonecipher, 1979; Rosenfeld, 2000; Wahl-jorgensen, 2004 among others for more about editorials and columns’ social function.

the power to set the dominant political agenda, as elaborated over weeks, months and years...amounting to extended narrative of unity and division, success and failure, rise and fall. In this capacity the institutions of the press take the lead in establishing the dominant interpretative frameworks within which ongoing political events are made sense of (p.30)

Since opinion, as a form of complex verbal action, is goal oriented, it must be defended and supported, which explains why they exhibit argumentative structures and strategies such as by proving (or making) their own positions plausible or/and other's untenable (van Dijk, 1989, pp. 231-2). Journalistic bent, i.e. leaning in one political direction or another in the case of editorials or columns is encouraged if not obligatory- because neutrality is a negative noun especially when it involves injustices; as Freire (1985) puts it: "washing one's hands of the conflict between the powerful and the powerless means to side with the powerful, not to be neutral" (p.122). But taking side must come with one condition; as much as "there is a pressure for the reporter to write a factually accurate story, then the commentator faces just as much responsibility to write factually accurate comment. His or her opinions may be controversial, but they have to rest on truth" (Greenslade, 1997 cited in Petley, 2006, p. 59). These opinions are not written by just journalists or contributors who are merely reporters of political action as they are political actors in their own rights who play an active role in the political process by selecting and structuring information, assigning relevance, interpreting and evaluating the stream of events that continuously taking place (Conboy, 2004; See also Eilders, 2000, p. 182).

Against this background, in this thesis, I approach editorials and columns as argumentation. Van Eemeren and Grootendorst (2016) believe that "argumentative discourse should be studied as a specimen of normal verbal communication and interaction, and it should at the same time, be measured against a certain standard of reasonableness" (p.8) and that "a definition of argumentation suitable to be used in argumentation theory...[should] connect with commonly recognized characteristics of argumentation as it is known from everyday practice" (van Eemeren and Grootendorst, 2004, p. 8). Thus, argumentation is defined as:

a verbal and social activity of reason aimed at increasing (or decreasing) the acceptability of a controversial standpoint for the listener or reader, by putting

forward a constellation of propositions¹⁹ intended to justify (or refute) the standpoint before a rational judge (van Eemeren and Grootendorst, 2004, p.1, see also, among others van Eemeren et al., 1996, p. 5; van Eemeren et al., 2009, p.5).

Richardson (2007, pp. 155-6) expands four characteristics of argumentation or argumentative discourse that are echoed in the definition above:

1. Argumentation is *active*

It is an activity in which participants use language to *do* certain things, whether this is advancing their point of view or attacking that of someone else. On this point, Perelman (1979) reiterates that “it must not be forgotten that all argumentation aims somehow at modifying an existing state of affairs” (p. 11), whether this be mental, social and political.

2. Argumentation is *social*

It is a social activity in which argumentation moves are “not just the expression of an individual assessment, but a contribution to a communication process between persons or groups who exchange ideas with one another in order to resolve a difference of opinion” (van Eemeren and Grootendorst, 2004, p. 55).

3. Argumentation is a *joint process* between participants

It is an interaction, requiring participants to both produce and consume argumentation; to compose arguments and to analyse those of their opponent; argumentation can only work when participants consent to being persuaded.

4. Argumentation requires *certain standards* by which the quality of the argumentative language can be measured (van Eemeren and Grootendorst, 2004, p.56).

Argumentation is aimed at resolving a difference of opinion, occurs in a particular material social context, and is realised through the participants offering arguments which they believe support their standpoint and which are aimed at exerting an influence on the opinions, attitudes and even behaviour of others. However, argumentation is not a free-for-all, with participants offering any old argument and concluding that they have proved their standpoint. While it is unreasonable for Person A to threaten Person B and then, once

¹⁹ Or expressed thought contents (see van Eemeren, et al., 2014, p.2)

Person B is too scared to defend his/her standpoint, to declare that Person A has won the argument is an approach of violence not persuasion. Therefore, there are standards, or rules of argumentation and “these rules should aim to regulate both the *product* of arguments as texts and the *process* of argument as an activity” (Richardson, 2007.p. 156, see also Chapter 4); in other words, to regulate the content of arguments and the conduct of arguers.

2.3.1. Editorials and columns as argumentative persuasion

Editorials and columns are treated as one genre in this thesis as they share one primary social function (or mission) that is, they both aim to persuade their readers (van Dijk 1991, p. 120; van Dijk, 1992, p.242; Hynds, 1990; Fowler, 1991, p. 211). McNair (2008) asserts that “on whatever basis the authority of journalistic opinion is constructed, the aim is always to persuade readers ... [about] what things mean, and, where appropriate and what should be done about them” (p. 114), highlighting its definitive role in (re)forming and altering the public opinion, producing public’s consensus, decision making and other forms of social and political action (van Dijk, 1995).

Jowett and O’Donnell (2012) define persuasion as “communicative process to influence others. A persuasive message has a point of view or desired behaviour for the recipient to adopt in a voluntary fashion” (p.32). Perloff (2014), emphasizes the use of words like freedom, justice and equality, as persuaders’ tools that are designed to change attitudes and mould opinions. He sees persuasion as “a symbolic process in which communicators try to convince other people to change their attitudes or behaviour regarding an issue through the transmission of a message, in an atmosphere of free choice (p.8). However, Soules (2015) states that “persuasion wears many masks across a spectrum of influence that ranges from giving advice and gaining compliance, to education, promotion, propaganda and physical coercion...like fish in water, we are immersed in persuasion before we know we are swimming” (p.96), making defining the broad the term ‘persuasion’ problematic. Hence, O’Keefe (2002, p.5) suggests the need to understand the concept of persuasion instead of resorting to a hard-edged definition. On that basis, this thesis goes back to Aristotle’s *Rhetoric* (350BCE/2004) which propounds that “rhetoric is the counterpart of Dialectic” (1354a 1), with dialectic defined by van Eemeren and Houtlosser (2009) as “a method for dealing systematically with critical exchanges in verbal communication and interaction to

move from conjecture and opinion to more secure (descriptive, evaluative or inciting) standpoints” (p.4). According to Aristotle (350BCE/2004), rhetoric is “the faculty of observing in any given case the available means of persuasion” (1355b 26-27). Corbett (1984) highlights a number of things to be noted about this definition:

First of all, although the generic term that Aristotle uses here to define rhetoric is *dynamics* (“faculty” or “power” or “ability”), in most other places in the text, he speaks of rhetoric as being an art. We can reconcile the *art* of rhetoric, one has the *faculty* or *ability* to discover the available means of persuasion. Aristotle does not designate persuasion as the end or function of rhetoric; rather, the function of rhetoric is to observe or discover the potentially persuasive *arguments* in a particular case. With this emphasis, Aristotle relieves rhetoric of the onus of having to achieve persuasion at any cost. He implies here and elsewhere that if one acquires the ability to discover the available arguments, one will be guided in making a choice of the most effective and legitimate arguments by one’s intellectual and moral disposition (pp. xv-i)

Echoing Aristotle, Richardson (2007) adds that rhetoric is “a *political* facility” (p.156) whose function “is not simply to succeed in persuading, but rather to discover the persuasive facts in each case” (Aristotle, 350BCE/2004, 1355b 10-11) and how they are presented in a way that they convince an audience and provoke them into an immediate or future course of action.

2.4. Critical approach to argumentative discourse

Critical discourse analysis (CDA)²⁰ views discursive and linguistic data as a social practice, both reflecting and producing ideologies in society (Van Dijk 2008; Wodak and Chilton 2007). CDA as a ‘research program’ is a recognisable approach to language study (Wodak & Meyer, 2009, pp. 3–5; Wodak, 2011, p. 50). Thus, all CDA approaches are both theoretical approaches and a practical means for studying language. While discourse analysis and *critical* discourse analysis differ significantly, with the latter being overtly political and interested in questions of power and inequality (see Wodak and Meyer, 2009, p. 2), it is important to point out that CDA is not a method of discourse studies, a common

²⁰ Or critical discourse studies (CDS) (see van Dijk, 2009, p. 62; van Dijk, 2013).

mistake. Neither is it a method of critical discourse analysis (see Wodak and Meyer, 2009). Van Dijk (2013) argues, and is worth being quoted at length, that:

CDA is *not a method of critical discourse analysis*. This may sound paradoxical, but I am afraid it isn't. Think about it. Indeed, what would be the systematic, explicit, detailed, replicable procedure for doing "critical" analysis? There is no such method. Being critical, first of all, is a state of mind, an attitude, a way of dissenting, and many more things, but not an explicit method for the description of the structures or strategies of text and talk. So, in that sense, people who want to practice CDA may be supposed to do so from a perspective of opposition, for instance against power abuse through discourse. Playing with words, then, CDA is DA "with an attitude" [...] that is, with a rebellious attitude of dissent against the symbolic power elites that dominate public discourse, especially in politics [and] the media. [...] Methodologically, CDA is as diverse as DA in general, or indeed other directions in linguistics, psychology or the social sciences. Thus, CDA studies may do so in terms of grammatical (phonological, morphological, syntactic), semantic, pragmatic, interactional rhetorical, stylistic, narrative or genre analyses, among others, on the one hand, and through experiments, ethnography, interviewing, life stories, focus groups, participant observation, and so on, on the other hand. A good method is a method that is able to give a satisfactory (reliable, relevant, etc.) answer to the questions of a research project. It depends on one's aims, expertise, time and goals and the kind of data that can or must be generated - that is, on the context of a research project. [...] So, there is not 'a' or 'one' method of CDA but, many. [...] So, please, no more 'I am going to apply CDA because it does not make sense. Do critical discourse analysis by formulating critical goals, and then explain by what *specific* methods you want to realize it (italics in original).

CDA, according to Ihnen and Richardson (2011, p. 236), "typically describes texts from the point of view of a specific social problem ... and concentrates on the discursive manifestation of power abuse and axes of domination in relation to that problem" (ibid.). Therefore, considering Malaysian media that have been instrumental in maintaining the government's hegemony for more than half century, and where such control has long been institutionalized (see Chapter 3 for more discussion of this), this thesis, along with its CDA principles, endeavours to describe and explain how such power abuse is enacted,

reproduced and legitimized. It attempts to uncover, reveal and disclose what is implicit, hidden or otherwise not immediately obvious in relations of discursively enacted dominance or their underlying ideologies in editorials and columns during the country's 13th general election (GE13) campaign. Since elections are important in the legitimization process in a parliamentary democracy such as Malaysia's, this thesis specifically focuses on the discursive strategies employed to legitimize/ delegitimize the government/ opposition during the campaign period in order to influence the minds (and indirectly the actions) of the people in the interests of the powerful. Since concepts of power, legitimation, hegemony and ideology are central to CDA, and thus this thesis, the section below will briefly discuss these concepts:

2.4.1. Concepts of power, legitimation, ideology and hegemony

Fairclough (1995 p.2), following Foucault (1975), defines power not only as the asymmetries that exist between individuals participating in the same discursive event, but also in terms of how people have different capacities to control how texts and thus discourses are produced, distributed and consumed. Therefore, according to Reisigl and Wodak (2009), texts are often sites fighting for dominance and hegemony and "power is legitimized or delegitimized in discourses" (p. 89). In democratic societies, disciplinary power, as opposed to sovereign power (see Foucault, 1975, p. 223), or consent as opposed to coercion (see Fairclough, 1989) is important. It is a way of ensuring that people exercise self-control or submit to the will of 'experts' as well as of manufacturing consent without putting a bludgeon over people's heads (see for example, Foucault, 1975; Herman and Chomsky, 1988; van Dijk, 2008). Or, as Talbot (1998) puts it, "real social power does not reside in big muscles ... power resides elsewhere: in being at the head of a corporation, a general leading an army, a senator or an MP" (p. 193), i.e. the power to "influence knowledge, beliefs, values, social relations, social identities" (Fairclough, 1995, p.2).

Legitimation, on the other hand, according to Habermas (1988), is negotiated in society in the sense that citizens cast their votes, i.e. grant legitimacy, in return for certain benefits. Fairclough (2003) views legitimation as the "widespread acknowledgement of the legitimacy of explanations and justifications for how things are and how things are done" (p. 219). Hence elections contribute to providing justification for the existence of a regime, thus consolidating its legitimacy. Legitimation does not occur at the end of a power struggle; as Beetham (2015) points out, it is "not the icing on the cake of power, which is

applied after baking is complete, and leaves the cake itself essentially unchanged. It is more like the yeast that permeates the dough and makes the bread what it is” (p. 39).

We have discussed how editorials and columns play a key role in political campaigns in democratic elections in previous chapters. Therefore, discourses are a major instrument of power and control as they are underpinned by ideologies (see Caldas-Coulthard & Coulthard, preface; Flowerdew & Richardson, 2018, p. 3; see also Chapter 2 on how this study defines ‘newspapers discourse’). Reisigl and Wodak (2009) see ideology as “an (often) one-sided perspective or world view composed of related mental representations, convictions, opinions, attitudes and evaluations, which is shared by members of a specific group” (p. 88). Power is linked to discourse because discourses are ways of representing and constructing reality so that power relations are constructed, maintained and contested via discourses. Fairclough (1992, p. 87), drawing on Althusser (1971), views ideologies as “constructions of realities ... which are built into various dimensions of the forms/ meanings of discursive practices, and which contribute to the production, reproduction or transformation of relations of domination” (p.87). But Jones (2001, p. 227) asserts that ideology “is not just any system of ideas or beliefs but ways of thinking in which historically transient exploitative forms of social organization are presented as external, natural, inevitable or ‘rational’”. The dissemination of ideology in promoting the interests of specific social groups may involve the dichotomy of an us versus them situation, positive in-group and negative out-group representations. van Dijk (1998, p. 44) characterizes this as an ‘ideological square’:

- emphasise positive things about Us
- emphasise negative things about Them
- de-emphasise negative things about Us
- de-emphasise positive things about Them.

Wodak and Meyer (2009) assert that “dominant ideologies appear as ‘neutral’, holding on to assumptions that stay largely unchallenged ... when most people in a society think alike about certain matters, or even forget that there are alternatives to the status quo, we arrive at the Gramscian concept of *hegemony*” (p. 8, italics in original). Hegemony is maintained through manufacturing consent, and power is successful precisely when it is being neutralized and re-enacted in routine activities that are not questioned but instead seen as

normal. In other words, when the dominated give their consent to the dominant and start to see the world from the point of view of the dominant. Therefore, van Dijk (1996) maintains that “social power [as opposed to individual power] and dominance are often organised and institutionalised, so as to allow more effective control and to enable routine forms of power reproduction” (p. 85).

2.4.2. Discourse-Historical Approach to argumentative texts

CDA has a number of approaches and they all share the emancipatory agenda with the same forms of domination identified earlier. Although the methods of each of these approaches overlap, they are still distinct depending on, amongst other things, their foci and theoretical influences (see Flowerdew and Richardson, 2018; Wodak and Meyer, 2009 for more discussion on approaches in CDA). For example, Norman Fairclough, one of the key figures in the realm of CDA, is generally more interested in the language of new capitalism. His Dialectical-Relational Approach (DHA), which draws on a specific linguistic theory – Halliday’s Systemic Functional Linguistics, focuses on social conflict in the Marxian tradition (e.g. see Fairclough, 2000; Fairclough, 2009; Fairclough, 2018). On the other hand, another key figure, Teun van Dijk with his Sociocognitive Approach (SA), represents the sociopsychological dimensions of CDA and draws on Moscovici’s social representation theory (e.g. see van Dijk, 1993; van Dijk, 2009; van Dijk, 2018).

However, as mentioned earlier, I approach editorials and columns as argumentation. Although CDA is not solely concerned with argumentative strategies, DHA is the only approach that explicitly and consistently cites argumentation as a key discourse strategy. Therefore, its framework will be adapted in this thesis. The DHA should prove particularly useful, due to its aim to integrate and triangulate knowledge about historical sources and the backgrounds of social and political fields, i.e. political communication, also studies of rhetoric discussed earlier, within which discursive events are embedded (see e.g. Reisigl and Wodak, 2009; Wodak and Meyer, 2009; Wodak and Richardson, 2013; Richardson, 2017; Reisigl, 2018).

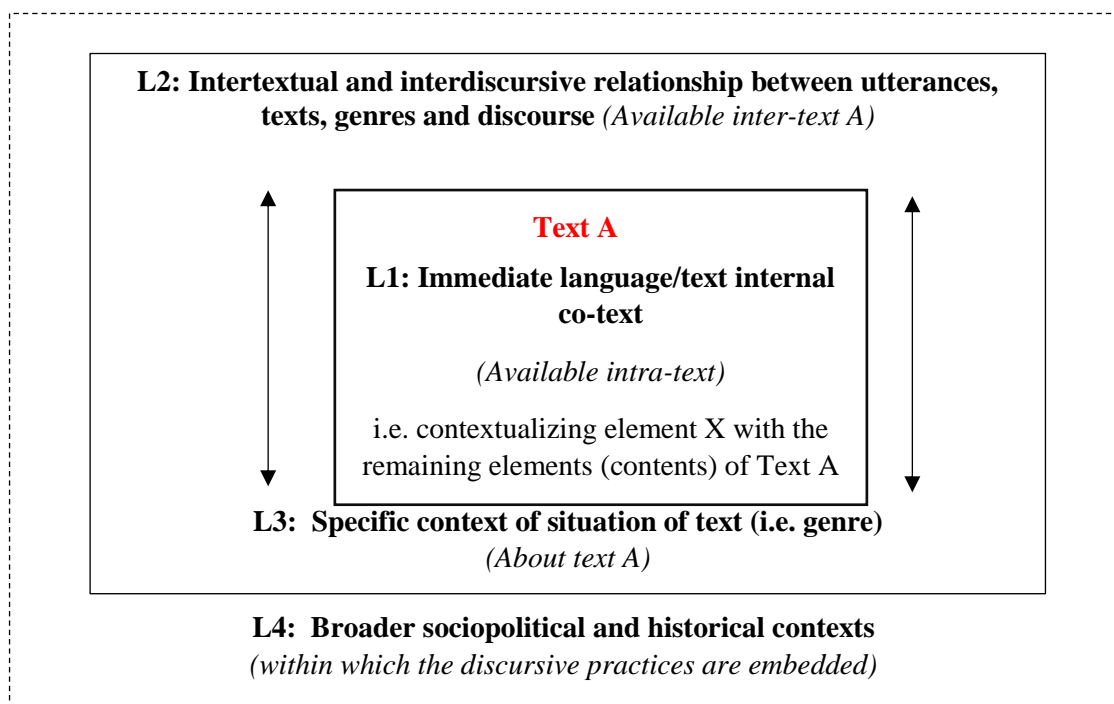
Wodak (1996) elaborates on the process of news comprehension and argues that this process is dependent both “on the text itself with respect to form and content” and “on the cognitive and emotional predisposition of the listener [as well as reader]” (p. 102). It would be naive to assume that differences in comprehension among readers are ‘necessarily idiosyncratic’ and to ignore wider sociological and socio-psychological

factors. She asserts that ‘comprehension does not function on the basis of a *tabula rasa* in the human mind but is to a large extent dependent on schematic prior knowledge’ (ibid., p. 111). Echoing Richardson (2017, 62):

...the present is the outcome, more or less directly, more or less clearly, of longstanding historic processes – material processes, social, political and economic processes, cultural processes, institutional processes, intellectual processes. These processes are both reflected and enacted in the discourse of any particular period in history, as recorded in texts.

So, every ‘text’ in DHA is conceived as a semiotic entity embedded in a four-level model of context (see Wodak and Meyer, 2009; Reisigl and Wodak, 2009, p. 89; Richardson and Wodak, 2009, p. 46; Richardson, 2017, p. 61) to locate discursive practices, strategies and texts in specific sociopolitical contexts which are used as heuristics (i.e. a problem-solving technique). The four levels of contexts are summarized in Figure 1 below:

Figure 1: Summary of four levels (Ls) of context in DHA



The DHA is imbued with an attention to analysis of the immediate, text-internal context (Level 1) as well as the intertextual (i.e. links to other texts through invoking a topic, an event or a main actor) and interdiscursive (i.e. the indication that discourses can be linked

to discourses on other topics or sub-topics) relationships between utterances, texts, genres and discourses (Level 2), extra-linguistic social/sociological variables and institutional frames of a specific context of situation and processes of text production, text-reception and text consumption (Level 3) and broader sociopolitical and historical contexts of the issue under investigation (Level 4).

However, for most discourse analytical approaches, and for qualitative research in general, there is no fixed procedure for analysis (Jorgensen and Phillips, 2002; Hjelm, 2011). And since DHA too, should be perceived as an approach or attitude rather than a step-by-step method (Reisigl and Wodak, 2009, p. 95), my analysis is tailored to match the characteristics of the texts in terms of deconstructing how legitimation is accomplished discursively in the argument for/against the government/opposition in mainstream editorials and columns during the campaign period from 20 April to 4 May 2013. The methods adopted for this approach are further elaborated later in Chapter 4. The final section below briefly discusses other discourse approaches to argumentation.

2.5. Other discourse approaches to argumentation

Van Eemeren et al. (2014) remind us that “argumentation is not just structural entity... [it is] a communicative act complex consisting of a functional combination of communicative moves” (p.5). Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca (1969) argue that it is the study of these discursive techniques in texts which “[allow] us to induce or increase the mind’s adherence to these presented for its assent” (p.4) that will be the object of argumentation theory. Therefore, Richardson (2001) asserts that in approaching argumentation, “a fully formed critical model of argumentation should take account, not only of the form and content of arguments, but also the functional and interactive aspects of argument within their discursive context, and of their application and effect in the social field” (p.145).

On that basis, I use the discourse-historical approach (DHA) as the framework to analyse this particular argumentative discourse, that is editorials and columns, in this thesis. DHA is the only approach that explicitly and consistently cites argumentation as a key discourse strategy (see Ihnen and Richardson, 2011; Reisigl, 2014). There are other critical discourse studies approaches such as socio-cognitive approach (see e.g. van Dijk, 1993, 2018) and critical discourse approach developed by Isabela let, cu-Fairclough and Norman Fairclough (see e.g. Fairclough and Fairclough, 2012) that focus on argumentation. But the former

does not build argumentation formally into its analytic framework and although the latter includes a framework, *a method*, for analysing and evaluating argumentation in political discourse, it has different focus and principles to what the thesis adopts. Also, as a rule, the method(s) of discourse analysis used in CDA cannot be prescribed in advance, since their selection depends mainly on specific research questions” (Ihnen and Richardson 2011, p.240).

Toulmin’s *The Uses of Argument* (2003 [1958]), the basis of Fairclough’s (2003) approach while discussing ‘dialogical’ and ‘monological’ arguments and Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca’s *The New Rhetoric* (1969) for instances, have been a major impetus to other scholars to embark upon the study of argumentation. But the goal they set out to reach has not yet been materialized (See e.g. van Eemeren et al. 2007). While the former’s theory is developed to explain how argumentation occurs in the natural process of an everyday argument, the latter tries to find a description technique of argumentation used by people to obtain the approval of others for their opinions, Van Eemeren (1995) comments that:

In my opinion, this can be blamed partly on neglect of functional, social and dialectical aspects of argumentation as a discourse phenomenon, in spite of the appearances to the contrary. Toulmin’s approach does not do justice to the fact that argumentation is a speech act complex²¹ which is dependent on the commitments created by the linguistic and situational context of the speech event in which it is embedded. Apart from similar shortcomings, Perelman [and Olbrechts-Tyteca]’s ‘new rhetoric’ ignores the interactional aspect of argumentation ensuing from the critical reactions of the interlocutors whose approval is sought. [Their] abandonment of logic from the tools for dealing with argumentation has not resulted in an alternative which gives the communicative, interactional and critical features of argumentation their due (p. 147)²².

Argumentation theory, as an academic discipline is not *the* theory for argumentation as different scholars employ the argumentation theory differently. Therefore, Atkin and Richardson (2007) consider the pragma-dialectical model developed by van Eemeren and

²¹ Argumentation is “a speech act complex with a justificatory or refutatory function in a critical discussion aimed at resolving a difference of opinion between a protagonist who is positively committed to the standpoint at issue and an antagonist who is doubtful or had contrary standpoint” in pragma-dialectics (van Eemeren, 1995, p. 150)

²² See also van Eemeren and Grootendorst (2016[1992]) pp. 1-2

Grootendorst (2004, 2016)²³ ‘to be the most sophisticated and practicable’ theory; “what distinguishes the pragma-dialectical analysis from others is its account of the process [as opposed to product] by which claims are justified or refuted” (p. 4). Instead of treating argumentation as a practice in logic, pragma-dialectics takes a functional approach to argumentation analysis in terms of how competing standpoints (i.e. points of view) are relatively justified in the attempt to address and resolve difference of opinion on the merits in a critical discussion.

Van Eemeren and Houtlosser (2009) pragmatically define ‘dialectics’ in *pragma-dialectics* as “a method for dealing systematically with critical exchanges in verbal communication and interaction to move from conjecture and opinion to more secure (descriptive, evaluative or inciting) standpoints” (p.4). However, what makes the analysis ‘dialectical’ according to van Eemeren, Jackson and Jacobs (2015) is not that “its object is dialogue but that it places any argumentative text into the context of one party’s effort to convince another of a standpoint by answering doubts and objections and by grounding conclusions in mutually acceptable starting points” (p.14). The dialectical rules for conducting a critical discussion are conceived pragmatically as speech acts performed by protagonist²⁴ and the antagonist^{25,26} in four stages: the confrontation stage, the opening stage, the argumentation stage and the concluding stage of the resolution process while observing the rules of a dialectical procedure which is instrumental in resolving the difference of opinion at every stage (van Eemeren et al. 1996, p. 283). How the rhetorical aim of achieving effectiveness and the dialectical aim of maintaining reasonableness are pursued at the same time in argumentative discourse is explained by the notion of strategic manoeuvring- when dialectical reasonableness is flouted, fallacies are committed, which are viewed as derailments of strategic manoeuvring (See van Eemeren et al., 2009).

²³ See also Feteris, Garssen and Henkemas, 2011 for an account of how the theory is first developed in the 1970s written to honour van Eemeren on the occasion of his retirement)

²⁴ Protagonist of a standpoint

²⁵ The antagonist who attempt to achieve clarity as to whether the protagonist’s standpoint can be defended in light of the antagonist’s critical reactions

²⁶ According to van Eemeren and Grootendorst (2004, p. 59): “argumentative language use is always part of an exchange of views between two parties that do not hold the same opinion”. Therefore, even when the “exchange of views takes place by way of a monologue [e.g. as in the case with editorial and columns] ...the monologue is then taken to be a specific kind of critical discussion where the protagonist is speaking (or writing) and the role of the antagonist remains implicit. Even if the role of the antagonist is not actively and explicitly performed, the discourse of the protagonist can still be analysed as a contribution to a critical discussion: The protagonist makes an attempt to counter [potential] doubt or criticism of a specific or non-specific audience or readership” (p. 59)

Argumentation analysis forms part of the DHA to CDA (See Reisigl and Wodak, 2009, See also Chapter 4). The way in which argumentation in pragma-dialectics and CDA is treated is virtually overlapping, especially in terms of how context is emphasised, the shared assumption on language being a goal-oriented activity and their interest in ‘evaluation’ or ‘critique’ of discourse. As Ihnen and Richardson (2011) further explain:

pragma-dialectics shares with CDA an interest in describing (argumentative) discourse and in carrying out these descriptions from a pragmatic point of view. The pragmatic principle, for instance, that the meaning of a (fragment of) discourse is linked to the context of its use is not only basic to CDA but also to pragma-dialectics (pp. 234-5)

Although some scholars criticize that pragma-dialectics and DHA to argumentation is fundamentally incompatible (see Žagar, 2009; Forchtner and Tominc, 2012), Ihnen and Richardson (2011) maintain that there is still strong potential for useful methodological synthesis. As Reisigl (2014) argue, in DHA, the reference to the pragma-dialectical rules does not mean that the whole model of critical discussion must be adopted. He adds “the content-related analysis of argumentation is especially interesting for [CDA], particularly for approaches which opt for a topic-related definition of ‘discourse’ and are interested in the analysis of ideology, subject positions, contested claims and justification strategies, i.e. for the DHA” (p.92). The DHA framework to argumentation will be discussed in detail in Chapter 4. Since the principal theoretical and analytic foci of CDA remain the relationship between text and context, the next chapter, i.e. Chapter 3 is therefore central to the thesis. This is because, in analysing journalistic genre such as editorials and columns, *meaning* is constantly tied to context. To understand the GE13 campaign discourse in the mainstream editorials and columns, one must first understand why the undemocratic procedures and institutions are sustained in the complex interplay of race and politics in contemporary Malaysian society. Then only the linguistic structure and discursive strategies of the op-eds during the GE13 campaign discourse can be uncovered. All the more, it is the relationship between text and context that forms the heart of any CDA approach, DHA in particular.

Chapter 3

The sociopolitical context of Malaysia

Introduction

This chapter is central to the thesis since, in analysing any journalistic genre, *meaning* is constantly tied to various levels of context, i.e. micro, meso and macro. Chapter 2 has briefly introduced the meso-context of production and reception of a text, i.e. editorials and columns. While the micro-context of these texts under investigation can only be examined along with the localised micro-analyses in Chapters 6, 7, 8 and 9, this chapter focuses on a broader sociopolitical and historical context discussion. It begins with a brief history of British colonial rule in Malaysia in section 3.1. Section 3.2, which follows, offers a summary of the impact of colonialism from 1874 to 1957 on mono-ethnic Malaya, and section 3.3 briefly reviews the rise of Malay nationalism as an effect of British policy. Section 3.4. offers a brief account of the 1969 race riots which strengthened BN/UMNO dominance. In the remaining two sections of this chapter, section 3.5. briefly discusses the challenge to BN's hegemony while section 3.6. describes two ways in which this hegemony is maintained, via legal controls and media ownership. The discussion of these sections will reflect five elements of culture that relate directly to this thesis, i.e. religion, race/ethnicity, language, history and values already discussed in Chapter 1; in this chapter, they are relevant to the specific case of Malaysia, especially when it is impossible to understand the sociopolitical and historical background in isolation from its cultural context.

3.1. Malaysia and its sociopolitical history

Malaysia is a Southeast Asian country of 31.7 million citizens. It is a multi-ethnic nation made up of several different races. Of these, 67.4% are Malay/Bumiputera,²⁷ 24.6% are Chinese, 7.3% are Indians and 0.7 are other (see Department of Statistics Malaysia, 2011). The history of Malaya can be traced back as far as the 15th century (Andaya & Andaya, 2001, p.1), but from 1874 onwards, Malaya was colonised by British forces. When the

²⁷ Bumiputera is a Malaysian term to describe Malays and indigenous peoples, often translated as 'native Malaysians'. The term originates from Sanskrit, it translates literally as 'sons of the land' or 'sons of the soil'.

Malay Sultans gave up their power to the British crown, the colony was named British Malaya, then the Malayan Union²⁸ in 1946 before becoming 'Persekutuan Tanah Melayu' (Federation of Malaya) in 1948. After several negotiations for independence,²⁹ the country secured its independence from Britain in 1957. The Federation of Malaya was later joined by Singapore³⁰ and British Borneo (i.e. Sabah and Sarawak) to form Malaysia in 1963. Malaysians inherited deep racial and social divisions as their shared historical legacy of British colonial rule, divisions which played a fundamental role in the deaths of hundreds of Malaysians during the 13 May 1969 riots. Cheah (2002) argues that it was when Britain abandoned the Malayan Union, i.e. a nation-state without a dominant ethnic model, for *Persekutuan Tanah Melayu* (literally 'Malay Land Federation' or Federation of Malaya) that the current modern state was taken as a 'given', a 'Malay' nation-state. The name '*Persekutuan Tanah Melayu*' (Federation of Malaya) assumed ownership of the Malay States, which later contributed to the emergence of the concept of '*Ketuanan Melayu*' (Malay supremacy or dominance), the belief that the Malays are the *tuan* (masters) of Malaysia, while the Chinese and Indians are considered beholden to the Malays.

However, I must make it clear that it is not the intention of this chapter merely to synthesize the large body of materials on the sociopolitical background of Malaysia. For the purposes of understanding the GE13 campaign discourse, I decided to deal with it from a cultural construction of colonialism and nationalism perspective, which has often been (un)consciously dismissed in the many discussions on the history of Malaysia (see Raj, 2007). The crucial dimension of this chapter is, therefore, to discuss how these constructs, which might have left their colonial origins behind, have continued to reproduce in a discursive field what can be linked to many institutions and domains in present-day Malaysia. In its empirical manifestation, the primary excusatory function of the white's man burden in the Asia always constructs the formulation of the idea that inferior natives require guidance from colonial masters (see, among others, Said, 1978; Spurr, 1993;

²⁸ The Malayan Union was a union of Malay states and the Straits Settlements of Penang and Malacca under a single government to simplify administration. Malayan Union policies loosened immigration policies, reduced the sovereignty of Malay rulers and derecognized Malay supremacy; as local-born residents, most Chinese and Indians qualified for citizenship of the Union. Following opposition from ethnic Malays, it was reorganised as the Federation of Malaya in 1948 (see discussion in Section 2.2)

²⁹ The *Rundingan Merdeka* (Negotiations for Independence) delegation which met the British in London was led by Tunku Abdul Rahman in January 1956.

³⁰ Singapore opted out and went its own way in 1965.

Pearson, Parry & Squires, 1997), and Malaya was no exception. The ethnicized political system that Malaysia still has today is an irresistible colonialism legacy where merit and individuality have been subsumed under the mantra of race-based equity crafted by its leaders.

3.2. Multicultural Malaysia: British colonialism in Malaya

Malay-Chinese and Malay-Indian contacts extend far back to before the 15th century (Andaya & Andaya, 2001, pp. 7–18) and the impact of European imperialism was felt by the States ever since the 16th century (Mohamad Amin & Caldwell, 1977, p. 13). However, no part of Southeast Asia had been fully incorporated into a colonial system, other than Malaya, according to Stenson (1980, p. xi), until a significant demographic change occurred in the middle of the 19th century when a massive influx of migrants from China and India were brought into mono-ethnic Malaya (then Malaysia) by the British. These Chinese migrants organized *kongsi* or dialect group associations, clan associations and secret societies to maintain group cohesion and to serve Chinese interests, while the Indian community was not as self-sufficient as the Chinese (see Andaya and Andaya, 2001, p. 147).

The main justification for the imposition of colonial rule rested on the ‘inefficiency’ and ‘incapacity’ of the Malay race to benefit from their own country’s abundant resources, such as tin and rubber (see Pluvier, 1974, pp. 29–36; Abu Talib & Liok, 2003, pp. 312–313; Kernial, 2011, pp. 92–93). In addition, many Malays were more comfortable in a non-monetary economy which focused only on production for domestic consumption, which was recognized as their ‘moral obligation’ towards the British. In return, the colonisers ‘acknowledged’ the Malays as sons of the soil (*bumiputera*), which minimised the interference with indigenous society, as well as Malay rulers, as they preserved the Sultans and their courts while maintaining the outward appearance of indirect rule, as ‘advisors’ (see Wang, 1969, p. 10).

Between 1906 and 1920, the British effortlessly restructured the socioeconomic landscape of the Malay Peninsular in two ways: first, by providing greater leeway for the immigration of cheap labour; and second, by adopting a divide and rule policy (as in so many of their imperial ‘possessions’), one privileging Malays and limiting different ethnic

groups to particular parts of the economy. This racial compartmentalization according to race and religion, socially, politically and economically, was tacitly encouraged by the British (Comber, 2009, p. 4). According to Funston (1980), the situation was further exacerbated by the colonial education policy, whereby the majority of Malays (with the exception of Malay aristocracy) were provided with only an elementary vernacular education, “practically oriented so as to stress the educational value of manual labour and not give rise to any dissatisfaction with the peasants’ humble lot” (p. 31). The Chinese and Indians in the urban areas, on the other hand, were in effect favoured by the British education system as they, including a few members of the Malay aristocracy, were offered English-medium education as part of their grooming for administrative elite positions (Puthucheary, 1987, p. 96). Abraham (1997, pp. 183–218) asserts that the manipulation of racial diversity within the colonial situation was not only used to maintain class domination, but also resulted in heightened racial tension and conflict. The presence of large numbers of Chinese in Perak, for example, was manipulated to serve colonial interests in two ways: first, as an obvious proof that the Chinese were doing jobs which could not be done by the Malays; and second, the Chinese presence was used as a rationale to ‘protect’ the Malays from Chinese economic dominance and prevent conflict between the two groups. It is also worth underlining how the colonial powers consciously sought to secure and ensure the sociopolitical hegemony of the Malays.

Under the inter-ethnic bargain, (i.e. *kontrak sosial* or social contract), Chinese and Indians immigrants were granted citizenship rights in return for Malays’ special position and privileges that must be safeguarded, as set out in Article 153 of the Constitution of Malaysia. Until today, the exclusive Malaysian constitution has rendered non-Malays ‘second-class’ citizens (see for example Crouch, 1996, p. 239; Daniels, 2004, p.177). Apart from that, the Malay language was to be made the national language (Article 152), and Islam the official religion of the Federation (Article 3). This was how the pillars of Malayness, i.e. language, religion and royalty, were constitutionally protected. Among the ethnic elites, there was an informal understanding: “UMNO and the Malays would be *primus inter pares* (first among equals) in politics, while in return the business pursuits of the non-Malays would remain free of hindrances or persecution” (Mauzy, 2006, p. 53). However, this special Malay position has been often challenged by non-Malays. In 1931, for example, a member of the Straits Settlements Legislative Council, Lim Ching Yan, spoke to a Penang Chinese association:

Who said this is a Malay country? When Captain Light arrived, did he find Malays or Malay villages? Our forefathers came here and worked hard as coolies – weren't ashamed to become coolies – and they didn't send their money back to China. They married and spent their money here, and in this way the Government was able to open up the country from jungle to civilization. We've become inseparable from this country. It's ours, our country. (as cited in Roff, 1967, p. 209)

Tunku Abdul Rahman (1969, in Comber, 2009, p.64), Malaysia's first Prime Minister, comments that while the Chinese and Indians have won for themselves economic power, the Malays, on the other hand, have gained for themselves political power, albeit power prescribed by the colonial rulers. However, it must be mentioned that part of the colonialism-ideological legacy is the creation of "an Asiatic governing class rather than Asiatic races capable of self-government" (Wilkinson, 1902, as cited in Roff, 1967, p. 28). In other words, it was exclusively for the chosen Malay elite, while Malay commoners were left undisturbed to live their traditional peasant lifestyle as far as possible (see Andaya & Andaya, 2001, pp. 220–1). This system that was initially used to rationalise colonialism in Malaya, as Sir Hugh Clifford urged: "everyone in this country [is to] be mindful of the fact that this is a Malay country ... and it is our duty to help the Malays to rule their own country" (as cited in Keith, 2005, p. 140), has been used to keep supporting the position and privileges of Malay elites who have held political power over the rest of Malaysians they rule (as opposed to govern). The political dominance by Malays and some degree of economic power for the Chinese had an impact on subsequent development of the Malaysian state.

3.3. Rise of Malay Nationalism

The period when Malayan Union policy (1946–1948) was implemented witnessed the birth of resurgent Malay nationalism, especially when there were already substantially more non-Malays than Malays in the country. Taken as a whole, by 1941, the Malays formed only 41 per cent of the population, while the Chinese formed 43 per cent and the Indians remained constant at 14 per cent (see Roff, 1967, p. 65; Fee, 1995, p. 392). Therefore, the Malayan Union policy was taken as a betrayal by the Malay aristocracy. This was because the scheme called for awarding citizenship rights to those (non-Malays) who claimed Malaya to be their homeland, the end of Malay "special rights" and the elimination of the power and status of the Sultans. The "swift, bitter and intense" Malay reaction to the

Malayan Union came as a complete surprise to the British, because “it was the key causal factor that provided the catalyst to Malay nationalism that pre-war colonialism, pan-Islamic reform, pan-Indonesianism and a world war could not stimulate” (Mauzy, 2006, p. 49).³¹ At that point, the Malays had started to become sensitive to their interests and special privileges and apprehensive about their future. There was a growing sense of fear and insecurity, all the more so when newspapers emphasised how they were slacking economically and lagging behind in education (see Ishak, 1960).

This fear was later fomented by racial clashes between Malays and Chinese, the former believing that one day they might be overwhelmed and ruled by the Chinese. They cried *Hidup Melayu!* (‘Long Live the Malays!’) as another manifestation of their fear that common citizenship and equal political rights for all would destroy the Malay race and unjustly strip Malays of their inherent rights as the historical community (see Ariffin, 2015, p. 245). Tunku Abdul Rahman emphasised that the Malays must protect their rights over the land, “which is ours for the benefit of our future generations” (quoted in Vasil (1971, p.6), while later, in an interview with *The Asia Magazine* (30 August 1964), Tunku said:

It is understood by all that this country by its very name, its traditions and character is Malay. The indigenous people are Malays and while they on the whole have been left behind in the economic and professional fields, others have been helped along by the understanding and tolerance of the Malays to be successes in whatever fields they are in. In any other countries where aliens try to dominate economic and other fields, eventually there is bitter opposition from the indigenous people. But not with the Malays. Therefore, in return, they must appreciate the position of the Malays who have been given land in Malay reservations and jobs in the Government. Without those where would they go? They can’t go into business which is in the hands of the non-Malays. And anyhow these businessmen quite naturally employ their own people. Therefore, if Malays are driven out of everything, however tolerant they may be, there is a limit. Resentment would build

³¹ Wan Hashim (1983) explained: “[the] idea of rebelling against the established order was foreign to the Malay community for the prevailing dogma was the ordinary Malays must not meddle in politics because the politics of the state and its people are in the hand of the Sultan and the traditional elite who must be given complete loyalty. No Malay can betray his Ruler (*Pantang Melayu menderhaka kepada Rajanya*)” (p. 12).

up and there would be trouble, and those who had found prosperity would also suffer.

It is important to quote this at length at this stage for two reasons: first, it signifies the growth of Malay nationalism and the prominence of safeguarding Malays' privileges because the Malays had a great fear of losing them, losing their privileges meant leaving them crippled. There were only two options: *jadi tuan* (become masters, hence *ketuanan Melayu* (Malay supremacy)), or become beggars in their own land. Second, it manifested that this morbid fear among the Malays was planted from the very beginning. The reproduction of such fear by the government to safeguard their legitimacy and extend their uninterrupted rule in elections started with this very first election. The Malays were bent on defending themselves by staying united, and the leaders of the Malays realised that the strength of the Malays lay in the unity of all Malays, whatever their status in life. Throughout December 1945 and January 1946, the Malays were busy reviving their pre-war associations and organising bodies with the clarion call:

Join and take part in associations as soon as possible if you love your grandchildren. Look at your people – what will befall them – they will be left far behind. There is no other remedy than to organise ourselves into associations through which we unite to face the danger. (Majlis, 5 January 1946, cited in Ishak, 1960, p. 66).

The future was represented as threatening through emphasis on the possible adverse consequences of the citizenship proposals on the Malays, as well as the prophetic rhetoric. For example, an *Utusan Melayu* (then *Utusan Malaysia*) editorial (16 October 1945) stated: “At the moment our future is in danger. The new Plan [Malayan Union] is a big question mark that will affect us and our grandchildren. If we are inactive and lazy our grandchildren will curse us” (cited in Ishak, 1960, p. 64). The United Malays National Organization (UMNO) party was born at this point.

3.4. The 13 May 1969 tragedy

In the wake of a tireless campaign mounted by the Chinese opposition parties supporting non-Malay rights during the 1969 general election, the atmosphere was already becoming volatile. The election results on 11 May 1969 ignited smouldering ethnic tensions and created critical areas of uncertainty. As the results showed a significant swing to the

opposition, particularly the DAP and *Gerakan*, the Alliance failed to deliver communal votes as it had in previous elections (see Tunku Abdul Rahman, 1969; Slimming, 1969; Goh, 1971). According to Goh, 1971 (p. 21), some of the slogans on the banners and placard carried by the demonstrators were too abusive and intimidating, adding insult to electoral injury, thus causing anger and feelings of humiliation among the Malays. Among them were: 'Malays have fallen' (*Melayu sudah jatuh*); 'Malays now no longer have power' (*Melayu sekarang tak ada kuasa*); 'Kuala Lumpur now belongs to the Chinese' (*Kuala Lumpur sekarang Cina punya*); 'Malays may return to their villages' (*Melayu sekarang boleh balik kampung*); 'Malays get out, why do you remain here?' (*Melayu keluar, apa lagi duduk sini*); 'We'll trash you, we are now powerful' (*Kita hentam lu, sekarang kita besar*); and 'This country does not belong to the Malays, we want to chase out all Malays' (*Ini negeri bukan Melayu punya, kita mahu halau semua Melayu*). To non-Malays, the election results gave the impression that their political power was growing while their dominance of the Malaysian economy remain unchallenged. However, the Malays then saw that their political supremacy was at stake with the growing political power of the Chinese, while their economic inferiority remained unchanged. The feeling of Malay anxiety was best described by Mahathir's remark (1971):

They foresaw a Malaysia in which they, without economic strength and deprived of political superiority, would forever be under the thumb of the immigrant Chinese and Indians. They foresaw their position rapidly deteriorating and the whole nation losing its basic Malay character. They foresaw Malay leaders bowing and scraping in order to gain the favour of Chinese superiors. The whole picture was frightening to them. (p.14)

Thus, on the evening of 13 May, a large number of diehard Malays assembled to stage a counterdemonstration against non-Malays, specifically to 'warn' that the Malays were still '*tuan*' (masters), still in charge of the country and the Chinese were the infidels who must be taught a lesson (Funston, 1980, p. 208). The parade broke away from the rallying point and Malays ran amok through adjoining non-Malay sections, resulting in groups of people of different races, Malays, Chinese and Indians, slaughtering each other, large numbers of buildings in Kuala Lumpur and other towns being set on fire and thousands made homeless (Raj, 2007, p. 323; Kua, 2011). Officially, about 196 people died, and 409

people were injured (but the numbers were certainly higher, with most of the victims being Chinese) during the riot.³²

The country was plunged into a state of fear and panic. In the aftermath of the riots, parliamentary institutions were suspended, emergency or '*darurat*' rule was decreed, and this event shaped the Malaysian media system (see Chapter 1) for decades with the aim of avoiding any further spread of ethnic violence. Censorship began, and the government started to control publications which it felt had inflamed communal feeling; all major newspapers were permitted to publish but with the proviso that the government had the right to censor items that were deemed "dangerous to national security". Nearly all types of political activity were banned, including demonstrations and processions, distributing pamphlets or posters, and using loudspeakers, and incomplete elections in Sabah and Sarawak were suspended (see Andaya & Andaya, 2001; Derichs, 2002; Klitgaard & Katz, 1983; Seah, 2000; Singleton, 2007; Yong, 2004). A new national ideology, *Rukunegara* (Articles of Faith of the State), was introduced on 31 August 1970 (13 years after independence) as a new 'political religion' to improve and tackle ethnic disaffection within the society. According to Andaya and Andaya (2001, p. 298), *Rukunegara* formally proclaimed:

Our nation, Malaysia, being dedicated to achieving a greater unity of all her peoples; to maintaining a democratic way of life; to creating a just society in which the wealth of the nation shall be equitably shared; to ensuring a liberal approach to her rich and diverse cultural traditions; to building a progressive society which shall be oriented to modern science and technology. We, her people, pledge our united efforts to attain those ends guided by these principles:

Belief in God (*Kepercayaan Kepada Tuhan*)

Loyalty to King and Country (*Kesetiaan Kepada Raja dan Negara*)

Sanctity of the Constitution (*Keluhuran Pelembagaan*)

Rule of Law (*Kedaulatan Undang-Undang*)

Good Behaviour and Morality (*Kesopanan dan Kesusilaan*)

³² John Slimming (1969, pp. 29–48), who was an eye-witness to some of the rioting and its aftermath, estimates the death toll was about 800. He claims that a large proportion of the casualties were Chinese who had been shot by army units in the later stages of the rioting.

The government responded to the Malays' insecurity by implementing a socio-economic affirmative action plan that became the New Economic Policy (NEP) in 1971. This was a 20-year development plan that was succeeded by the National Development Policy (NDP) in 1991 and the National Vision Policy (NVP) in 2001–2010.³³ This is another instance of the political and economic divides between ethnic groups in Malaysia, as it was designed to help the Malays 'catch up' with other groups economically by giving them a greater share of the country's wealth through special terms, e.g. generous loans, positive discrimination in the commercial sector and many scholarships for tertiary education (Crouch, 1996a, pp. 25–7). The May 1969 riots not only strengthened the dominance of the Alliance in the political centre, with its expansion into Barisan Nasional (BN), the UMNO's dominance also became ever more pronounced, relegating its partners in the BN coalition to ever more humiliating secondary roles, especially under the leadership of Mahathir Mohamad.³⁴

3.5. Challenging the government's hegemony

The dominance of the Alliance/BN continued from independence until the late 1990s; in July 1997, currencies in the region began to crash, plunging Malaysia, one of Southeast Asia's tiger economies, into its first recession, in 1998 (see Zainal and Deepak, 2008). The economic crisis led to a political crisis, particularly at the point when Mahathir Mohamad sacked his deputy, Anwar Ibrahim, on 2 September 1998. Anwar was also expelled from UMNO, imprisoned under the Internal Security Act (ISA) and beaten while in custody.³⁵ The official reason for his swift dismissal was put down to his alleged sodomy and corruption.³⁶ However, political observers were inclined to suggest that Anwar was sacked

³³ The NDP and NVP were introduced by Malaysia's fourth prime minister, Mahathir Mohamad, who came to power in 1981 and retired in 2003. Both were intended to enhance the welfare of Malaysia, compared to the world, as Malaysia pressed onward towards the ultimate goal of achieving developed-nation status in its 'own mould' by the year 2020. However, they continued to pursue most of the NEP policies of affirmative action for the Malays, i.e. *bumiputera* (Hooker, 2004, p. 150).

³⁴ Mahathir Mohamad was Malaysia's fourth prime minister, he served for 22 years and won five consecutive elections from 1981 to 2003.

³⁵ These events happened amidst a 'Machiavellian ruthlessness', although the then Prime Minister, Mahathir Mohamad, claimed that he had not read Machiavelli to be a successful politician (see In-Won, 2003, pp. 276–7).

³⁶ See, for example, front-page news on *Utusan Malaysia* by Othman and Manimaran (4 September 1998) 'Anwar dipecat dari UMNO' (Anwar is sacked from UMNO); Baharom and Mazlin (9 September 1998)

due to his disloyalty after months of economic policy differences with the prime minister over calls for reform and an end to cronyism.³⁷

Anwar's dismissal resulted in street protests by tens of thousands of Malaysians from all ethnic groups who believed he was unjustly treated. Anwar was released from prison in 2004 and led the party in Malaysia's 12th General Election (GE12) in 2008. BA was succeeded by Pakatan Rakyat (PR, People's Alliance) in 2008. During the GE12 election, the changing political landscape in Malaysia, after years of BN dominance, started when BN lost its traditional two-thirds majority for the first time since 1969, as well as losing five states to the federal opposition, PR. The impact of GE12 succeeded in solidifying the opposition and its supporters. This was evident in the outcome of GE13. However, the incumbent BN still won, though with a majority reduced from 140 in GE12 to 133 seats; as fate would have it, the PR fell 44 parliamentary seats short of the number needed to win the election. PR won 89 federal seats, they essentially claimed a moral victory for winning the popular vote for the first time since 1969. PR won 51% of the popular vote against the BN's 47% (see also Weiss, 2014, p. 72).

3.6. Maintaining the hegemony: media clampdown

Malaysian media have been instrumental in maintaining the government's hegemony by silencing dissent and gravitating towards the government and against any alternatives for more than half a century. As discussed previously, after independence, control was initially implemented as part of the plan for modernization and socioeconomic development of the country.³⁸ Later, after the 13 May 1969 race riots, it was for national stability and ethnic unity. As Lee (2006) puts it: "the media ... must be sensitive to issues related to religion, race, culture and language and must not instigate issues that threaten peace and security" (p. 47). Faridah (2010) asserts that:

'Punca Anwar dipecat-Bukti perangai tidak bermoral terlalu kukuh-PM' (The reason for Anwar's dismissal-proof of his immorality is too pressing – PM).

³⁷ See for example BBC News (2 September 1998); Symonds (3 October 1998)

³⁸ Mustafa (2005) argues that ever since independence in 1957, government leaders, who were very much informed by scholars in the West, particularly the United States, such as Wilbur Schramm and Daniel Lerner, have had successive economic policies designed for Malaysia. These scholars viewed the mass media as vital instruments and catalysts for modernization and socioeconomic development. Many government leaders in the developing world utilized their control over the media to guard and guide the people towards national development.

...the mainstream media, is tied closely to government objectives ... the mass media are not only required to inform, educate and motivate the masses towards the developmental goals stipulated by the government, they are also expected to go along with the government's policies ... Newspapers and other media are expected to help the government foster a spirit of understanding and strengthen friendship and unity between people. The diversity of culture, race, language and ethnic groups is most distinctively portrayed in the mass media. (p.3)

The slew of legal controls and indirect or direct mass media ownership through the need for privatization during the premiership of Malaysia's fourth prime minister, Mahathir Mohamad, continue to repress, silence and curtail the people's freedom and desire for information. By the 1990s, when currencies in the Southeast Asia region began to crash in July 1997, "the local media stuck to the script provided by the authorities" (Wang, 1998, p. 67). The grip on the media was even tighter after the sacking of Anwar Ibrahim in 1998 (see Zaharom & Wang, 2004; Mustafa, 2005; Yeoh, 2010). The following sections provide a brief discussion of the legal controls and media ownership in Malaysia.

3.6.1. Legal controls through coercive laws and regulations

The Malaysian media are governed by several pieces of legislation. There are at least 45 laws relevant to the newspaper industry alone. These laws were inherited from the colonial past and were imposed because of the perceived threat posed by communism and communalism (see Loh and Mustafa, 1996, p. 100). However, they have been enforced, amended and maintained even since Independence in 1957, each time resulting in more control of the media, which is against the idea of the Western democratic media discussed in Chapter 1. Four pieces of legislation that stand out as among the most powerful direct control mechanisms utilized by the government are the Internal Security Act (ISA), the Printing Presses and Publications Act (PPPA), the Official Secrets Act (OSA) and the Sedition Act (SA).

At the top of the pile is the Internal Security Act (ISA), a draconian piece of legislation. It allows for indefinite detention without trial and has been used uncompromisingly to detain political dissidents, religious cult figures and opposition members of parliament, including Anwar Ibrahim. The ISA was replaced by another act for detention without trial, the Security Offences (Special Measures) Act (SOSMA) in 2012, by the fifth prime minister, Najib Razak. However, according to Kua (21 November 2016), "the torture, humiliation

and other forms of cruel, inhuman treatment suffered by those detained under SOSMA are identical to the accounts of former ISA detainees”.

More specifically for the media, there is the Printing Presses and Publications Act (PPPA) 1984, which replaces the Printing Presses Act 1948. It gave the Home Affairs Minister the “power to grant or withdraw a printing license or a publishing permit” (Loh & Khoo, 2002, p. 128), if and only if he deems it fit to do or not to do so when the publication is ‘prejudicial to the nation’s security’ (Mustafa, 2002, p. 150). It stipulates that all newspapers and other regular publications should possess a publishing permit issued by the Ministry of Internal Security, which had to be re-applied for annually. PPPA puts enormous pressure on the press to conform to the ideology of the government.

The Official Secrets Act (1972) (OSA) is “a piece of legislature that hampered the working of journalists and dampened the development of investigative journalism” (Mustafa, 2002, p. 151), making virtually all official documents, ‘official secrets’ and illegal for journalists to have access to. The very definition of an ‘official secret’ has been made vaguer and more all-encompassing over time (Mustafa, 2005, p. 29).

The Sedition Act (SA) was originally designed to curb expressions that could incite ethnic hatred and social disorder after the 13 May 1969 tragedy. However, Lim (2007) comments that:

...the scope of the act is very broad and its definition very much open to interpretations ... it would be considered a seditious tendency to question the provisions of the Constitution dealing with language, citizenship, the special privileges of the Malays ... [as well as to subject to] hatred or contempt the administration of justice in the country or to promote ill-will and hostility between races or classes. (pp. 9–10)

Therefore, over the years, its implementation continues to repress critics and dissenters as it curbs genuine and constructive criticism of some government policies. Rodan (2004) characterises Malaysia as one of the countries that has imposed “security laws and official acts to intimidate journalists and editors, as well as annual licensing laws that meant the spectre of official retribution was a perennial problem for publishers and distributors alike” (p.18). Later he adds that control of the media through ownership is part of the government’s strategy to tame domestic media, which will be briefly discussed in the following section.

3.6.2. Media ownership

In line with the prime objective of nation-building and the national interest, according to Lent (1997), the role of the Malaysian media is not “to check on the government ... [they are here not as] pro- or anti-government, but supporters of government” (p. 39), which fits poorly with the typology of democratic media discussed in the previous chapters. The Malaysian media are:

[p]art of the power structure built and transferred to the government and designed to provide the same service that it provided for the colonial government, namely to safeguard and strengthen the authority of government [with a] built in partiality towards people and parties in power. (Karthigesu, 1988, p. 767).

The Mahathir’s long-term policy on ‘*Privatization*’ is the idea of ‘*Malaysia Inc.*’, which was outlined in the Fourth Malaysia Plan, 1981–85. What this supposedly meant for the media was less state involvement and less control over media institutions. However, it actually provided the government with more control, albeit indirectly, and more influence over media institutions. This was because, with Mahathir, what seemed to be a liberalization plan aimed to promote *Bumiputera* capitalism in order to fully realize the NEP objectives from the very start. Strategically, according to Verma (2000), it allows the government to control and regulate other potential agencies for political representation and for UMNO to strengthen its hegemony. Zaharom (2002) asserts that UMNO currently holds controlling shares in two of the largest media conglomerates in Malaysia through a complex web of nominee companies, investment arms and individuals aligned with it. The major players in the Malaysian mainstream media ownership pattern summarized in Table 1 below provide an inkling of the degree of involvement of the various partners in the ruling coalition, as well as of their economic allies:

Table 1: Summary of Malaysian Mainstream Media Ownership (see discussions in Wang, 2001, 72–7; Mustafa, 2005, pp. 30–1; Mustafa, 2010, pp. 49–510)

Media Prima Berhad (MPB)	The largest media conglomerate in the country, it owns the New Straits Times Press (M) and Berhad (NSTP). NSTP publishes Malay-language newspapers, <i>Berita Harian</i> , <i>Berita Minggu</i> and <i>Harian Metro</i> , as well as English-language newspapers, <i>New Straits Times</i> and <i>New Sunday Times</i> . Apart from radio stations, WA FM, Fly FM, One FM and Hot FM, it also owns Sistem Television Malaysia Berhad (Malaysian Television System Berhad), popularly known as TV3, 8TV, Channel 9 and NTV7. ³⁹	MPB has a 100% equity stake in TV3 and a 43% equity stake in NSTP. Media Prima's largest shareholder is Gabungan Kesturi Sdn Bhd, an UMNO-owned company (see MPB, 2013).
Huaren Holdings (HH)	HH owns the English-language <i>The Star</i> and Sunday Star; the Chinese-language dailies <i>Nanyang Siang Pau</i> and <i>China Press</i> .	HH is an investment arm of the BN component party MCA. It has a 58% stake in Star Publications (see SUARAM, 2001, p. 90; Zaharom & Wang, 2004, p. 252).
Utusan Melayu (M) Bhd (UMB)	UMB owns the Malay-language newspapers <i>Utusan Malaysia</i> , <i>Mingguan Malaysia</i> and <i>Utusan Melayu Mingguan</i> . <i>Utusan Melayu</i> began publishing in 1939. It advocated Malay rights, articulated issues pertaining to Malay interests and development and gave much support to UMNO's efforts to oppose the Malayan Union. It was the first newspaper in Malaysia that	According to Mohd Safar (1996), after the strike, a substantial number of the company's shares was bought by UMNO, enabling the party to have full allocative control over the

³⁹ List of free-to-air television stations in Malaysia: TV1, TV2, TVi (**Radio Televisyen Malaysia, RTM**); TV3, 8TV, Channel 9, NTV7 (**Media Prima**); TV AlHijrah (**Jabatan Kemajuan Islam Malaysia, JAKIM**)

	faced a takeover by UMNO through the appointment of an UMNO man, Ibrahim Fikri, as the director of operations in 1961. Editor, journalists and other newspaper workers were concerned about the daily's editorial independence. Therefore, they resisted the state's intervention and staged a 93-day strike. But it ended with the triumph of UMNO (Zaharom and Wang, 2004, p, 252).	newspaper. An annual report of <i>Utusan Melayu</i> (M) Berhad revealed that it was 49.77 % owned by UMNO and its nominee companies (Malaysian Digest, 13 August 2012).
Government of Malaysia	Government of Malaysia owns Radio Televisyen Malaysia (RTM). The Ministry of Information controls TV1, TV2, TVi and all government radio stations.	
Malaysian Indian Congress (MIC)	The party owns two mainstream Tamil newspapers: <i>Tamil Nesan</i> and <i>Malaysia Nanban</i> .	<i>Tamil Nesan</i> was published by the then MIC's president, Samy Vellu's wife, Indrani S. Vellu.
Nexnews Bhd	It owns <i>The Sun</i> , <i>The Edge</i> and <i>Asia Inc</i> .	The company is controlled by Mahathir's close allies, Vincent Tan and Tong Kooi Ong.
Sin Chew Media Corp Bhd	The company publishes <i>Sin Chew Daily</i> and <i>Guang Ming Daily</i> .	Sin Chew Media Corp Bhd is owned by the timber tycoon Tiong Hiew King, who is well-connected to Sarawak state's political elite (SUARAM, 2004, p. 72).

3.7. Summary

This chapter has explained the broad historical context of Malaysia and reflects different Malaysian cultures in order to understand the GE13 campaign discourse in mainstream editorials and columns. I set out to briefly explain the dominant role of cultural issues, i.e. religion, race/ethnicity, language, history and values in Malaysian politics, which often tends to be treated as common-sense and self-explanatory precisely because of that dominance. I have also provided a summary of how the origins of this dominance lie in the racial recruitment policies of the colonial state, and later in racially clustered class fractions which sought to protect their (i.e. Malay elites) interests during the process of decolonization, especially after the 13 May 1969 racial riots. This chapter has also shown the complexity of racial/ethnic politics in Malaysia, especially how each of the main racial groups – Malays, Chinese and Indians – is dispersed throughout different hierarchies; and for social and political purposes, Malaysians have an overwhelming tendency to cluster with co-ethnics from different groups, rather than affiliating on the basis of communal lines. This complexity, often incompatible with Western-centric theories and models of communication, was discussed in Chapter 1; it admittedly serves the West but does not fit in with the cultural characteristics of Malaysian society. As this historical review reveals, the reproduction of colonial ideologies in a discursive field can be linked to many present Malaysian institutions and domains, the media in particular. It explains how and why undemocratic procedures and institutions are sustained in a complex interplay of race and politics in contemporary Malaysian society that contributes to the maintenance of the incumbent government's hegemony and legitimacy. On the meso- and macro-levels, this broader sociopolitical and historical context will be integrated into the micro-level analyses in Chapters 6, 7, 8 and 9. The next chapter will review the methodological approach, i.e. Discourse-historical approach, adopted in the current study.

Chapter 4

Methodology

Introduction

This chapter aims to clarify the research methods followed to analyse mainstream editorials and columns during the GE13 campaign. It begins with an overview of the notion of ‘triangulation’ of the Discourse-Historical Approach (DHA) research program, which explains what was triangulated to achieve the aim of this thesis. Section 4.2. discusses the data and explains how they were *collected*. This section also provides the background of the mainstream newspapers used in the research and clarifies the respective imagined communities (i.e. target audience) they are speaking to, before proceeding to review the translation methods employed. Section 4.3. provides an overview of the different phases of analysis taken in this research. The discussion on the preliminary analysis and how the data were further *selected* are discussed in Section 4.3.1. The methodological tools employed in the four-part analysis of the data are discussed in Section 4.3.2: content analysis (Section 4.3.2.1), as well as referential and predication strategies and argumentation analysis (Section 4.3.2.2.). Finally, the chapter summarizes in section 4.4.

4.1. ‘Triangulation’ in DHA research programme

Problem is key to the discourse-historical approach. In this thesis, the problem is the fact that Malaysia as a parliamentary democracy to have had the same ruling party in power for the last six decades as discussed in previous chapters. And since DHA is problem-oriented, language necessarily remains only a part of this research. This reflects the thesis’s aim to reveal the relationship between linguistic means, forms and structures and concrete linguistic practice *while* making transparent the reciprocal relationship between discursive action and political and institutional structures as emphasised in previous chapters. To achieve this, this thesis follows the principle of ‘*triangulation*’. Triangulation is one of the key features of the DHA that “attempts to transcend the pure linguistic dimension and to include more or less systematically the historical, political, sociological and/or psychological dimension in the analysis and interpretation of a specific discursive occasion” (Wodak, 2007, p. 210). Therefore, in exploring the discursive strategies of argumentative discourse during the GE13 campaign, my interdisciplinary approach

combines historical, socio-political and linguistic perspectives. The principle of triangulation implied for my case study employing the integration of quantitative and qualitative method of newspaper articles corpus that is based on DHA's key concept, i.e. *context* discussed previously in Chapter 2 (see also chapter 3) which takes into account four levels (see Figure 1, p.48):

L1: The co-text of each utterance or clause

L2: The intertextual and interdiscursive relationships of the respective speech event to other relevant events.

L3: The con-text in the macro-text; the genre analysis

L4: The socio-political context of the speech event

In the following empirical chapters, I focused in detail on the linguistic means and analytical tools, which relate the broad and narrow contexts with each other in recursive manner. The impact of such a discourse can only be understood when related to Malaysian political developments explained in previous chapters (see especially Chapter 3). The different phases of analysis taken in this research are explained in the following section.

4.2. The data

4.2.1. Definition of editorials and columns

Editorials are defined here as unsigned columns that represent the official opinions of newspapers' editorial boards that appear on editorial pages. Other materials on the same pages, such as signed columns by columnists, columns written by syndicated columnists and columns written by guest writers, are counted as columns. Not counted as editorials or columns are letters to the editor, reprints of other newspapers' editorials or columns, initialled opinions that appear in the same locations as the editorials or columns, collections of brief observations of just a few sentences.

4.2.2. Data collection

I collected editorials and columns from four paid-for daily mainstream newspapers, along with their Sunday editions during the GE13 campaign period that ran from 20 April to 4 May 2013. A summary of the totals editorials and columns per newspaper (Table 2) as well as the newspapers' circulations (Table 3) are presented below:

Table 2: Totals of editorials and columns per newspaper during the campaign period

	20/4	21/4	22/4	23/4	24/4	25/4	26/4	27/4	28/4	29/4	30/4	1/5	2/5	3/5	4/5	Total per title	Total (including Sunday edition)
1. Utusan Malaysia	4		5	8	7	6	6	4		5	7	7	7	7	7	80	105
2. Mingguan Malaysia (S)		10							15							25	
3. Berita Harian	6		15	13	9	1	9	8		10	6	10	12	15	6	120	138
4. BH Ahad (S)		7							11							18	
5. New Straits Times	5		2	4	3	2	4	5		3	4	4	6	5	5	52	60
6. New Sunday Times (S)		4							4							8	
7. The Star	11		3	5	2	2	3	1		3	3	6	4	2	5	50	57
8. Sunday Star (S)		3							4							7	
Total																	360

S= Sunday edition

Table 3: Mainstream newspapers' circulation in Peninsular Malaysia, Sabah and Sarawak from January to June 2013 (per issue)

	Print newspaper	Circulation Peninsular Malaysia (West Malaysia)	Circulation Sabah & Sarawak (East Malaysia)	Total West + East Malaysia	Total (including Sunday edition)	Total Malay- language newspapers	Total English- language newspapers
1.	Utusan Malaysia	195,308	4,006	199,314	590,322	962,627	
2.	Mingguan Malaysia (S)	384,827	6,181	391,008			
3.	Berita Harian	165,814	7,262	173,076	372,305		
4.	Berita Harian Ahad (S)	192,483	6,746	199,229			
5.	New Straits Times	118,576	3,006	121,582	258,115		876,500
6.	New Sunday Times (S)	134,360	2,173	136,533			
7.	The Star	298,533	9,171	307,704	618,385		
8.	Sunday Star (S)	301,453	9,228	310,681			

S= Sunday edition

Source: Audit Bureau of Circulations (ABC) Malaysia

This collection is based on the highest circulations for Malay-language and English-language print newspapers, respectively. Of the eight newspapers, four are in Bahasa Malaysia and four in English.

Due to copyright issues at the British Library, London, I flew back to Malaysia and collected print newspaper samples at the National Library, Kuala Lumpur and the National University of Malaysia's (UKM) library in Bangi, Selangor. It was done in two places because the broadsheet newspapers, including *Utusan Malaysia* and *Mingguan Malaysia* available at the National Library were too big to be hand-scanned using MyScan (a mouse scanner). I browsed the newspaper archive in the UKM's library on microfilm using a microreader available in the Newspaper Reading room. Although the quality is lower than actual print newspapers and only available in black and white, it is quite convenient as I could save materials directly onto a USB stick. The following section provides a brief discussion of the backgrounds of the mainstream newspapers used in this research. The newspapers target audiences are clarified in Section 4.2.2.2.

4.2.2.1. Backgrounds of mainstream newspapers

4.2.2.1.1. Utusan Malaysia and Mingguan Malaysia

Utusan Malaysia is a Malay-language daily first published in 1967 as a romanised version of the jawi-scripted⁴⁰ *Utusan Melayu*, initially published in 1939. The newspapers advocate Malay rights and articulate issues pertaining to Malay interests and development. UMNO's control of *Utusan Melayu* began with the appointment of UMNO strongman, Ibrahim Fikri, by the party leadership⁴¹ to run the newspaper in July 1961. The newspaper's former editor, Said Zahari (2001), wrote in his memoir "only with a free policy could *Utusan Melayu* be the voice of the people, fighting for the interests of the people ... But UMNO wanted *Utusan Melayu* to be totally different. That *Utusan Melayu* should belong to UMNO and should only serve that political party" (p.73).

⁴⁰ Jawi is a Perso-Arabic alphabet for writing Malay language.

⁴¹ Tunku Abdul Rahman, UMNO's president as well as Malaysia's first prime minister.

Today, UMNO still holds controlling shares in Utusan Melayu (M) and Berhad (UMB) (see especially Chapter 3). Its newspapers, *Utusan Malaysia* and Sunday edition, *Mingguan Malaysia*, are the one among the mainstream newspapers that reflect the agenda and ideology of the ruling coalition, BN. It is available as a 32-page printed broadsheet as well as online at: <http://www.utusan.com.my/>. Its Sunday edition, *Mingguan Malaysia*, had the highest circulation (in total 38,482) for the period January–June 2013, according to the Audit Bureau of Circulation (ABC) (see also, among others, Wang, 1998, pp. 61–83; Mustafa, 2005, pp. 25–47).

4.2.2.1.2. *Berita Harian, Berita Ahad, New Straits Times and New Sunday Times*

The Malay-language newspapers, *Berita Harian* and *Berita Ahad*, and the English-language newspapers, *New Straits Times* and its Sunday edition *New Sunday Times*, are published by the New Straits Times Press (M) Bhd (NSTP). NSTP is owned by Media Prima Berhad (MPB) and one of UMNO's allies has a large stake in MPB (see Chapter 3).

Berita Harian was launched on 1 July 1957, a month before Malaysia gained its independence, as the first mainstream romanised newspaper in Malay. Initially it reflected the content of the *New Straits Times*. Its Sunday edition, *Berita Ahad*, previously known as *Berita Minggu* was launched on 10 July 1960. The newspapers were printed in broadsheet format until July 2008, when the newspaper sported a newer, more compact look. They are also available online at: <http://www.bharian.com.my/> for a RM20-per-month subscription.

The *New Straits Times* is Malaysia's oldest English-language newspaper still in print (though not the first). Started in 1845 as "*The Straits Times*", it was re-established as the "*New Straits Times*" in 1974. The paper served as Malaysia's only broadsheet-format English-language newspaper. But following the example of British newspapers, *The Times* and *The Independent*, a tabloid version first rolled off the presses on 1 September 2004; and since 18 April 2005, the newspaper has only been published in tabloid size, ending a 160-year-old tradition of broadsheet publication. They are available online at: <http://www.nst.com.my/>.

4.2.2.1.3. *The Star and the Sunday Star*

The English-language *The Star* and its Sunday edition *Sunday Star* are owned by one of the investment arms of the BN party, the Malaysian Chinese Association (MCA), Huaren Holdings (see Chapter 2). *The Star* and *Sunday Star* are the largest paid-for English newspapers in terms of circulation in Malaysia, according to the Audit Bureau of Circulation (see Table 3).

The newspaper was first published on 9 September 1971, as a regional newspaper based in Penang, but went into national circulation on 3 January 1976 when it set up its new office in Kuala Lumpur. In 1987, *The Star* was one of the newspapers whose publication licences were withdrawn in ‘Operation Lalang’⁴² (Ng, 2012). It resumed publication five months later in March 1988 but, after its return, *The Star* had lost its previous ‘liberal flavour’ (Hilley, 2001, p. 120). *The Star* and *Sunday Star* are available free online at: <http://www.thestar.com.my/>.

4.2.2.2. Target audiences for the Malay and English language newspapers

The mainstream newspapers continue to serve a vital role in maintaining racial identities in Malaysia. While Malaysia’s over 3.8 million-strong daily press readership in 2013 (ABC, 2013) continues to defy the wider trend of declining readership throughout the Asia-Pacific region, it also continues to reflect the national population distribution – Malay constitute 55 percent- the Chinese 36 percent and Indians 9 percent (see also Chapter 2). Shaari, Ngu and Raman (2006) confirm that the newspapers have been setting agenda and catering predominantly to readers of a particular ethnic group since the colonial days. In Malaysia, the Mandarin newspapers that aim to preserve the communal and cultural rights of the Malaysian Chinese are generally read by the Chinese and the Tamil and Punjabi dailies focus on Indian issues and are read by the Indians (see Ng and Lee, 2018; Zeti et al., 2017; Shahrul and Ong, 2016). Likewise, the Malay newspapers cater for the Malays as they focus on Malay issues while the English language newspapers, deriving from colonial times, are read by the elites,

⁴² Operation Lalang (Malay: Operasi Lalang, also referred to as Ops Lalang, literally translated as Weeding Operation in English) was a major crackdown carried out on 27 October 1987 by the Malaysian police, ostensibly to prevent the occurrence of further race riots in Malaysia after the 13 May 1969 tragedy.

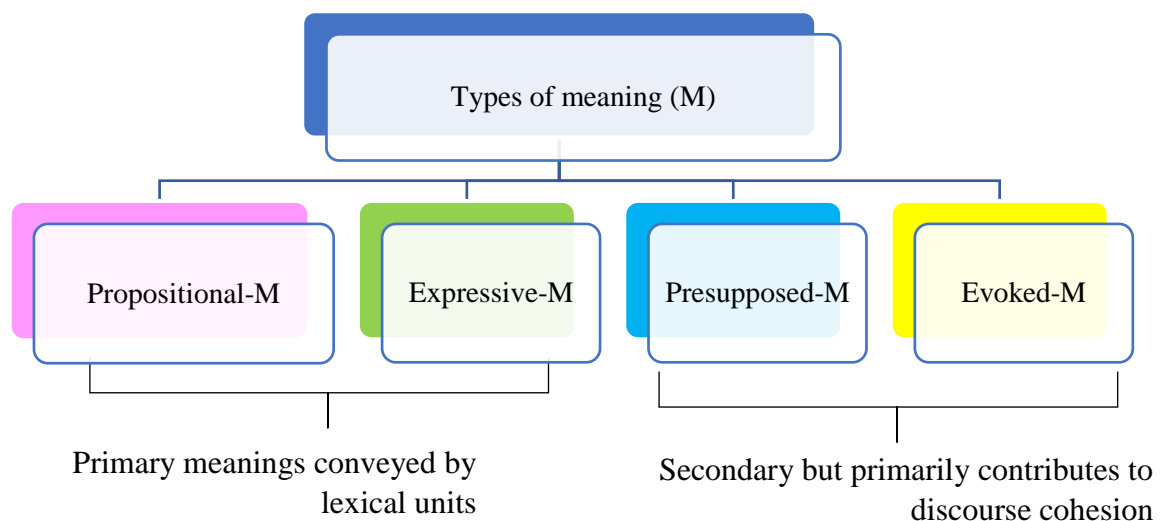
the privileged, (English-) educated readers who are mostly concentrated in the urban areas (see e.g. Amira, 2006; Nain, 2016; Zeti et al., 2017).

4.2.3. Translation of the data

The translation of the Malay language editorials and columns from *Utusan Malaysia*, *Mingguan Malaysia*, *Berita Harian* and *Berita Ahad* from Bahasa Malaysia into English is my own. The translation of the GE13 campaign discourse from the Malay language was intended to be kept as literal as possible, except where modifications had been necessary in order to preserve conversational style. However, Malay-English translation poses its own translating challenges as these two languages come from different language families (see e.g. Azmi et al., 2016). Therefore, maintaining equivalence when translating the Malay-language content is not a straightforward task especially when it involves inappropriate equivalent word (collocation aspect), equivalent word according to field as well as cultural differences.

To overcome this, Baker's (2011, pp. 24-43) list of strategies which includes *cultural substitution*, *use of a superordinate in place of a hyponym*, *use of words borrowed from the source language*, *paraphrase using unrelated words* and *omission* was helpful, but being aware of Cruse's (1986, pp. 270-285) categorisation of meaning was particularly useful. According to Cruse (1986), there are four types of meaning (See also Cruse, 2000, pp. 43-63):

Figure 2: Types of meaning (Cruse, 1986, pp. 270-285).



1. *Propositional -M* depends partly on the propositional attitude expressed by the sentence in which it operates, i.e. whether it is a statement, question, command, exclamation, etc. Therefore, propositional meaning is determined by its truth-conditions as perceived by the language speakers (e.g. 'I felt a sharp pain')
2. *Expressive-M* functions contrarily. Meaning carried by a lexical item in a statement plays no role in determining its truth conditions, but rather depends to the speaker's feelings or attitude. (e.g. 'Ouch!')
3. *Presupposed-M* refers to semantic traits which are, as it were, taken for granted in the use of an expression, or lexical item, but not actually asserted, denied, questioned, or etc. in the sentence they appear.
4. *Evoked-M* is a consequence of the existence of different dialects and registers within a language.

The process of translating the material was initially done in a side-by-side procedure with another Malay-language speaker, in which possible wordings were discussed. However, often, different linguistically correct translations were possible, but there were still subtle meaning differences, which needed to be closely examined in order to decide on the best translation.

The translation was attempted to put the Malay-language content into an equivalent readable form in English for solely comprehension purposes. This is because, as translation is an interpretive act, meaning may get lost in the translation process. This issue is discussed in depth by Van Nes, Abma, Jonsson and Deeg (2010):

Translation between language involves interpretation [...] The message communicated in the source language has to be interpreted by the translator (often the researcher him or herself) and transferred into the target language in such a way that the receiver of the message understands what was meant. Challenges in the interpretation and representation of meaning may be experience in any communicative action, but are more complicated when cultural contexts differ and interlingual translation is required. Because interpretation and understanding meanings are central in qualitative research and text is the 'vehicle' with which meaning is ultimately transferred to the reader, language differences generate additional challenges that might hinder the transfer of

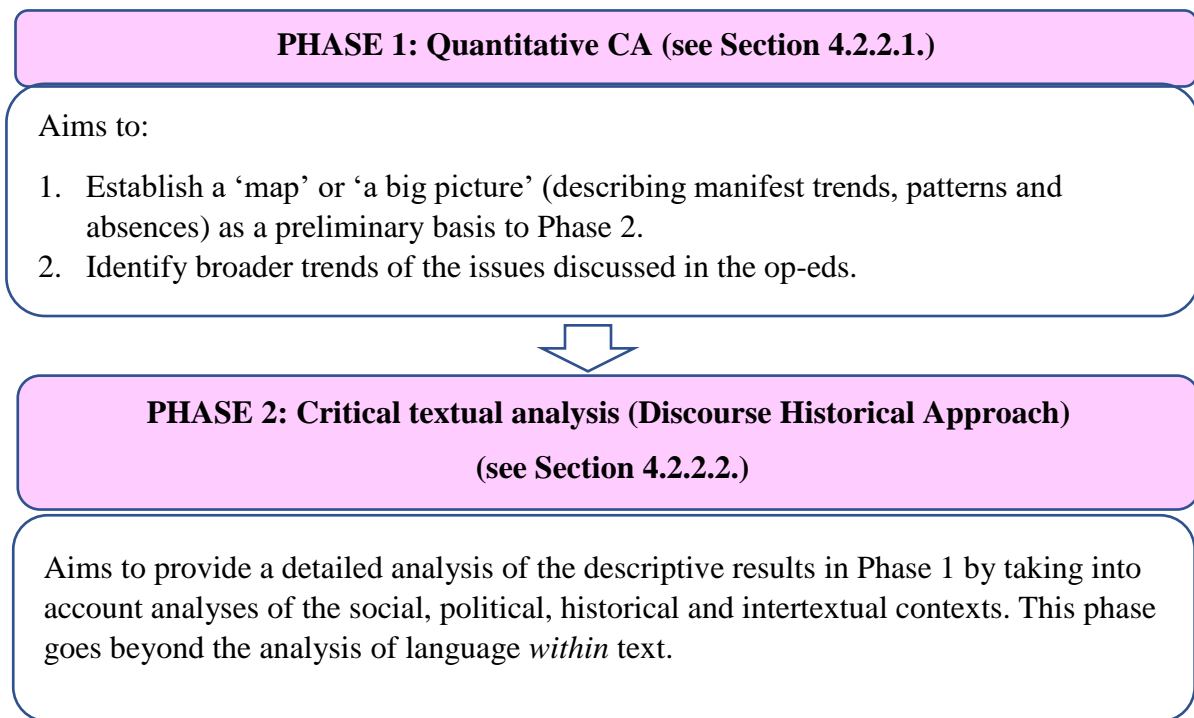
meaning and might result in loss of meaning and thus loss of the validity of the qualitative study (p. 314).

Therefore, I analysed the original articles in my mother tongue, i.e. Bahasa, instead of the translated texts to avoid potential limitations in the analysis.

4.3. Methodology of the analysis

Precisely, the analysis in this thesis was divided into two phases, as summarized in Figure 2 below:

Figure 3: Cross-sectional research design



4.3.1. Phase 1: Preliminary quantitative analysis

Since I was dealing with a total of 360 texts (see Section 4.2.2., Table 2, p. 73), I am conscious, as Koller and Mautner (2004) point out, that ‘by opting for solely qualitative analysis, what is gained in terms of depth is usually lost in terms of breadth: the more detailed and holistic method, the less data one can reasonably hope to cope with’ (p. 218). The aim of Phase 1 was, therefore, to act as a prelude to a qualitative critical analysis of texts by

providing a summary of the textual meanings across a sample of editorials and columns during the campaign period from 20 April to 4 May 2013. The quantitative evidence was used to support the case and identification of any specific issues being propagated before critically analysing the selected ones qualitatively based on the highest recurring themes covered in the op-eds. Although, there are many definitions of content analysis available in the literature, many share emphasis on objectivity, system and generality. For the sake of the current study, I adopt Berelson's 1952 definition: "content analysis is a research technique for the objective, systematic and quantitative description of the manifest content of communication" (p. 18).

Pool (1959) also reminds us that "it should not be assumed that qualitative methods are insightful, and quantitative ones merely mechanical methods for checking hypotheses. The relationship is a circular one; each provides new insights on which the other can feed" (p. 192). Therefore, it must be highlighted that the use of content analysis in this thesis is as a supplement, not a substitute or alternative analysis of text. This is because, according to Baker, Gabrielatos, KhosraviNik, McEnery and Wodak (2008):

We understand CDA to be an academic movement, a way of doing discourse analysis from a critical perspective ... We do not view CDA as being a method nor are specific methods solely associated with it. Instead, it adopts any method that is adequate to realize the aims of specific CDA-inspired research. (p. 273)

CDA is especially relevant to the detailed analysis of a small number of discourse samples (Fairclough, 2003, p. 230), but since I was dealing with substantial number of texts, the valuable overview or a general 'pattern map' of content analysis helped to down-sample my data through the findings of significant discursive patterns that were later more closely investigated and analysed using CDA. I selected my data to be analysed qualitatively based on the quantitative findings. As Törnberg and Törnberg (2016) put it:

[This] methodological synergy can be mutually beneficial and help in addressing some of the open issues in both fields ... which are hard to extract with the *naked* eye, with sensitivity for linguistic nuances and implicit and symbolic meanings, which may not be visible for the *automatic* eye. (p. 417, italics in original)

With different foci and goals in different stages, different methods may be appropriate. This methodological eclecticism through ‘triangulation’ highlighted in CDA (see van Dijk, 1993; Wodak and Meyer, 2009) is to a researcher’s advantage, as agreed by Williams, Rice and Rogers (1988, p. 47; see also Deacon and Wring, 2011, p.117), as they complement each other’s (quantitative and qualitative) strengths and compensate for each other’s weaknesses. In other words, the methodological synergy between CDA and CA harvests the strength of CA by exploring and categorizing large amounts of data, rather than being used as a rigorous, stand-alone scientific method, as has often been the case in the social sciences. While this increases the credibility of the analysis, this synergy is also proven to be very useful for familiarization purposes, identifying idiosyncrasies, anomalies and exceptions and illuminating text that lends itself to closer reading. The specific methods used in the analysis are explained in the next section.

4.3.2. The methods

4.3.2.1. Content analysis: what to count?

According to Barelson (1952):

In content analysis, as anywhere else in social research, it is important to start in *the right way*. Simply going on a fishing expedition through some common communication material is almost certain to be unrewarding. Unless there is a sensible, or clever or sound, or revealing or unusual, or important notion underlying the analysis, it is not worth going through the rigor of the procedure, especially when it is so arduous and so costly of effort. (p. 198, my emphasis)

However, no content analyst offers one single technique or method for an analysis because, perhaps as Richardson (2001, p. 84) claims, it does not exist. *The right way* to start content analysis, then, is better reiterated in Deacon et al. (2007, p. 119); start with the right questions of what it is one is interested in investigating, because content analysis is a directive method, “it gives answer [*only*] to the questions you pose” (p. 119, my emphasis; see also Stempel, 1989). With that in mind, before I started drafting a coding sheet, the questions I was interested in answering were refined based on the research agenda set earlier:

1. What percentage of the content of the editorials and columns analysed was specific to the 2013 GE? How do the selected newspapers compare to each other?
2. Of the content that is election-centred, was the focus on the campaign or a specific issue?
3. Of the content that is focused on a specific issue, what issues are covered and what issues are most frequently covered?

Having these questions ready before doing any coding was very helpful in two ways; first, it guided my research; second, it fulfilled the most important requirement, i.e. to select and define ‘categories’: “the pigeonholes into which content units are to be classified” (Holsti, 1969, p. 95). This is central to any content analysis studies as categories are the backbone of content analysis:

Content analysis stands or falls by its categories ... content analysis studies done on a hit-or-miss basis, without clearly formulated problems for investigation and with vaguely drawn or poorly articulated categories, are almost certain to be of indifferent or low quality, as research productions. (Berelson, 1952, p. 147).

In the absence of standard schemes of classification, but with a considerable extent of the subject area, categories can be predetermined by presupposing “knowledge of events that may possible occur (for example, textual contents)” (Titscher et al., 2000, p. 9). The analysis will be particularly productive when the categories are clearly [uniquely] formulated and well adapted to the problem and to the content under investigation (i.e. the data at hand) (see Berelson, 1952). At this stage, such ‘knowledge of possible events’ arose from a variety of sources:

First and perhaps most importantly, from the parameters of the research in question: only editorials and columns were sampled and therefore only codes for editorials and columns needed to be included in the coding manual.

Second, the coding manuals of previous research on newspapers or opined genre specifically provided an invaluable initial framework (e.g. Richardson, 2001).

Third, my own anecdotal and cultural knowledge about the case study, the GE13 election campaign in Malaysia and Malaysia media, the background and current circumstances.

This process then consisted of moving back and forth from theory to data as a ‘fishing expedition’, as Berelson (1952) calls it, should not merely apply a pre-conceived category set to an unknown body of text. Hansen et al. (1998) encourage researchers to have “some familiarity with the content, structure and general nature of the material to be analysed in order to be able to set up categories that will be sufficiently sensitive to capture the nuances of the texts” (p. 107). Before formulating the categories, I pre-read the samples to get a general idea of which campaign issues and topics emerged from the narratives. Then, I did a pilot study by testing the usefulness of the formulated categories on two sampled articles per day for each newspaper, and then modified them in light of the data several times before determining the categories for actual coding (see Appendix 1). This modification of the codes of variables was allowed to continue during the analysis for some end variables. In this way, any emergent or unexpected themes and developments in the texts were able to be recorded more accurately.

Since the focal goal of content analysis application is to determine *what* (as opposed to how) the editorials and columns during the campaign election communicated, I used only what is known as ‘what is said categories’ (Berelson, 1952: p. 149) and ‘subject matter’ categories (Holsti, 1968: p. 104) to analyse the data. These categories answered the basic question of ‘what is the communication about?’ and enabled me to determine the relative emphases the coverage gave to different topics in the sampled texts. In addition to the eight macro-themes (i.e. race and ethnic relations, negative campaign strategy, ad baculum: the politics of fear, Islam and Muslims, election, political parties/ coalition and others), I also quantified which political actors and parties featured most prominently and how they were presented during the campaign (i.e. negative, positive or neutral) (see Appendix 2 for a full code sheet and account of its application).

After coding the sampled editorials and newspapers, the variables and data were transferred to SPSS software; simple numerical analyses, frequency checks and cross-tabulations were conducted to identify patterns across the sample. The findings are presented and discussed in

Chapter 5. Based on the highest recurring themes identified in the preliminary quantitative analysis, the data to be used and critically analysed were downsized and selected. The next section discusses the methods used to qualitatively analyse the texts using the discourse-historical approach (DHA).

4.3.2.2. Discourse-historical Approach (DHA)

There are five discursive strategies in the DHA. By strategies I mean “a more or less intentional plan of practices (including discursive practices) adopted to achieve a particular social, political, psychological or linguistic goal. Discursive strategies are located at different levels of linguistic organisation and complexity” (Reisigl and Wodak, 2009, p. 94). Of these strategies, five are proposed by Reisigl and Wodak (2009, p. 94; 2016, p. 42-3), namely nomination, predication, argumentation, perspectivization, framing, discourse representation and intensification/ mitigation. The discursive strategies discussed above are summarised in the table below:

Table 4: A selection of discursive strategies

Discursive strategies	Purpose	Devices	Linguistic function
REFERENTIAL	discursive construction of social actors, objects, phenomena, events, processes and actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • membership categorisation devices, deictics, anthroponyms, etc. • tropes such as metaphors, metonymies and synecdoches (<i>pars pro toto, totum pro parte</i>) • verbs and nouns used to denote processes and actions etc. 	Ways of naming
PREDICATION	discursive qualification of social actors, objects, phenomena, events, processes and actions (positively or negatively)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (stereotypical) evaluative attributions of negative or positive traits (e.g. in the form of adjectives, oppositions, prepositional phrases, relative clauses, conjunctive clauses, infinitive clauses and participial clauses or groups) • explicit predicates or predicative nouns/ adjectives/ pronouns • collocations 	Ways of describing

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • explicit comparisons, similes, metaphors and other rhetorical figures (including metonymies, hyperboles, litotes, euphemisms) • allusions, evocations, presuppositions/implicatures, etc. 	
ARGUMENTATION	justification and questioning of claims of truth and normative rightness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • topoi (formal or more content-related) • fallacies 	Ways of reasoning Ways of persuading
PERSPECTIVIZATION	positioning the speaker's or writer's point of view and expressing involvement or distance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • deictics • direct, indirect or free indirect speech • quotation marks, discourse markers/particles • metaphors • animating prosody, etc. 	Ways of positioning
INTENSIFICATION or MITIGATION	modifying (intensifying or mitigating) the illocutionary force and thus the epistemic status of utterances	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • diminutives or augmentatives • (modal) particles, tag questions, subjunctive, hesitations, vague expression, etc. • hyperboles, litotes • indirect speech acts (e.g. question instead of assertion) • verbs of saying, feeling, thinking, etc. 	Ways of scaling

These strategies involved in the discourse argumentation of positive ‘self’ and negative ‘other’ presentation and which reveal the main elements establishing the discursive opposition between ‘us’ and ‘them’ are central to the DHA (Reisigl and Wodak, 2001, pp. 44–5; see also KhosraviNik, 2010, 2015). However, this study will only focus on three strategies, namely, referential, predication and argumentation strategies:

4.2.2.2.1. Referential and nomination strategies

First, there are referential strategies or nomination strategies, particular in relation to self and other representation, by which people, processes, events and all other things (abstract or

concrete) are named, positively with respect or negatively by holding them in esteem. The strategies are identified by examining the kinds of words that are used to name, and therefore to represent, different groups of social actors as the construction of in-groups and out-groups is facilitated. This is done by using a number of membership categorization devices, including deictics, tropes such as metaphors, metonymies and synecdoches in the form of a part standing for the whole (*pars pro toto*) or a whole standing for the part (*totum pro parte*), as well as verbs and nouns used to denote processes and actions (see Reisigl and Wodak, 2009, p. 98). Analysing these strategies is based on three assumptions: first, the way people, processes, events and all other things (abstract or concrete) are named is always a matter of choice; second, nomination always carries values judgements; and third, referential strategies “established coherence relations with the way that other social actors are referred to and represented” (Richardson, 2007, p. 50). While doing the analysis, it is important to remember that there are many ways that can be used to describe someone, or something; but they are terms that are all accurate as each other (Richardson, 2007, p. 50).

For example, during GE13, Anwar Ibrahim was labelled as ‘an opposition leader’ (Amir Ali, 29 April 2013, *Free Malaysia Today*), ‘a religious pluralist’ (Mona Ahmad, 25 April 2013, *Berita Harian*) or ‘a bisexual’ (Zulkefli Hamzah, 28 April 2013, *Mingguan Malaysia*), but he was also ‘a father’, ‘a husband’, ‘a Muslim’ and so on ... but the differences between the denoted and connoted meanings of these terms are significant.

4.2.2.2.2. Predicational strategies

Second, there are predicational strategies through which people, events and all other things (abstract or concrete) are described or linguistically characterized once constructed or identified. Predicational strategies can be realized as positive or negative evaluative attributions or qualities in the linguistic form of implicit or explicit predicates. It is through predicational strategies that:

Persons [etc.] are specified and characterised with respect to quality, quantity, space, time and so on ... Among other things, [they] are mainly realised by specific forms of *reference* (based on explicit denotation as well as on more or less implicit

connotation), by *attributes* (in the form of adjectives, appositions prepositional phrases, relative clauses, conjunctive clauses, infinitive clauses and participial clauses or groups), by *predicates* or *predicative nouns/ adjectives/ pronouns*, by *collocations*, by explicit *comparisons*, *similes*, *metaphors* and other *rhetorical figures* ... and by more or less implicit *allusions*, *evocation* and *presuppositions* / *implications*. (Reisigl and Wodak, 2001, pp. 54–5, italics in original)

These strategies aim at labelling people, process, events and all other things (abstract or concrete) positively or negatively, deprecatorily or appreciatively. They cannot neatly be separated from the nomination strategies, as reference can already bear the feature of predication. Referential as well as predication strategies also function as a basis for the argumentation schemes of the text (Reisigl and Wodak, 2001, p. 46), which are often taken for granted as starting points for argumentation. In other words, categorizing and attributing people, processes, events and all other things (abstract or concrete) via referential/ nomination and predication is often introduced as given and shared background information, which obscures many of the political and ideological interests served by this categorization of qualities.

For example, during the GE13 campaign, the government was described as “the one who have proven records” (Adha Ghazali, 2 May 2013, *Berita Harian*), which suggests that they have experience and should be trusted.

4.2.2.2.3. Argumentation strategies

Reisigl and Wodak (2001) begin with a discussion on persuasion when discussing argumentation strategies. Persuasion, they argue, is “the means of intentionally influencing a person so that she or he adopts, fixes or changes her or his ways of perception, attitudes to and views on persons, objects and ideas, and disposition to behave or act in a specific way” (p.69). Reisigl (2014) argues that argumentation is about persuasion – “either in the sense of convincing, by sound arguments or in the sense of influencing somebody suggestively and manipulatively by fallacies” (p.70, see also Reisigl, 2014, p. 73 and the discussion on persuasion in Chapter 2 in this thesis). In this sense, persuasion can be double-edged, and in

languages like German, for example, the difference is explicitly lexicalised in the lexematic distinctions between verbs (*‘überzeugen’*) and (*‘überreden’*) (Kopperschmidt, 1989, pp. 116–21; Reisigl and Wodak, 2001, pp. 69–70). Both can be translated into English as ‘to persuade’, while the former also means ‘to convince’, the latter denotes a particular, restricted form of consent, under conditions of suspended rationality. Here, for (*‘überreden’*), forms of non-argumentative compulsion, such as emotionalization, suggestion and brainwashing, can compel approval by repressing the ability for rational and logical judgements and conclusions.

Drawing on Reisigl (2014), whose conception of argumentation follows Kopperschmidt’s Habermasian theoretical framework,⁴³ argumentation in this thesis is not regarded as a (complex) speech act, as proposed by Van Eemeren and Grootendorst (2004) as well as by Fairclough and Fairclough (2012), as discussed in previous chapters. Instead, argumentation is defined as “a non-violent linguistic as well as cognitive pattern of problem-solving that manifests itself in a more or less regulated sequence of speech acts which, altogether, form a complex and more or less coherent network of statements or utterances” (Reisigl, 2014, p. 70).

Echoing Habermas’s (1992 [1981]) theory of communicative action, Kopperschmidt (1985) maintains that there are four fundamental validity claims in every communicative act, i.e. understandability, truthfulness (sincerity, honesty), truth and [normative] rightness,⁴⁴ that constitute the validity basis of normal communication. But, when at least one interlocutor overtly questions the validity [the why-s] of utterances, validity claims are said to become problematic. When they become problematic or what Kopperschmidt (1989) calls ‘made *virtualized*’ (p. 97 in Houtlosser, 2001, p. 41), only truth claims, and [normative] rightness claims need argumentative support. These claims are implied in speech acts. The former is an assertive speech act that refers to a (supposed) state of affairs, i.e. one’s guarantee that the information provided in his/her assertion is reliable. While the latter is a directive speech act which refers to actions, i.e. one’s guarantee that performing the action mentioned in his/her

⁴³ The framework is presented in its fullest form in German in *Methodik der Argumentationsanalyse* (Kopperschmidt, 1989), but see Kopperschmidt (1987) for an English introduction.

⁴⁴ Note that terminology varies somewhat when describing Habermas’ validity claims. In *Communication and the Evolution of Society*, the four validity claims are translated as truth, rightness, truthfulness and comprehensibility (Habermas, 1979). But in Cukier, Bauer and Middleton (2004), for example, the four validity claims are translated as truthfulness, clarity, sincerity and legitimacy (see also Ulrich, 2001; Forester, 1989).

directive is legitimized by a mutual willingness to act (see Houtlosser, 2001, p.40). In Kopperschmidt's (1985) own words, he argues: "Do we seek our solution in implicit theoretical validity resulting from a presentation of knowledge, which we call truth, or in a validity arising from evaluation, which we call correctness?" (p. 161). On this, Reisigl (2014) further elaborates:

...whereas the validity claim of truth relates to questions of knowledge, epistemic certainty⁴⁵ and theoretical insight, the validity claim of normative rightness relates to practical questions of how to do the right thing, i.e. to questions of practical norms or ethical and moral standards, to questions of what should be done or must not be done or what is recommended or forbidden. (p.70)

According to Houtlosser (2001, p.41), in Kopperschmidt's (1989) view, when assertive or directive speech acts are performed, they imply a guarantee of a legitimate underlying validity claim. Performing such speech acts implies one's obligation to defend it, when asked to do so (see *10 commandments* discussed in Chapter 2). However, Kopperschmidt (2000 in Reisigl, 2014) convincingly argues, which is a point I wish to reemphasize, that "argumentation is not an autonomous speech act per se" (p.70). Although validity claims of truth as well as of normative rightness are prototypically performed by or take the form of assertive and directive speech acts at the level of pragmatic deep structure, "the literally uttered secondary illocutionary act often deviates from the intended primary illocutionary act" (Reisigl, 2014, p.70). Therefore, Kopperschmidt (2000, p.59 in Reisigl, 2014, p.70) highlights that all types of speech acts are capable of fulfilling an argumentative function under certain conditions, which complicates the argumentation analysis.

4.2.2.2.3.1 Speech Acts Theory

Searle (1979) develops the theory of speech acts based on Austin's (1975 [1962], see pp. 150–63) types of speech acts (or illocutionary acts, i.e. to commit *something* through enunciation, revealing a certain value and 'force': statement, promise, demand, order, request, warning,

⁴⁵ Just like knowledge, certainty is an epistemic property of beliefs. (In a derivative way, certainty is also an epistemic property of subjects: *S* is certain that *p* is just in case *S*'s belief that *p* is certain.) (see Nuyts, 2000).

advice etc.). In other words, an illocutionary act generally consists of an illocutionary force F and a propositional content P (see also Searle and Vanderveken, 1985, p. 1). Therefore, two utterances: “You will vote for the government” and “Vote for the government” have the same propositional content P , namely that you will vote for the government; but characteristically, the former has the illocutionary force F of a prediction and the second has the illocutionary force F of an order. According to Searle and Vanderveken (1985), “there are five and only five fundamental types and thus five and only five illocutionary ways of using language ... Each of these five categories of illocutionary forces has one type of illocutionary point” (p. 52). They formulate the following recursive definition of the set of all illocutionary forces (pp. 54–62; see also Vanderveken, 1990, pp. 125–27):

1. The illocutionary force of an assertion:

It has an assertive point, a neutral mode of achievement, a neutral propositional content condition and a preparatory condition that the speaker has reasons or evidence for the truth of the propositional content, the sincerity condition that the speaker believes the propositional content, and a neutral degree of strength. It is named by the performative verb “assert” and is realized syntactically in the *declarative sentential type*. Simple declarative sentences whose illocutionary force markers are identical to their sentential type serve to make assertions.

2. Commissive illocutionary force:

It has a commissive point, a neutral mode of achievement and degree of strength, a condition that the propositional content represents a future course of action of the speaker, a preparatory condition that the speaker is capable of carrying out that action, and a sincerity condition that he intends to carry it out. It is not realized syntactically in a sentential type in English but is named by the performative verb “commit”.

3. Directive illocutionary force:

It has a directive point, a neutral mode of achievement and degree of strength, a condition that the propositional content represents a future course of action of the hearer, a preparatory condition that the hearer can carry out that action and a sincerity condition that the speaker desires or wants the hearer to carry it out. It is realized in the *imperative*

sentential type. All simple imperative sentences serve to make an attempt with a medium degree of strength to get the hearer to do something.

4. Illocutionary force of a declaration:

It has a declarative illocutionary point, a neutral mode of achievement and degree of strength, a condition that the propositional content represents a present course of action of the speaker, a preparatory condition that the speaker is able to carry out this action in his utterance and a sincerity condition that the speaker believes, intends and desires to carry out this action. It is named by the performative verb “declare” and is expressed in utterances of *performative sentences*.

5. Expressive illocutionary force:

It has an expressive point and a neutral mode of achievement, a degree of strength and propositional content, preparatory and sincerity conditions. It is realized syntactically in *exclamatory sentences*. Because the expressive illocutionary point is the only point where variable sincerity conditions are part of the point, there are no exclamatory sentences which express only primitive expressive illocutionary force, just as there are no performative verbs naming that force. All actual expressive illocutionary forces of utterances are necessarily *complex*, because one cannot express a mental state about the state of affairs represented by a proposition without relating that proposition to the world with a *particular* psychological mode. Thus, expressive illocutionary force is a *limit* case, as shown by the fact that it is the weakest illocutionary force with a neutral degree of strength.

The idea of an illocutionary point, according to Searle and Vanderveken (1985), is the “idea of the point or purpose of a type of illocution in virtue of its being an illocution of that type” (p. 52). But as Searle (1979) emphasises:

If we adopt illocutionary point as the basic notion on which to classify uses of language, then there are a rather limited number of basic things we do with language: we tell people how things are, we try to get them to do things, we commit ourselves to

do things, we express our feelings and attitudes and we bring about changes through our utterances. (p. 29)

However, Searle and Vanderveken (1985) insist that there should be these and only these illocutionary points, because the “illocutionary point of an illocutionary force always relates the propositional content of that illocutionary force to the world of utterance and there are a limited number of ways that propositional contents can be related to a world of utterance”. They maintain that there are four and only four directions that fit in language (pp. 52–3; See also Austin, 1975). This distinction is necessary in understanding the relation between language and reality:

1. The word-to-world direction of fit: the propositional content of an illocution fits an independently existing state of affairs in the world (our words match how the world is in reality) (e.g. assertive illocution)
2. The world-to-word direction of fit: the world is altered to fit the propositional content of the illocution (the world changes to match our words) (e.g. commissive or directive illocutionary points)
3. The double direction of fit: the world is altered to fit the propositional content by representing the world as being so altered (e.g. declarative illocution)
4. The null or empty direction of fit: the direction is presupposed (e.g. expressive illocutionary point)

Against this background, Searle’s (1979) taxonomy of speech acts consists of five broad categories, namely *assertive*, *directives*, *commissive*, *expressive* and *declarative*. However, since questions have a more open, ‘incomplete’ propositional structure, instead of treating them as a sub-type of directive speech acts, like Searle (1979), Reisigl (2014) prefers to see questions and directives as two distinct types of speech act. He idealizes the relationship between types of speech act, their functions and primarily involved validity claims based on Habermas’ distinction between the four validity claims of truth summarized in the table below:

Table 5: Summary of the relationship between types of speech act, their functions and primarily involved validity claims

Type of speech act	Function and example	Primarily involved validity claim	Understandability
expressive	expresses feelings: <i>Thank you very much!</i>	truthfulness with respect to the sincerity of feelings	
declarative (including assertive declarations)	makes the uttered propositional content become reality by the act of utterance, thus changing the reality: <i>With this I declare this contract invalid</i>	truthfulness (plus conventional procedure, adequate persons and circumstances, correct and complete performance of the procedure)	
assertive	expresses that the speaker or writer makes a claim of truth: <i>They will move to Bern. (high degree of certainty)</i>	truth (the person who asserts something commits to knowing the truth); can question any of the four validity claims	
commissive	expresses the willingness and commitment to fulfil an obligation in the future: <i>I promise it to you</i>	truthfulness with respect to the willingness to be committed.	
interrogative	expresses that a speaker or a writer (a) does not know something, (b) wants to obtain the lacking information from the person who has been asked, and	can question any of the four validity claims (and simultaneously assumes a claim of truth in the sense that the other person should know the answer/truth)	Understandability

	(c) assumes that the asked person knows the answer: <i>Why did you do that?</i>		
directive	transfers the speaker's or writer's action plan to the addressee who is expected to do what the speaker or writer wants him or her to do (e.g. a request): <i>Stop it!</i>	normative rightness	

4.2.2.2.3.2. Topoi/fallacies

Central to argumentation strategies in DHA are argumentative *topoi* (singular *topos*). According to Eriksson (2012, p. 209), *topos* in Greek literally means a “place” for finding arguments, wherein ‘place’ is often understood metaphorically as a ‘place’ in the mind-referring *topoi* to many kinds of mental places. However, in a study of the discursive construction of national identity, Wodak, De Cillia, Reisigl and Liebhart (2009), the concepts of *topos* are clearly conceived as argumentation analytical categories and not literary motifs or common places, as has been falsely suggested by Zagar (2010, p.21). Similarly, Reisigl and Wodak's (2001) approach to argumentation departs from the formal view of *topoi* as an abstract formal typology and inclines towards material *topoi*: topic-related and field-dependent *topoi*.

Kienpointner (1997) asserts that in classic argumentation scholarship, *topoi* have two functions, first, a selective function as “*topoi* are search formulas, which tell you how and where to look for arguments”; second, a guarantee function as “*topoi* are warrants [i.e. inferential leap that links the claim with the evidence] which guarantee the transition from argument to conclusion” (p. 226). Since argumentation, according to Reisigl (2014), is “always topic-related and field-dependent (i.e. depending on the configuration of social

domains, disciplines, theories, etc.), topoi are also formalized as recurring content-related conclusion rules that are typical for specific fields of social action, disciplines theories, etc.” (p. 77, see also Reisigl and Wodak, 2009, p. 110). The tradition of identifying content-related argumentation schemes or topoi can be traced back to pre-Aristotelian rhetoric (see e.g. Rubinelli, 2009). In other words, *topoi* possess content-related as well as formal properties, which means, according to Richardson (2017), that they can be described as “reservoirs of generalised key ideas, from which specific statements or arguments can be generated, in addition to functioning as (explicit or unexpressed) premises, which connect the argument or arguments with the conclusion or central claim” (p. 71). In this sense, Reisigl (2014, p. 77) reiterates that topos is not rigid and static, but a dynamic concept. This relationship between topos (warrant/conclusion rule), claim (conclusion) and argument (data) is illustrated below:

Figure 4: The relationship between topos/fallacy, argument and claim in a simplified functional approach to argumentation



Based on Figure 4, topoi can be described as central parts of argumentation that belong to premises. Since argumentation is frequently enthymemic, i.e. shortened on the linguistic surface structure (Reisigl, 2014, p. 72), topoi are not always expressed explicitly but can be made explicit as conditional or causal paraphrases, such as ‘if x, then y’ or ‘y, because x’ (see Reisigl and Wodak, 2001, pp. 69–80; Wodak et al., 2009 [1999], pp. 36–42; Wodak, 2015, p. 53).

Argumentation schemes are reasonable or fallacious; if the latter is the case, we label them *fallacies*. A fallacy is “an underlying, systematic kind of error or deceptive tactic of argument used to deceptively get the best of a speech partner” (Walton, 2000, p.1). However, KhosraviNik (2015) asserts that “distinguishing reasonable from fallacious, identifying topoi is not an objective, formulaic process” (p. 112), because “it is not always easy to distinguish precisely without context knowledge whether an argumentation scheme has been employed as reasonable topos or as fallacy” (Reisigl and Wodak, 2009, p.110). And to say that an argument

is fallacious, according to Walton (2000), is a strong charge as it entails “more than just the claim that the argument is weak or has been insufficiently supported by good evidence” (p.25). But as reminded by Reisigl (2014), “critical discourse analysts should not content themselves with a purely descriptive analysis of argumentation, because they have critical ambitions and take a critical stand”. (p. 91). Drawing on the DHA’s framework (see Reisigl and Wodak, 2001; Reisigl, 2014) on argumentation, this study integrates a normative dimension into analysis model to distinguish between reasonable and fallacious argumentation. As I have briefly introduced in Chapter 2, a central normative basis for the DHA approach is the pragma-dialectics with its 10 commandments (or the rule of reasonableness) for rational dispute and constructive arguing (see Reisigl, 2014, pp. 79-80). The 10 rules are (see for example, van Eemeren and Grootendorst, 2016; pp.208-12; van Eemeren 2004, pp. 190-6):

1. The freedom rule (freedom from arguing): participants must not prevent each other from advancing or casting doubt on standpoints
2. The burden-of-proof-rule (obligation to give reasons): whoever advances a standpoint is obliged to defend it if asked to do so
3. The standpoint rule (correct reference to previous discourse by the antagonist): an attack on a standpoint must relate to the standpoint that has actually been advanced by the protagonist
4. The relevance rule (obligation to ‘matter-of-factness’): a participant may defend her or his standpoint only by advancing argumentation related to that standpoint
5. The unexpressed premise rule (correct reference to implicit premises): a participant can be held to the premises she or he leaves implicit; equally, an antagonist may not falsely suggest that a premise has been left unexpressed by the other participant.
6. The starting point rule (respect of shared starting points): a standpoint must be regarded as conclusively defended if the defence takes place by means of arguments belonging to the common starting point. A premise must not falsely be taken as a common starting point, and, conversely, a shared premise must not be rejected
7. The validity rule (logical validity): the reasoning in the argumentation must be logically valid or must be capable of being valid by making explicit one or more unexpressed premises

8. The argumentation scheme rule (use of plausible arguments and schemes of argumentation): a standpoint may not be regarded as conclusively defended if the defence does not take place by means of an appropriate argument scheme that is correctly applied
9. The closure rule (acceptance of the discussion's results): the failed defence of a standpoint must result in a protagonist retracting the standpoint, and a successful defence of a standpoint must result in an antagonist retracting his or her doubts
10. The usage rule (clarity of expression and correct interpretation): formulations must be neither puzzlingly vague nor confusingly ambiguous, and must be interpreted as accurately as possible

If these rules are violated, we no longer have sound topoi, but fallacies. Although the consequences of violating these rules may vary in their seriousness, van Eemeren and Grootendorst (2016, p. 212-14) maintain that every violation is a potential threat to the successful conclusion of the discussion. Therefore, "all violations of the rules are incorrect moves in critical discussion as it corresponds roughly to the various kinds of defects traditionally referred to as *fallacies*" (van Eemeren and Grootendorst, 1987, p. 284).

The next section discusses the texts dealt with in this thesis. The choice of the 'object under investigation' (i.e. the texts), which is analysed in this thesis, will be explained and justified through the following discussion.

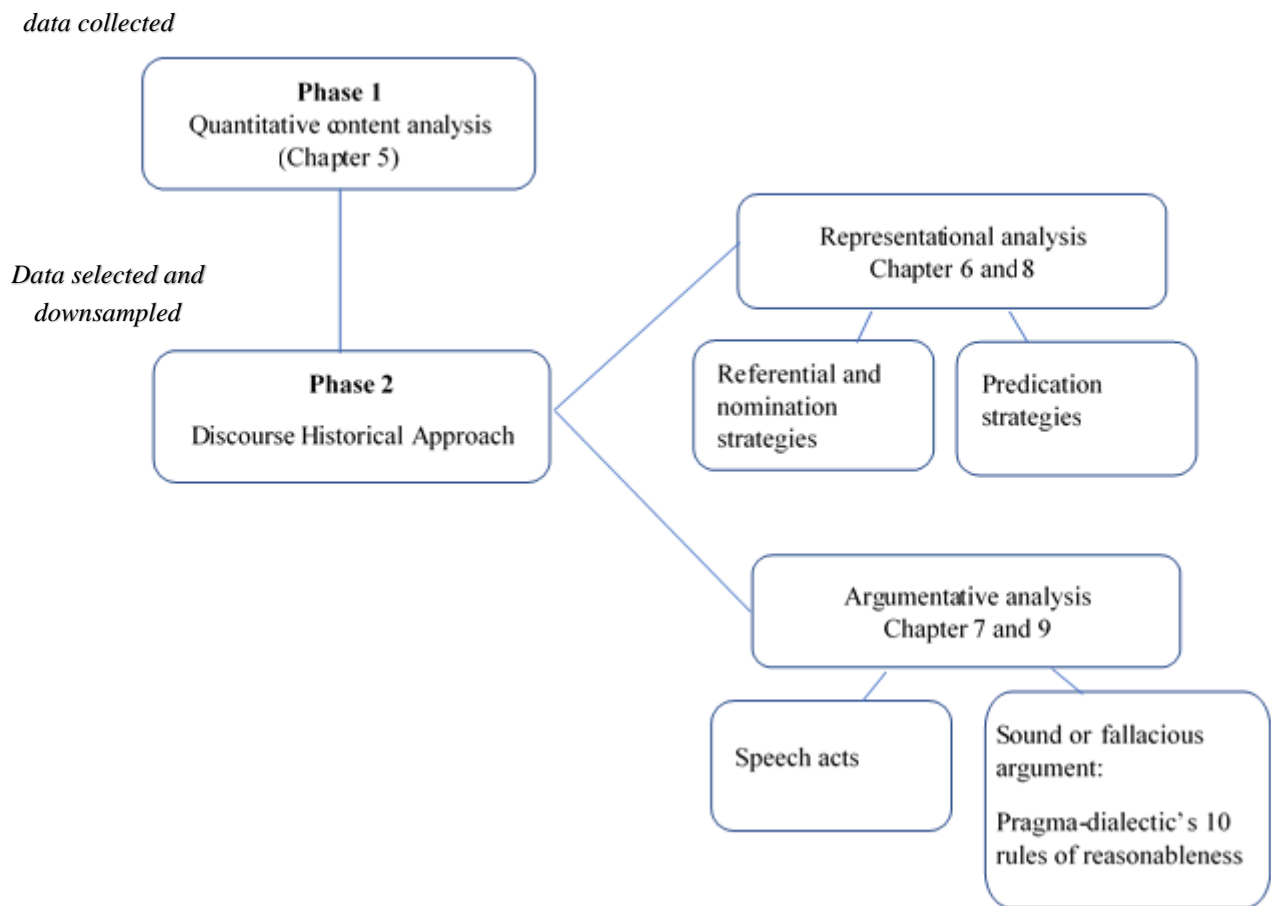
Summary

In this chapter, I have introduced my data, produced the rationale for the collected (as well as selected) sample of newspapers analysed. I have also discussed the procedures and method of analysis involved in this thesis. Initially, a content analysis of the sample was conducted in order to further downsize the text. The selected texts based on the major themes identified in the quantitative findings were analysed qualitatively using the DHA's discursive strategies of analysis. The analysis of arguments in the editorials and columns of GE13 discourse were conducted on two levels:

- The level of speech acts
- Distinguishing whether the argument is sound or fallacious

Figure 5 below summarizes the phases of analysis taken in this study:

Figure 5: Summary of the phases of analysis in this study



The next chapter, Chapter 5 presents my first empirical chapter and discusses the findings of the quantitative content analysis. Chapter 6 presents the first qualitative findings of the representational analysis in the Malay-language editorials and columns. Focusing on the same publications, Chapter 7 presents the argumentative analysis. Chapter 8 and 9 present the findings of the English-language editorials and columns.

Chapter 5

Quantitative findings and discussion

5.1. Introduction

This chapter presents and discusses the quantitative findings of a content analysis of the mainstream editorials and columns during the GE13 campaign. This chapter aims to establish a ‘map’ or ‘a big picture’ (describing manifest trends, patterns and absences) as a preliminary basis to textual analysis in Chapter 6, 7, 8 and 9. This chapter is divided into three sections. Section 5.2.1 provides insights about the nature of the newspapers based on their publication of the editorials and columns. Section 5.2.2. illustrates the topics discussed in the op-eds during the campaign. Section 5.2.3. shows who is reported the most during the campaign. The findings reveal that the discussion about policy was subsided in the op-eds as they were more concerned about the politicians and candidates. These results also generally concur with the status quo: the discussions about the government were positive while the discussions about the opposition were negative. The Malay-language op-eds had virtually the same number of positive government articles and negative opposition articles. In reverse, there was almost a 1-to-3 difference in the English-language op-eds with more negative opposition discussions compared to positive government discussions. The findings also show that race, ethnic and religion-related issues were prominently discussed as it was contributed more than half by the mainstream op-eds, just as much as texts devoted to Islam and Muslims issue. It is also hard to not notice the substantially high number of the politics of fear texts generated by the print op-eds.

5.2. Quantitative findings

5.2.1. The Newspapers

Table 5.1 below shows that only 7.8 per cent (n=28) of articles written on the GE13 during the sample period were editorials, leaving signed columns to comprise the bulk of the data (92.2 per cent, n= 332). Of the 31 editorials, only *The Star* and *Sunday Star* (n= 2), owned by the Star Media Group Berhad and the other two dailies, *Berita Harian* and the *New Straits Times* (n= 26), published by the New Straits Times Press (NSTP) Malaysia Berhad explicitly voiced

their newspapers' stance, ideology and policy. The ratio of editorial to column articles varied significantly across the newspapers sampled in the study, as Table 5.1 illustrates:

Table 5.1: Format and number of articles, by newspaper

	Format of article		Total
	Editorial	Column	
Utusan Malaysia	.	80	80
Mingguan Malaysia	.	25	25
Berita Harian	12	108	120
Berita Harian Ahad	.	18	18
New Straits Times	13	41	54
New Sunday Times	1	5	6
The Star	1	49	50
Sunday Star	1	6	7
Total	28	332	360

At this stage, a tentative initial statement regarding the impact of Malaysian media ownership and laws, among others, Security Offences (Special Measures) Act 2012 (SOSMA Act 2012)⁴⁶, Sedition Act (SA)⁴⁷, Official Secret Act (OSA)⁴⁸, Printing and Publications Act (PPPA)⁴⁹ toward the overall media practices as discussed in chapter 3 is possible. The low

⁴⁶ SOSMA Act 2012 provides special measures relating to security offences for the purpose of maintaining public order and security. The act replaces the 1960 Internal Security Act (ISA). This act may carry the death penalty to the perpetrators. Just like ISA, SOSMA fails to meet international human rights standards in several key ways including by allowing police to detain suspects incommunicado for 48 hours, increasing the risk of torture, and by allowing detention without charge or access to courts for up to 28 days (See Amnesty International, 2013).

⁴⁷ The Sedition Act (SA) in Malaysia is a law prohibiting discourse deemed as seditious. The act was originally enacted by the colonial authorities of British Malaya in 1948. The act criminalises speech with "seditious tendency", including that which would "bring into hatred or contempt or to excite disaffection against" the government or engender "feelings of ill-will and hostility between different races". The meaning of "seditious tendency" is defined in section 3 of the Sedition Act 1948. It includes the questioning of certain portions of the Constitution of Malaysia, namely those pertaining to the Malaysian social contract, such as Article 153, which deals with special rights for the bumiputra (Malays and other indigenous peoples, who comprise over half the Malaysian population) (Khoo, 1995, pp. 104–106).

⁴⁸ The act defines an "official secret" as "...any document specified in the Schedule and any information and material relating thereto and includes any other official document, information and material as may be classified as 'Top Secret', 'Secret', 'Confidential' or 'Restricted', as the case may be, by a Minister, the Menteri Besar or Chief Minister of a State or such public officer" (Wu, Min Aun and Hickling, 2003, pp. 91-92).

⁴⁹ The Printing Presses and Publications Act 1984 is a Malaysian statute governing publishing and the usage of printing presses in Malaysia. It replaces the Printing Presses Act 1948 and the Control of Imported Publications

number of editorials (7.8 per cent versus columns = 92.2 per cent) conceivably suggests the attempt made by the newspapers to toe the line because they do not want to lose their permit. Especially, the whole newspaper is responsible for words appear in editorial but not in column; column reflect the opinion of the writer and does not necessarily represent the views of the newspaper (see chapter 2). Although theoretically, it is not obligatory for columnist to agree with the editorial's leadership position, Table 5.2 below demonstrates the absence of any alternative opinion, in the mainstream newspapers during the GE13 campaign:

Table 5.2: Cross tabulation format of article and negative/positive comments

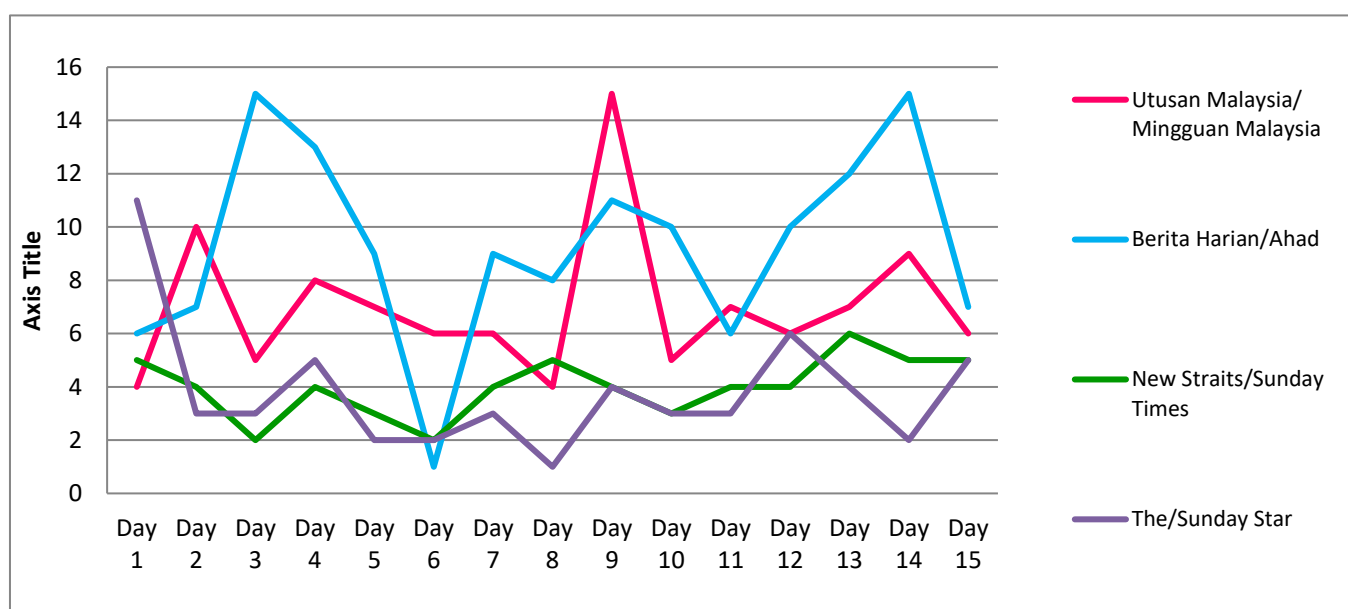
	Format of article															
	Editorial								Column							
	Gov +		Gov -		Opp +		Opp -		Gov +		Gov -		Opp +		Opp -	
	C	Col	C	Col	C	Col	C	Col	C	Col	C	Col	C	Col	C	Col
	%		%		%		%		%		%		%		%	
Utusan Malaysia	.	0.0	.	0.0	.	0.0	.	0.0	55	30.8	.	0.0	.	0.0	59	32.6
Mingguan Malaysia	.	0.0	.	0.0	.	0.0	.	0.0	11	6.1	.	0.0	.	0.0	14	7.7
Berita Harian	9	56.3	.	0.0	.	0.0	7	46.7	53	29.6	.	0.0	.	0.0	54	29.8
Berita Harian Ahad	.	0.0	.	0.0	.	0.0	.	0.0	4	2.2	.	0.0	.	0.0	8	4.4
New Straits Times	6	37.5	.	0.0	.	0.0	8	53.3	26	14.5	.	0.0	.	0.0	21	11.6
New Sunday Times	.	0.0	.	0.0	.	0.0	.	0.0	5	2.8	.	0.0	.	0.0	4	2.2
The Star	1	6.3	.	0.0	.	0.0	.	0.0	22	12.3	.	0.0	.	0.0	20	11.1
Sunday Star	.	0.0	.	0.0	.	0.0	.	0.0	3	1.7	.	0.0	.	0.0	1	0.6
Total	16	100	0	0	0	0	15	100	179	100	0	100	0	100	181	100

Table 5.2 cross-tabulates the positive and negative comment about the government and the opposition in editorial and column with the newspapers. *Berita Harian*, *New Straits Times* and *The Star* show similar trends with their editorials and columns positive tendency toward the ruling coalition and negative tendency toward the opposition. 56.3 per cent (n= 9) editorials in *Berita Harian* for instance were pro government and 46.7 per cent (n= 7) were anti opposition,

Act 1958 (Revised 1972). Under the controversial law, all printing presses require a licence granted by the Home Affairs Minister, renewed every year (Khoo, 1995, pp.108).

followed by 29.1 per cent (n= 53) pro government and 29.2 per cent (n=54) anti opposition columns. Likewise, 37.5 percent (n= 6) editorials published by *New Straits Times* offered positive comment on the government and 53.3 per cent (n= 8) negative comment on the opposition followed by 14.5 per cent (n= 26) positive comments about the government and 11.6 per cent (n= 21) negative comment about the opposition columns. Although *the Star* only published 1 positive comment about the government editorial throughout the 15-day campaigning period, it still conformed to the pattern with 22 (12.3 per cent) columns praising the government and 20 columns (11.1 percent) columns criticized the opposition. During the sample period, no editorial or column criticized the government or praises the opposition in the mainstream newspapers either in editorials or columns.

Graph 5.1: Editorials and columns daily frequencies per newspaper

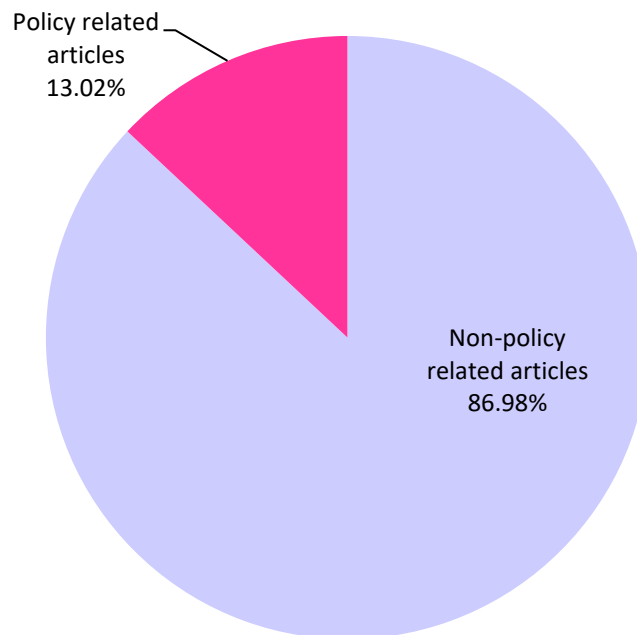


Graph 5.1 above illustrates the amount of election related editorials and columns produced in the mainstream newspapers, on a daily basis during the sample period. The frequency of the op-eds in the mainstream newspapers was volatile and variable. Other than *The Star* (n= 11; see Table 5.2 above: 11.1 per cent Gov +, 33.3 per cent Opp -), levels of opinion pages of other print newspapers commencing the campaigning period were low when compared to with subsequent days. But the frequency decreased significantly and fluctuates thereafter for the English daily and its Sunday edition, *The Star/Sunday Star*. While the amount of articles

reduced between April 22 (Day 3, n= 15; see Table 5.2 above: 61.5 per cent Gov +, 46.2 per cent Opp -) and May 3 (Day 14, n = 15; see Table 5.3. above: 37.5 per cent Gov +, 38.9 per cent Opp -) for *Berita Harian* and *Berita Harian Ahad, Mingguan Malaysia* peaked on Day 9 (April 28, n =15) where as shown in Table 5.2 above, 45.5 per cent of the articles dedicated to praise the government while 52.6 per cent give negative comment about the opposition before notably reduced during the last week of the campaign. The following section provides insights into the issues throughout the campaign.

5.2.2. What issues were important?

Graph 5.2: Primary and secondary macro-policies related stories



Across the two weeks of the campaign, Graph 5.2 illustrates that all newspapers only spent less than one quarter (n=66, 13.02 per cent) of their editorials and columns discussing policy-related matters. As further demonstrated in Graph 5.3 below, the most frequent policy related themes were governance (n=32, 6.3 per cent), development (n= 16, 3.2 per cent) followed by the general discussion on policies proposed by the government and opposition (n= 11, 2.2 per cent). There was far less attention paid specifically to education issues such as free higher education policy, scholarships and National Higher Education Fund (PTPTN) study loans, all

of which accounted for just 8 articles (1.6 per cent) despite the massive students' protests calling for abolishment of PTPTN and free tertiary education in April 2012. Perhaps the next most striking finding is the minimal analysis paid to economic policy (1.4 per cent) which did not even make to the top four prominent policy issues during the GE13, while issues related to social unity and equity, public sector and public safety continued to be marginalized.

Graph 5.3: Primary and secondary macro-policies

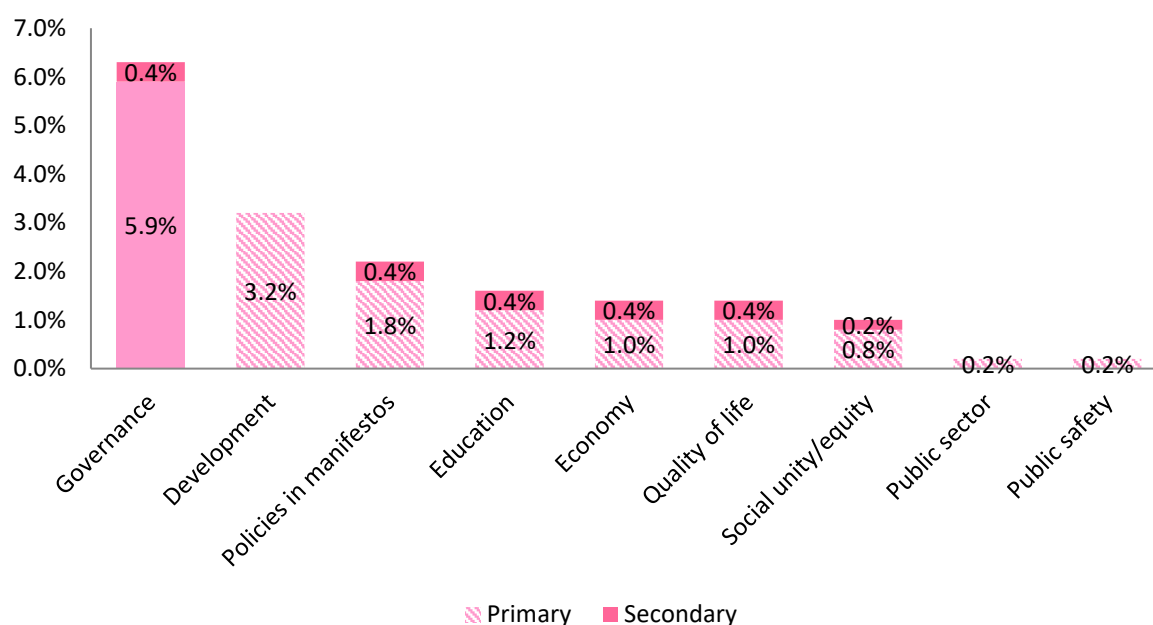


Table 5.3 below breaks this category down further by newspapers and shows that more than half of newspapers were concerned about the governance policies¹ which include corruption, independent judiciary, electoral process reforms, Malaysian Preventive Security Laws (i.e. the ISA⁵⁰, OSA⁵¹ and UUCA⁵²), media policy reforms, freedom of speech, academic freedom,

⁵⁰ Internal Security Act (ISA) was enacted after Malaysia gained independence from Britain in 1957. It allows for detention without trial or criminal charges under limited, legally defined circumstances. On 15 September 2011, the Prime Minister of Malaysia, Najib Razak said that this legislation will be repealed and replaced by two new laws. The ISA was replaced and repealed by the Security Offences (Special Measures) Act 2012 which has been passed by Parliament and given the royal assent on 18 June 2012. The Act came into force on 31 July 2012 (Lisa J. Ariffin, 2012)

⁵¹ Official Secret Act (OSA) is a statute in Malaysia prohibiting the dissemination of information classified as an official secret. The legislation is based on the Official Secrets Act of the United Kingdom. After criticism of the act for lacking clarity, it was amended in 1986 (Wu, Min Aun & Hickling, R. H., 2003)

⁵² The Universities and Universities Colleges Act (UUCA) piece of retrograde legislation that severely curtails freedom of thought, movement and association amongst students in Malaysia (Leslie Lau, 2011).

freedom of information and hudud⁵³. However, despite the quantitative prominence given to ‘governance’ in *Utusan Malaysia* (3.9 per cent) and *New Straits Times* (5.2 per cent), process stories predominate. Therefore, although issue positions and policy discussions were part of the discussion in editorials and columns, they were actually very much secondary to a dominant narrative of politics that turns on scandals, demonization and deception. The textual analyses explore this in greater detail, explaining the way that the substance was backgrounded and not communicated.

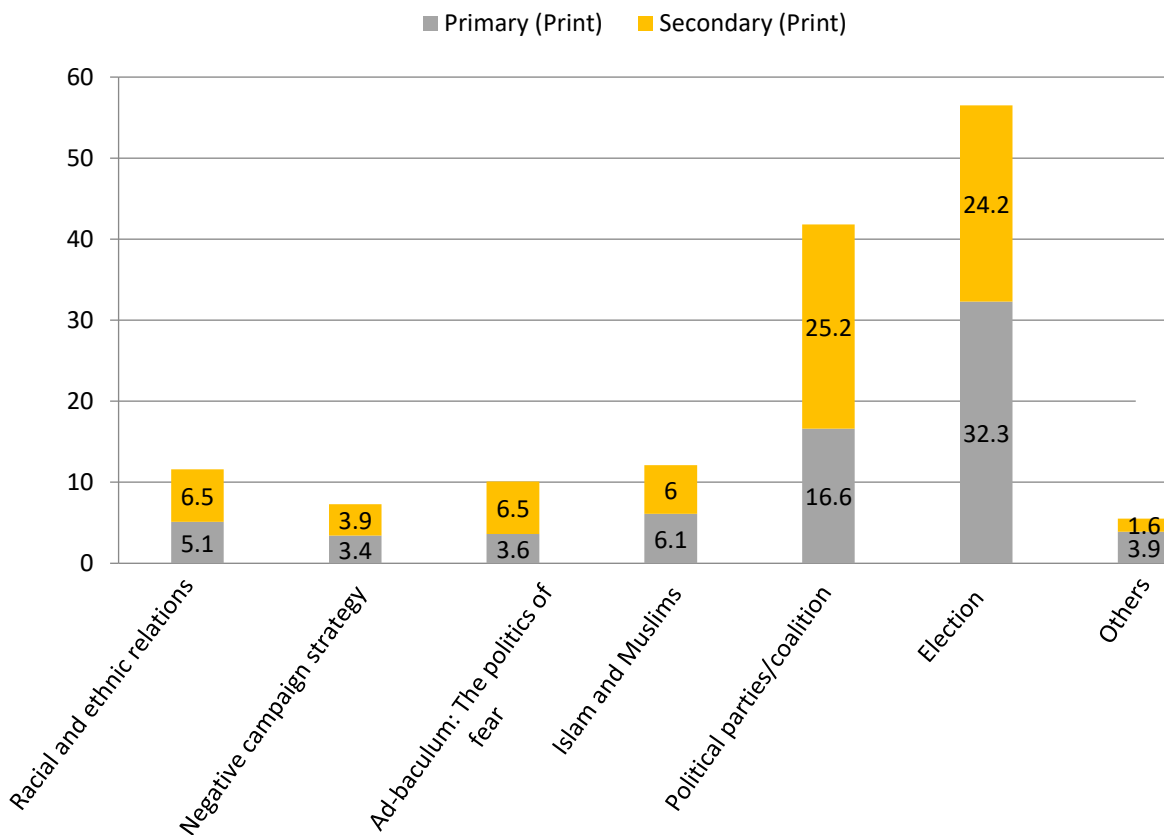
Table 5.3: Top 5 policy-related campaign topics in op-ed articles

	1	2	3	4	5
Utusan Malaysia	Governance 3.9%	Education Policies in manifestos 2.6%	Economy Development Public Sector 1.3%		
Mingguan Malaysia	Development Quality of life 1.3%				
Berita Harian	Development 9.1%	Economy 3.9%	Education Social unity & equity Policies in manifestos 2.6%	Public safety 1.3%	
Berita Harian Ahad	Quality of life 1.3%				
New Straits Times	Governance 5.2%	Development Social unity & equity 2.6%			
New Sunday Times	Quality of life 1.3%				
The Star	Development 3.9%	Governance 2.6%			
Sunday Star	Education 1.3%				

⁵³ Hudud is a law derived from the Qur’an and the teachings of the Sunnah, which sets out punishments for crimes under Shariah law. The bill was passed at the state level in Terengganu, Kelantan and Perlis in 2013 but as of 2014 none of these laws have been implemented (Zurairi, 2014).

Consequently, the substantive issues underlying the campaign were given minor emphasis. Of 66 policy-related editorials and columns (13.02 per cent), only a total of 28 (of 7.49 per cent) discussions of all eight newspapers centred on policy. Graph 5.4 below illustrates the frequency of primary and secondary macro-topics during the campaign. As is typical in any general election, discussions about political parties and coalition and attention to the mother-of-all-elections (as it was widely touted) crowded out almost all the discussions in the op-eds, combined to account for over 70 per cent of the newspapers narrative.

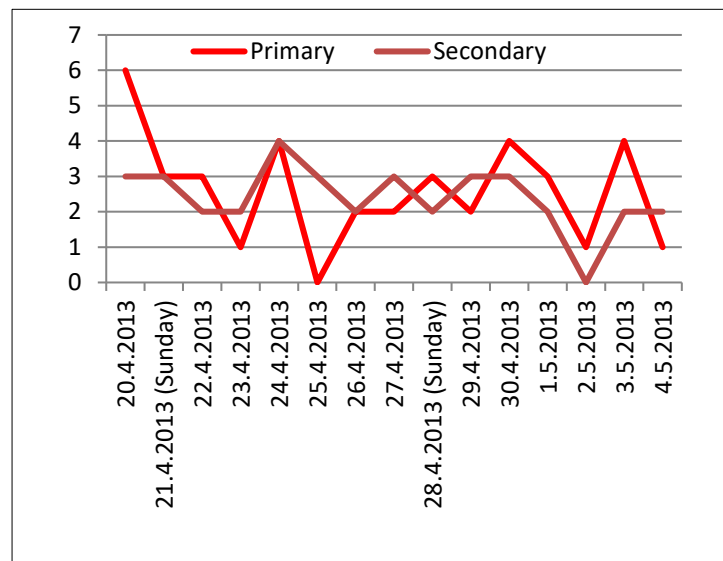
Graph 5.4: Primary and Secondary Macro-topics²



In the Malaysian context where racial and religious sensitivities abound, race and religion-related issues have surfaced over the years and while these have passed without leaving too deep a dent on inter-ethnic unity, they nevertheless contributed to the underlying uneasiness between the different races and religions (See Chapter 3). However, from April 20 to May 5, 2013, the hot-button racial and ethnic relations issue still accounted for a striking 11.6 per cent (n= 51) of the discussion, about the same amount of attention that was devoted to Islam and

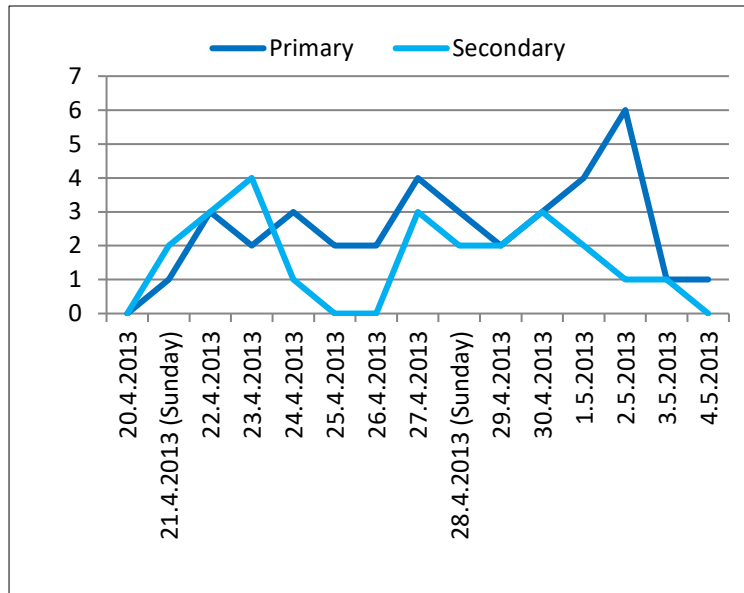
Muslims issue (12.1. n= 54). It is also hard to not notice the substantially high number of the politics of fear articles in Graph 5.4 above (10.1 per cent, n=28). GE13 was the titanic battle for the ruling Barisan Nasional (BN) to retain power and a referendum on the future of two leaders, prime minister Najib Razak and his challenger, opposition leader, Anwar Ibrahim⁵⁴, clashed for the first time in an electoral test of wills and skills (See Chapter 3). Therefore, the big question for all Malaysians was whether GE13 would be conclusive or whether there would follow a period of uncertainty, if not instability, and what that would mean for Malaysian and the region (see Yang Razali, 2013). “Fear begins with things we fear” (Altheide, 2002, p. 3) and the newspapers generate fear and redirect fear that already exists (Chomsky, 1997, pp. 91-2). Perhaps, the very realization of that fear was what helped triggered the considerable margin of the politics of fear that shaped both the focus and the strategic trajectory of the campaign which will be discussed further in the qualitative findings chapters. The graphs below show the number of articles that discussed the topics of racial/ethnic relations, Islam and Muslims and politics of fear, by date:

Graph 5.5: Number of racial and ethnic relations articles, by date

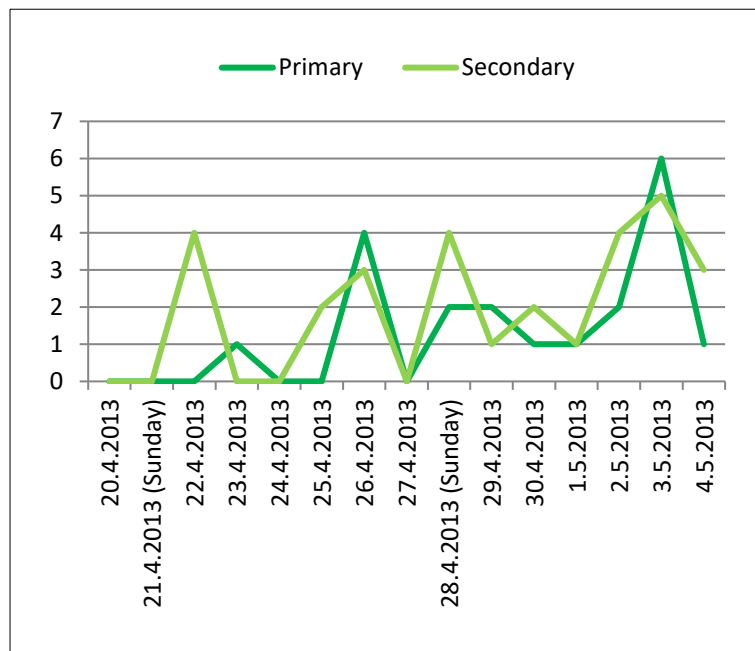


⁵⁴ Anwar Ibrahim is also a former UMNO deputy president and deputy prime minister (see chapter 3).

Graph 5.6: Number of Islam and Muslims articles, by date



Graph 5.7: Number of ad baculum (politics of fear) articles, by date



Racial and ethnic relations related articles started off the campaign really high, combined for 9 articles (12 per cent) solely on April 20 as illustrated in Graph 5.5 above. Between April 21 and May 5 however, the number fluctuated but they remained fairly stable on April 22, April 27 to 29 and May 1 with a considerably high total number of 5 (6.67 per cent) racial and ethnic relations issues discussed for each day. What this means is that, overall, it is evident that racial and ethnic issues had been a constant topic of discussion throughout the period. On the other hand, in Graph 5.6, it depicts that discussions on Islam and Muslims issue reached a peak in the middle and in the homestretch of the campaign with a total of 11.47 per cent (n= 7) related articles published on April 27 and May 2 each day. Although the narrative was absent during the first day of the campaign and only discussed once during the last day of the campaign, in between, the numbers were still significantly steady especially on April 22 and 23 and April 30 and May 1. Likewise, to say that this topic was central to the GE13 election campaign is clearly not an overstatement. Especially as it is evident in Graph 5.6, between April 20 and May 4, the number of articles ranges from 0 to 11 with an average of 3 articles per day. Similar to the discussions on Islam and Muslims, the politics of fear articles were discussed the most during the closing week of the campaign, reaching a peak on May 3 with an alarming 22.45 per cent (n=11) in total. The fear narratives were fluctuated throughout the period but were steadily published on April 26 (n=7) and 28 and May 2 (n= 6 for each day in total, see Graph 5.7)

Table 5.4 below further cross tabulates the primary and secondary macro-topics. Immediately noticeable from the table is the disparity between observed and expected frequencies. If there were no relationship between the two cross tabulated variables, there would be no difference between the observed and expected counts in the table. But it is evident that there is a lower-than expected frequency of racial and ethnic relations and Islam and Muslims and the politics of fear discussions.

Table 5.4: Primary macro-topics versus Secondary macro-topics

Primary Macro-topics * Secondary Macro-topics Crosstabulation								
Primary Macro-topics		Secondary Macro-topics						
		Racial and ethnic relations	Negative campaign strategy	Ad Baculum: the politics of fear	Islam and Muslims	Election	Political parties/coalition	Others
Racial and ethnic relations	Count	11	0	2	1	6	11	0
	Expected Count	2.9	1.5	2.3	1.9	12.5	9.3	.6
	% of Total	2.9%	0.0%	0.5%	0.3%	1.6%	2.9%	0.0%
Negative campaign strategy	Count	1	6	0	2	7	3	0
	Expected Count	1.8	.9	1.4	1.2	7.6	5.7	.3
	% of Total	0.3%	1.6%	0.0%	0.5%	1.8%	0.8%	0.0%
Ad Baculum: the politics of fear	Count	3	1	7	2	3	2	0
	Expected Count	1.7	.9	1.4	1.1	7.2	5.4	.3
	% of Total	0.8%	0.3%	1.8%	0.5%	0.8%	0.5%	0.0%
Islam and Muslims	Count	4	3	6	6	1	11	0
	Expected Count	2.9	1.5	2.3	1.9	12.5	9.3	.6
	% of Total	1.0%	0.8%	1.6%	1.6%	0.3%	2.9%	0.0%
Election	Count	3	4	3	3	73	28	1
	Expected Count	10.8	5.7	8.7	7.2	46.3	34.4	2.1
	% of Total	0.8%	1.0%	0.8%	0.8%	19.0%	7.3%	0.3%
Political parties/coalition	Count	13	5	10	10	57	53	4
	Expected Count	14.2	7.5	11.4	9.5	61.2	45.4	2.8
	% of Total	3.4%	1.3%	2.6%	2.6%	14.8%	13.8%	1.0%
Others	Count	1	0	1	0	8	7	2
	Expected Count	1.8	.9	1.4	1.2	7.6	5.7	.3
	% of Total	0.3%	0.0%	0.3%	0.0%	2.1%	1.8%	0.5%
Total	Count	36	19	29	24	155	115	7
	Expected Count	36.0	19.0	29.0	24.0	155.0	115.0	7.0
	% of Total	9.4%	4.9%	7.5%	6.2%	40.3%	29.9%	1.8%

Table 5.5 cross tabulates the newspapers with the main focus of article to further examine the different attention given to different issues in the sampled newspapers.

Table 5.5: Editorials and op-eds per focus versus language

Paper (Including its Sunday edition)					
	Language	The main focus of the article			Total
		Policy	Politicians/ Candidates	Election	
Utusan/Mingguan Malaysia	Malay	6	68	31	105
		21.4 %	35.1%	22.5%	29.2%
Berita Harian/Ahad	Malay	12	81	46	139
		42.9%	41.7%	33.3%	38.6%
New Straits/Sunday Times	English	6	26	27	59
		21.4%	13.4%	19.6%	16.4%
The/Sunday Star	English	4	19	34	57
		14.3%	9.8%	24.6%	15.8%
Total		28	194	138	360
		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

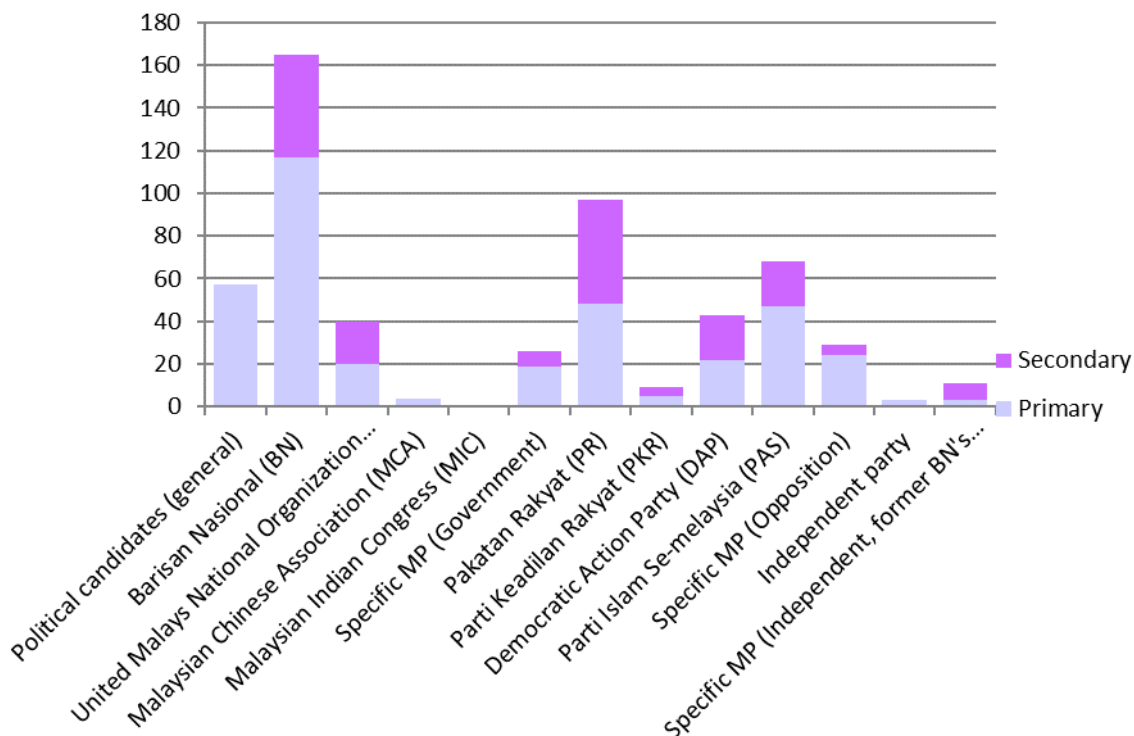
Berita Harian and its Sunday edition, *Berita Harian Ahad* published the highest number of articles over the period as a whole. Therefore, compared to other newspapers, the number of articles for each category was expectedly higher. It is surprising however that the number of texts discussing the politicians and political candidates was more frequent in *Berita Harian/Ahad* than in *Utusan/Mingguan Malaysia* (n= 81 versus n=68). Especially when the latter is known more as the unofficial mouthpiece of its political master, the ruling party, the United Malays National Organization (UMNO) (see Chapter 4). It is also worth noting that print Malay dailies in general contributed more than triple the number of articles on the politicians and candidates than the print English language newspapers (n=194 versus n=45). At this stage, it could be attributed to the fact that the readership of the English-language press goes beyond the ethnic Malay electorate and, therefore, had to cater to the needs of Malaysians in general. It is also interesting to speculate whether these figures reflect how the target Malay speaking audience are presumed to consume the news. In order to establish

whether the observed relationship was significant, a chi-square tests which are the standard statistical test for independence was performed on the crosstabulation above. The result displays that, the relationship between the two variables in Table 5.5 was found to be statistically highly significant.

5.2.3 Who received the limelight?

The discussions on the GE13 also reveal a substantial difference in the coverage of the rival politicians. Graph 5.8 below shows that the ruling coalition⁵⁵ enjoyed the greatest amount of attention devoted to the coalition itself, its parties and members combined for 42.68 per cent (n= 236⁵⁶) of all the coverage examined. It is interesting, however, that the newspapers preferred to discuss the government most as a coalition (29.84 per cent, n=165) instead of as isolating parties that form the coalition.

Graph 5.8: Primary/secondary appearance by coalition/party



⁵⁵ Ruling coalition: Barisan Nasional (BN), United Malays National Organization (UMNO), Malaysian Chinese Association (MCA) and Malaysian Indian Congress (MIC)

⁵⁶ Total primary and secondary appearance.

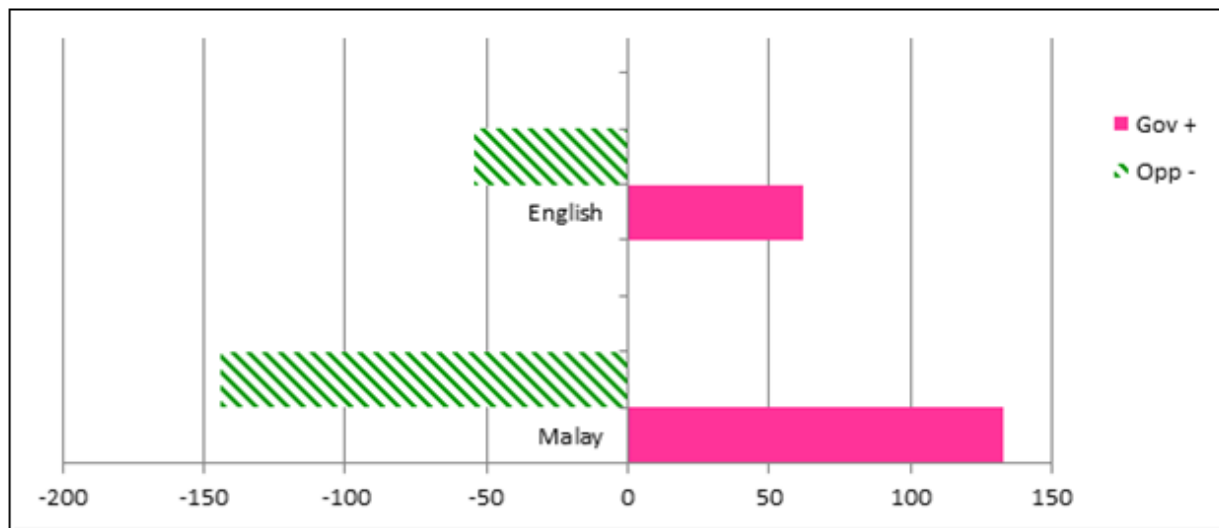
Therefore, although UMNO, a Malay dominant political party was still relatively a significant party in BN as it appeared as much as 7.23 per cent (n=40) in the editorial and column stories; the Indian and Chinese dominant parties (MIC and MCA) were virtually not exist in the narrative, accounting for less than 1 per cent of the coverage. Assuming they were all inclusively BN may initially appear to be in line with the idea of 1Malaysia⁵⁷ professed by the prime minister Najib Razak who wanted national reconciliation. The irony, however, lies in *Utusan Malaysia*: a day after the GE13, where the ruling BN suffered its worst-ever results, *Utusan* published a highly racist feature article with the headline ‘*Apa lagi Cina mahu?*’ (What else do the Chinese want?) (Zulkiflee Bakar, May 6, 2013). The article accused Chinese Malaysians of trying to overthrow the Malay-dominated government and labelling them ‘ungrateful’. The paper’s unapologetic race-baiting was surprisingly defenced by the prime minister Najib Razak himself in the article by conveniently scapegoating the Chinese for the coalition’s poor performance using the phrase ‘Chinese tsunami’ in the wee hours of May 6 after all the results were in.

On the other hand, the case is not similar with the opposition alliance. Most of the times, they were referred as distinctly Parti Keadilan Rakyat (PKR), Democratic Action Party (DAP) or Parti Islam Semalaysia (PAS) as an individual entity, combined to account for about 22 per cent (n= 120) of the newspapers narrative compared to still a smaller 17.54 per cent (n= 97) as Pakatan Rakyat (PR/People’s Pact). It almost seems like particularly pitting PAS against DAP as a result of their divergent stance on various issues and constant internal bickering between DAP-PAS in public, particularly on ‘*hudud*’, Islamic penalties pushed by PAS and DAP decision to contest under PAS banner. Overall, although the opposition coalition⁵⁸ had a considerable margin in terms of the amount they were mentioned in the print newspapers, it comes to no surprise to learn that those were mostly showing them in a bad light. Graph 5.9 below demonstrates the number.

⁵⁷ 1Malaysia is an ongoing programme designed by Malaysian Prime Minister Najib Tun Razak on 16 September 2010, calling for the cabinet, government agencies, and civil servants to more strongly emphasise ethnic harmony, national unity, and efficient governance.

⁵⁸ The political coalition was formed by the Parti Keadilan Rakyat (PKR/ People's Justice Party), Democratic Action Party (DAP), and Parti Islam Se-Malaysia (PAS/ Pan-Malaysian Islamic Party)

Graph 5.9: Number of positive/negative comments about coalition/party, per language



The articles written in English⁵⁹ and Malay⁶⁰ editorials and columns were virtually identical. The comments discussed in the Malay dailies in general contributed more than half the number of positive articles about the ruling government (n= 133, 54.5 per cent) and in contrast, more than half the number of negative articles were about the opposition coalition (n= 144, 59 per cent). In reverse, more than a third (39.71 per cent, n=54) of the discussions in the English dailies were negative about the opposition compared to 45.59 per cent that were positive about the government- almost a 1-to-3 difference.

Throughout the 15-day period studied, editorials and columns had already winnowed the battle to mostly five candidates and offered readers relatively little information about their records or what they would do if elected. Instead, attentions were given on heated rhetoric and personal attacks, leading to high ratio of sentimental coverage. Graph 5.10 below reveals a generally strong show of support by the print newspapers for the ruling coalition candidates⁶¹. Positive ratings of 54 (73.98 per cent) and the absent of the negative comment about the prime minister Najib Razak for instance are not far from constituting a mirror image of the tone

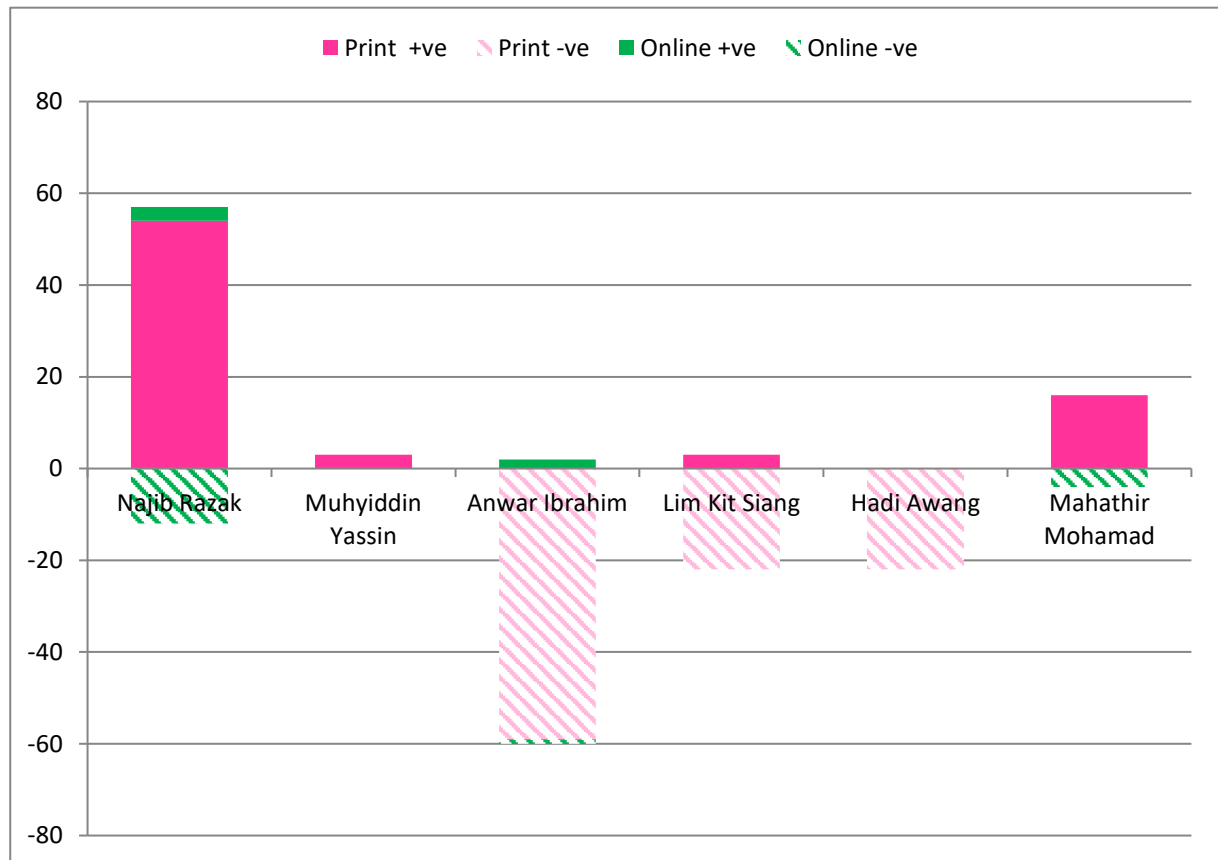
⁵⁹ English dailies (including their Sunday edition): *New Straits Times (and New Sunday Times)*, *The Star (and Sunday Star)*

⁶⁰ Malay dailies (including their Sunday edition): *Utusan Malaysia (and Mingguan Malaysia)*, *Berita Harian (and Berita Harian Ahad)*

⁶¹ Najib Razak and his deputy, Muhyiddin Yassin.

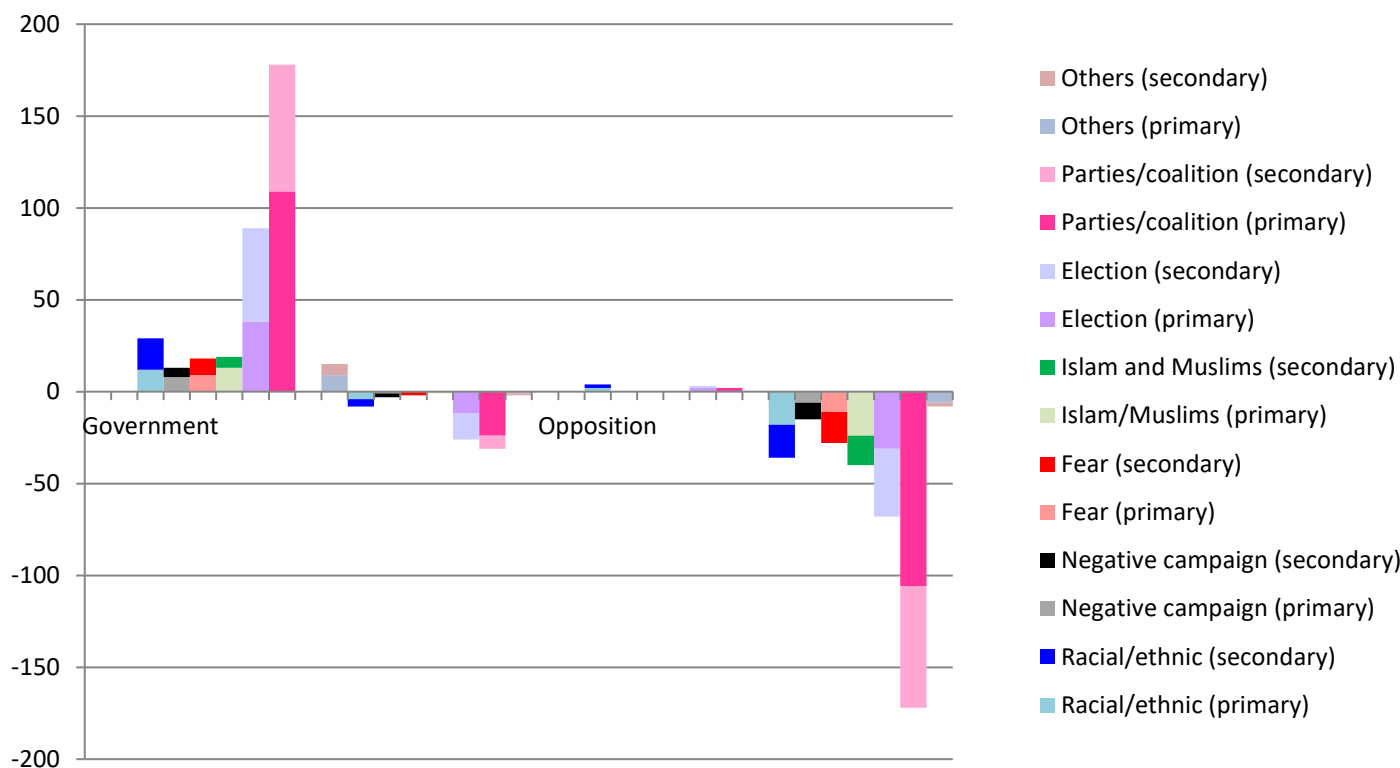
written about the opposition leader, Anwar Ibrahim (n= 59, 55.66 per cent negative, 0 positive). Surprisingly Lim Kit Siang, the leader of Democratic Action Party (DAP) enjoyed three positive articles (4.11 per cent) in the mainstream newspapers. But compared to 22 articles (20.75 per cent) which were negative, it is evident that overall, the government was more favoured than the opposition in the editorials and columns narrative in mainstream newspapers. This discursive dimension of manipulation by focusing on the typical polarized structures of positive self-presentation and negative other presentation expressing ideological conflict is one of the aspects that will be discussed further in the qualitative chapters (Chapter 6, 7, 8 and 9).

Graph 5.10: Individual politician appearance in the editorial/column



Graph 5.11 shows a clear and almost mirror-image ideological divide between the positive and negative comments about the government and the opposition in the primary and secondary macro-topics narratives:

Graph 5.11: Positive and negative comments about government/opposition coalition versus primary and secondary macro-topics



Editorials and columns generally agree with each other in their treatment of the government and opposition in roughly equal measure, with more editorials and columns more positive about the government and the opposition, the reverse. Table 5.6 below breaks down the crosstabulated positive and negative comments about government or/and opposition coalition with primary and secondary macro-topics into per newspaper:

Table 5.6: Positive and negative comments about government/opposition coalition versus primary and secondary macro-topic

	Racial/ethnic				Negative campaign				Fear				Islam/Muslims				Election				Parties/coalition				Others			
	G+	O+	G-	O-	G+	O+	G-	O-	G+	O+	G-	O-	G+	O+	G-	O-	G+	O+	G-	O-	G+	O+	G-	O-	G+	O+	G-	O-
News paper	%				%				%				%				%				%				%			
	Frequency				Frequency				Frequency				Frequency				Frequency				Frequency				Frequency			
UM	9.5	0.0	0.0	8.1	19.4	0.0	0.0	19.4	14.6	0.0	0.0	27.1	13.6	0.0	0.0	22.0	9.7	0.0	0.0	8.6	13.6	0.0	0.0	13.6	20.0	0.0	0.0	12.0
	7	0	0	6	6	0	0	6	7	0	0	13	8	0	0	13	18	0	0	16	51	0	0	51	5	0	0	3
MM *S	4.1	0.0	0.0	8.1	9.7	0.0	0.0	9.7	4.2	0.0	0.0	6.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	3.4	2.2	0.0	0.0	2.2	1.9	0.0	0.0	2.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	4.0
	3	0	0	6	3	0	0	3	2	0	0	3	0	0	0	2	4	0	0	4	7	0	0	8	0	0	0	1
BH	17.6	0.0	0.0	16.2	6.5	0.0	0.0	9.7	16.7	0.0	0.0	20.8	15.3	0.0	0.0	28.8	9.7	0.0	0.0	7.5	14.1	0.0	0.0	13.8	24.0	0.0	0.0	8.0
	13	0	0	12	2	0	0	3	8	0	0	10	9	0	0	17	18	0	0	14	53	0	0	52	6	0	0	2
BHA *S	2.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	2.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	3.4	0.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.1	0.0	0.0	0.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	2	1	0	0	0	4	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
NST	4.1	0.0	0.0	9.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	6.5	2.1	0.0	0.0	2.1	1.7	0.0	0.0	10.2	14.5	0.0	0.0	9.7	7.2	0.0	0.0	6.1	4.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	3	0	0	7	0	0	0	2	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	6	27	0	0	18	27	0	0	23	1	0	0	0
NST *S	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.1	0.0	0.0	1.1	1.9	0.0	0.0	1.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	2	7	0	0	5	0	0	0	0
TS	1.4	0.0	0.0	2.7	3.2	0.0	0.0	3.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	8.6	0.0	0.0	6.5	5.9	0.0	0.0	5.3	12.0	0.0	0.0	8.0
	1	0	0	2	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	16	0	0	12	22	0	0	20	3	0	0	2
SS *S	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	3.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.1	0.0	0.0	0.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	0	2	0	0	0	0
Total	39.2	2.7	10.8	47.3	41.9	0.0	9.7	48.4	37.5	0.0	4.2	58.3	30.5	0.0	1.7	67.8	47.8	6.3	14.0	36.6	47.3	5.2	8.6	43.9	60.0	0.0	8.6	32.0
	29	2	8	35	13	0	3	15	18	0	2	28	18	0	1	40	89	3	26	68	178	2	31	165	15	0	2	8
	100.00				100				100.0				100.0				100.0				100.0				100.0			
	74				31				48				59				186				376				25			

Notes: G+ = Government positive, O+ = Opposition positive, G- = Government negative, O- = Opposition negative

*Utusan Malaysia (UM), Berita Harian (BH), New Straits Times (NST), The Star (TS)***S= Sunday edition: Mingguan Malaysia (MM), Berita Harian Ahad (BHA), New Sunday Times (NST), Sunday Star (SS)*

In *Berita Harian*⁶², the substantially high negative comments toward the opposition were mostly about Islam and Muslims issue (28.8 per cent) and the politics of fear (20.8 per cent), combined to account for over half of the narratives. On the other hand, 16.2 per cent were about racial and ethnic issues and 13.8 per cent attacking the opposition's coalition and parties- a difference of only 2.4 percentage points. That stands in significant contrast to the positive comments about the government, in which the overall negative stories accounted for 49.77 per cent, the government gained mostly from the discussion on the other marginalized topics (24 per cent), among others, youth and women in politics and what was even more pronounced was the topic of 'gratitude' where Malaysians were reminded to be grateful in order to preserve stability in the country. 16.7 per cent of the positive discussions were about the politics of fear, most prominent after the 17.6 per cent racial and ethnic discussions.

One issue that trumped all the others in *Utusan Malaysia*'s⁶³ negative comment about the opposition was about fear, accounted for a disturbing 27.1 per cent of the narratives. Issue related to Islam and Muslims had been relentlessly negative toward the opposition, although to a lesser degree as in *Berita Harian*, the 22 per cent was significant. Criticism about the negative campaign directed at the opposition coalition was ironically the highest compared to the other newspapers (19.4 per cent) while 13.6 per cent attacked the opposition coalition and parties. Last but not least, criticism towards the opposition was about racial and ethnic relations, 8.1 percent- half of the percentage in *Berita Harian*. On the other hand, positive comments given to the government was also mostly about the marginalized topics (20 per cent) as in case with *Berita Harian*. However, unlike *Berita Harian*, 19.4 percent of positive comments about the government while discussing the negative campaign of the election was more like killing two birds with one stone. Together, stories praising the government on the politics of fear (14.6 per cent), Islam and Muslim (13.6 per cent) and racial and ethnic relations (9.5 percent) accounted for a significant 36.3 per cent.

⁶² *Berita Harian* had the highest number of negative comments about the opposition (50.23 per cent, n=110) while 49.77 per cent (n=109) were positive comments government (see Graph 5.11)

⁶³ *Utusan Malaysia*'s negative comments about the opposition accounted for 51.43 per cent (n = 108) while 48.57 per cent (n=102) were positive comments about the government (See Graph 5.11)

On the other hand, in the *New Straits Times*,⁶⁴ the opposition was mostly criticized in Islam and Muslims discussions. Although in a lesser degree than in the Malay dailies, the 10.2 per cent still flagged a significant evident especially what closely followed after election (9.7 per cent) was the considerably margin of negative comments in racial and ethnic relation, accounted for about one fifth of the stories (9.5 per cent). While the *NST* focused on praising the government in election issues (14.5 per cent), *The Star*⁶⁵ on the other hand focused on criticizing the opposition (6.5 per cent). Together, racial and ethnic relations, negative campaign and other marginalized topics accounted for 13.9 per cent of the narrative.

5.3. Summary

The findings have shown that the discussion on issues (i.e. policy, manifesto, etc.) were just over 10 per cent as in the case with the voting processes. Instead, the focus of the Malaysian mainstream editorials and columns during the GE13 as quantitatively indicated in this chapter was heavily gravitated towards the political parties and candidates.

However, contrary to Ross's (2004) *Elections Reporting Handbook* (see Chapter 1, Section 1.2.), the quantitative findings have shown that not every party or candidate had the impartial limelight. The political stance of the Malay- and English-language editorials and columns during the GE13 campaign was evinced. The quantitative analyses flag up certain crucial points that are detrimental to Malaysian democracy. There are four key issues in this chapter:

- Firstly, praises of the government; be it about their economic endeavours or contributions in the past, were glaringly sung.

Genuine and constructive criticism of the government and its developmental policies and any useful criticism and legitimate dissent were absent perhaps due to the implementation of laws such as Security Offences (Special Measures) Act 2012 (SOSMA Act 2012), Sedition Act (SA), Official Secret Act (OSA), Printing and Publications Act (PPPA). This

⁶⁴ New Straits Times' negative comments about the opposition accounted for 48.72 per cent (n = 57) while 51.28 per cent (n=60) were positive comments about the government (See Graph 6.2)

⁶⁵ The Star's negative comments about the opposition accounted for 46.25 per cent (n = 80) while 53.75 per cent (n=43) were positive comments about the government (See Graph 6.2)

is thus acts in contrast with the idea of developmental journalism and its key elements discussed in the previous chapters (see Chapter 1, section 1.3.1.).

- Secondly, the narratives about the opposition coalition often resulted being depicted in the most negative light possible which created a credibility shortfall.

This pattern of coverage also indicates a narrowing of the democratic space for in depth discussions on issues that would involve not only the politicians but also the ordinary citizens who were about to exercise their democratic rights to vote in the GE13.

- Thirdly, discussion on manifesto and policy details is virtually absent as the narratives focused more on political impressions than information.

Ideas, issue positions, candidate qualifications and policy proposals were backgrounded if not casted as secondary. The focus on the politics over substance undermined the ability of citizens to learn from the opinionated pages and to reach informed decisions in the GE13.

- Fourth, race, ethnic and religion-related issues were prominently discussed. There was also a substantially high number of the politics of fear narratives.

This speaks in some interesting way (which I will explore more in the subsequent chapters) to the way topics of racial and ethnic relations, Islam and Muslims and the politics of fear being foregrounded in the mainstream editorials and columns during the GE13. The following chapter 6, 7, 8 and 9 are generally aimed at showing how certain ideological inputs were weaved into these editorials and columns, i.e. the subtle approach used that was designed to promote the dominant coalition party's hegemony over the society through the racial and religion sentiments.

Chapter 6

Discourse-historical analysis of Malay language editorials and columns

6.1. Introduction

In this and the three ensuing chapters, I analyse ideological workings in mainstream editorials and columns or, let me call it – following Wodak (2015), the *micro-politics* of mainstream editorials and columns. The analysis of ideological forms and contents in the texts involves explication of how the social world and its social actors are constituted. The selection of texts was based on the most frequently recurring themes identified in Chapter 5. Across the sample as a whole (n= 360), about 20 per cent (n=64) of the texts discussed racial and ethnic relations issues, 15.3 per cent (n=55) was on Islam and Muslims issues while 12.5 per cent (n=45) was on the politics of fear. This chapter in particular presents the findings of discourse-historical analyses of selected op-eds in Malay-language newspapers, *Utusan Malaysia* and *Berita Harian*, as well as in their Sunday editions, *Mingguan Malaysia* and *Berita Ahad*. I will focus more on two discursive strategies, namely referential and predication strategies, in this chapter, while in the following chapter (which also deals with these publications), I will be examining the argumentation strategies of the editorials and columns. This chapter explores how present mainstream editorials and columns (re)produce the ideological construct of the country's colonial origins discussed in Chapter 3 by emphasizing a macro-semantic strategy for categorising coalitional groups: with the government positively portrayed as the in-group (6.2–6.3) and the opposition as the stigmatised out-group (6.4–6.5) during the GE13 campaign. The findings show that there is a strong support for the government, which is articulated through the discursive strategies explained in detail in Chapter 4.

6.2. Positive representation of the government

6.2.1. Referential Strategy

In Malay language editorials and columns, a positive representation of the government is achieved through references to the multiracial/ethnic Barisan Nasional (BN) as a coalition. And even though the BN government had 13-member parties contesting GE13, reference

is only made to the Malay majority party, United Malays National Organization (UMNO), as well as to their political leaders, particularly the prime minister-cum-UMNO president, Najib Razak, and his predecessor, Mahathir Mohamad. Representing the government as one coalition instead of as individual parties in it signifies *unity* among multiracial/ ethnic party members. However, the sole focus on UMNO in the absence of other member parties, while positively representing the government, may also contradictorily signify the *superiority* of certain social groups, i.e. the Malays (“*orang Melayu*”) and UMNO, over other races in the country and parties in the coalition (see also discussion in Chapters 2 and 3). Such a contradiction, ‘multiracial but Malay-centric’, is far from being for appearances or an accident of discourse in the GE13 campaign, it echoes Hodge and Kress’s (1988) concept of *ideological complex*, defined as:

...a functionally related set of contradictory versions of the world, coercively imposed by one social group on another on behalf of its own distinctive interests or subversively offered by another social group in attempts at resistance in its own interests. (p.3)

Therefore, while positively representing the government coalition in a positive light within that coalition, the Malay ‘centre’ stands for the rest and is seen to be at the heart of the nation. Consider first the nominal strategy invoked and how the government is positively represented in Table 6 during the GE13 campaign:

Table 6: Referential strategies in Malay-language editorials and columns for positive construction of the government

Discursive strategy	Objective	Categories
Referential/ Nomination: how the government was named	Discursive construction of the government	<p>References to the government coalition and/or political party: <i>Barisan Nasional (BN), United Malay National Organization (UMNO), i.e. the backbone of the BN</i></p> <p>References to Malay political leaders: <i>Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak, Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad</i></p> <p>References to the people: <i>Rakyat, Malaysians</i></p> <p>References to the nation:</p>

		<p><i>Malaysia</i></p> <p>References to the Malay/‘Malay’ nation: <i>our people/race (orang kita, i.e. Malays), our nation (negara kita), our country (negara kita), our progeny (anak cucu kita), our children (anak-anak kita), our religion (agama kita, i.e. Islam)</i></p> <p>References to Malay/Muslim rights: <i>our rights (hak kita), Malay rights, Malays’ special privileges, the rights of the Malay language, Islam as the official religion</i></p> <p>Pronouns: <i>We, Us, Our, Ours</i></p>
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Table 6 suggests that referential strategies in Malay-language editorials and columns mainly focus on the ego-, racio-/ ethno-centric views by referring to one particular race/ ethnic social group, i.e. ‘the Malays’ (“*orang Melayu*”), while positively representing the government. This belief in the inherent superiority of the Malays is racio-/ ethno-centric, in the sense that it focuses on a “we group” where the in-group is at the centre and all outgroups are implicitly judged in relation to it, as shall be illustrated through the discussion on predication strategies which follows. The in-group nurtures attachment and loyalty, in this case, the presumed shared race/ ethnicity between the authors of Malay-language op-eds who are Malays themselves, Malay political leaders and Malay readers. This brings us to the notion of racio-/ethno-nationalism, in which they claim some degree of self-government on the ground that they are united by a sense of solidarity emanating from one or more shared features that make it a ‘nation’. Kecmanovic (1996) maintains that, in understanding racio-/ethno-nationalism:

to [racio-centrists] (ethno-centrists etc.) the [racial] (or ethnic group) is the ultimate point of reference for social, political, and all other loyalties and actions ... and to elicit and promote conformity – enforcement behaviour ... and collective intolerance, to engage in boundary-defining and contrast heightening. (p. vii)

Kecmanovic's (1996) point will become clearer in the following discussion in this section and in the negative representation of the opposition in Section 6.5, where Malays and non-Malay groups are further dichotomized.

The representation of the government is also achieved through references to ordinary Malaysians or citizens, i.e. "*rakyat*", to represent the national identity. But as discussed in Chapter 3, the term "*rakyat*" is a paradox, in the sense that it is inclusive when it refers to Malaysian citizens and exclusive when it excludes Chinese and Indians at the same time. "Rakyat" is synonymous with the term "*bumiputeras*" (see Online Institute Dictionary, Kamus DBP, 2018), i.e. "sons of the soil", essentially referring to the Malays on the Malaysia Peninsula and indigenous groups in the east Malaysian states of Sarawak and Sabah, while the Chinese and Indians, who are by right Malaysian citizens too, are regarded as migrant communities, even those who were born locally. As the "*bumiputera*" principle recognises the "special position" of Malays provided for in the Constitution of Malaysia (Article 153, see Chapter 3), in the case of Malay-language editorials and columns, the noun, "*rakyat*" is, semantically, exclusive (as opposed to inclusive) and is used to indicate solidarity with one's own group as opposed to excluding 'others' from this constructed collective.

This imagery of Us-versus-Them in Malay-language editorials and columns, which operates on different levels – government and opposition and within the coalition between Malays and non-Malays – is further constructed through references to the 'nation' or what Anderson (1983) describes as an 'imagined community' based on shared race/ ethnicity. In this case, the imagined Malays community (or Malay nation) is mentally constructed in the minds of those who identify with it. It is imagined in the sense that it is not based on direct interpersonal relations. Members of a nation cannot possibly know all fellow members, yet they have the feeling of belonging to the same national group, hence a feeling of sharing a collective identity (see Jenkins and Sofos, 1996, p. 11; see also de Cillia, Reisigl and Wodak, 1999). This suggests the role that Malay-language editorials and columns play in discursively constituting a sense of belongingness through positive representation of the government. This homogenous in-group then introduces an imaginary referent subsequently picked up by the strategic use of pronouns referring to *Us*, particularly '*kata ganti nama pertama, kita*' or the first-person pronoun 'we', including all of its dialect forms (inclusive "we" and exclusive "we", see also Filiminova, 2005); this is a key

characteristic of the language used by Malay-language op-eds throughout the texts to refer positively to the government.

However, within the context of election campaigns discussed in Chapter 1, it is worth acknowledging that the deictic term ‘we’ can be exclusive and inclusive, and it can contain quite broad means of categorization because of its inherent properties, ‘we’ may have different references in different contexts (see de Cillia et al., 1999; Petersoo, 2007). In the Malay-language op-eds, positive representations of the government during the GE13 campaign were achieved through references to ‘we’ in the sense that it constructs ‘we-groups’ outside of tropes, it also pronominally expresses “assimilation, unification and possessiveness” (p.164). With the employment of ‘we’, editors and columnists can:

...unite [themselves] and [their] audience into a single ‘community sharing a common destiny’ by letting fall into oblivion all differences in origin, confession, class and lifestyle with a simple ‘we’ ... This ‘community sharing a common destiny’ may be bound by different degrees of intimacy and familiarity: from the common economic interests of ‘society as a whole’ to the emotional needs of a family-type community. (Vollmert, 1989, p. 123 in Wodak, de Cillia, Reisigl and Liebhart, 2009, p. 45)

For example, in the Malay-language editorials and columns, there were many instances of metonymic ‘we’ (*kita*):

- (1) Jaga kepentingan diri **kita** dahulu sebelum menjaga kepentingan orang lain.
(Hussaini, 27 April 2013, *Utusan Malaysia*)/ [We, Malays must] [P]rotect our own interest first before other people’s.

In (1), the use of *kita* (we) includes the author of the text (i.e. editor or columnist), those present, and other third persons not present, allowing the author to persuade the reader that the narrative is for all members of the imagined community. There are also synecdochal or paternalistic uses of ‘we’ instead of ‘you’, “functions linguistically to obscure or trivialize a limited degree of self-determination on the part of the person addressed, that is, it

reflects an asymmetrical power relation between the interactants which it thus tries to make more bearable” (Wodak et al., 2009, p. 46). This is very typical in the context of tutelage and frequent in directives, as in (2):

- (2) Mari **kita** beri undi kepada kumpulan yang berjasa (Syukri, 29 April 2013, *Utusan Malaysia*)/ Let us vote for those who have done a lot for us.

In (2), it seems to be speaker-inclusive, but it actually excludes the speaker and refers solely to ‘you’. In addition, the historical ‘we’ expands ‘I’, ‘you’ and ‘we’ to include those who are there in the present and those who have died. It is a way for the speaker to “participate vicariously by linguistic annexation” in past achievements (Wodak et al., 2009, p. 46). For example:

- (3) **Kita** sudah bersama UMNO sejak merdeka (Zainor, 22 April 2013, *Berita Harian*)/ We have been with UMNO since Independence

As (3) illustrates, historical ‘we’ is often used in Malay-language op-eds to justify the argument about the government being viewed positively because they have a long track record and to reflect that they are the guardians of the nation’s past and, hence, future, as will be discussed further in the next section. And finally, as a person for the country, ‘we’ is a mechanism used to refer to the actual nation as people; a ‘we’ body or national body (Wodak et al., 2009), is an important mechanism in constructing the imagined community. Such use of the collective ‘we’ instead of “I” detaches the government from, if any, its own personal agenda: from thinking in terms of personal identity (“I”) to thinking about the self in terms of a group identity (“we”) through depersonalization. Simultaneously, this is also a manifestation of altruism, i.e. “moral behaviour emanates not solely from self-regarding concerns but also from concern for something beyond or outside the individual, something “other”-than-self” (Teske, 1997). Thus, this redefines self-related terms: it is about collective self-esteem, collective self-efficacy and collective self-interests, rather than personal self-esteem, personal self-efficacy and personal self-interests: “this is not just for me (the government), but for us all (government + people [the Malays])” (p. 72).

Meanwhile, its corresponding possessive pronoun, *apa yang kita punya* (what is ours), which in Malay retains its full form, e.g. *negara kita* (our country > ours), implies a sense

of collective ownership claims: *our* people/race (*orang kita*, i.e. Malays), *our* nation (*negara kita*), *our* country (*negara kita*), *our* progeny (*anak cucu kita*), *our* children (*anak-anak kita*) and *our* religion (*agama kita*, i.e. *Islam*), that are established and maintained in relation to others: “Ours and not yours”. This helps “people to define themselves, to feel a sense of home, to have a purpose and direction in life, to feel strong and powerful, and to have a sense of collective continuity across time” (Verkuyten and Martinovic, 2017, p. 1026). Pierce and Jussila (2011) refer to: ““ours”, a small word, arising out of shared events, when collectively experienced and recognized by a group of people who experience themselves as “us”, it is (...) capable of binding people together and controlling their behaviour in pursuit of a common cause” (p. 827). Verkuyten and Martinovic (2017) further explain that collective ownership “involves a particular group of community that has the perceived entitlement or rights” (p. 1021). Collective ownership adds something to whom “we” are, which is, I argue, a powerful justification for what “we” rightfully can do with what is “ours”. This again proposes the schema of Malay privilege discussed in Chapter 3, a mental representation that bundles together the conceptual division between Malays (or “Bumiputeras”) and non-Malays (“non-Bumiputeras”), and notions about Malays as the original, majority or “definitive people” (see also Mahathir Mohamad, 1970, pp. 124–7), along with the sense of entitlement or rightful claim to some class of distinctive benefits. As ownership implies rights, this also explains the rights referred to in legitimating the government, in Malay-language op-eds, only revolving around rights that grant advantages only to Malays, i.e. *Malays’ special privileges*, *the right of the Malay language* and *Islam as the official religion*, rights that echo the concept of ‘*ketuanan Melayu*’ (Malay supremacy; *tuan* literally means masters in the Malay-language, see Chapter 3) that must be asserted, marked and defended, as will be demonstrated in what follows.

6.2.2. Predicational strategies

The following predicational strategies of representation of the government in Malay-language editorials and columns describe the government positively as one that has a proven record (the Reliable), one that fights for our benefit and rights and protects our religion and race (the Protector), one who is responsible for taking care of all races (the Responsible), one who has *berjasa* (one who has done good deeds), one who is committed

to change. Consider first how the positive presentation of the government is continued through the use of main predication themes identified in the table below. While these thematic classifications are quite broad and may overlap in several cases, it seems appropriate to discuss the general predication qualities of Malay-language editorials and columns in terms of such inclusive thematic categories:

Table 7: Predication strategies in Malay-language editorials and columns on positive representation of the government

Discursive strategy	Objectives	Content categories
Predicational strategy: how the government is described	Discursive construction and legitimization of Self	<p>“BN/UMNO” [The RELIABLE], “WE” has a proven record</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>has governed in the complex reality of a multi-racial and multi-religious country for so long</i> - <i>has succeeded in bringing the country towards the development of a good economy and education system</i> - <i>has been empathetic towards the needy</i> - <i>has made Islam spread well into institutions and organizations</i> - <i>the party that bored through thorns and mines during the early stages of independence</i> - <i>has continued to make great sacrifices for the people</i> - <i>since the old days until now, our leadership has succeeded in maintaining stability and peace without any major issues</i> - <i>is capable of delivering what has been listed (in the manifesto)</i> - <i>is trusted by the people</i> <p>“BN/UMNO” [THE CARER], “WE” are responsible to take care of all races</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>have done the best to guarantee the rights and stability of the people in this country</i> - <i>are not nationalisist. We take care of every race in this country</i> - <i>provide a balanced space for the non-Malay community</i> - <i>listen to everyone without discriminating according to their religion, background or status</i> - <i>are led by brilliant leaders that make living in a multi-religious environment peaceful.</i>

		<p>“BN/UMNO” [THE PROTECTOR]. “WE” fight for our benefits and rights and protect our religion and race</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>make the rights of Malays, the Malay language and Islam clear in our manifesto.</i> - <i>fight for our [Malays’] benefits and rights</i> - <i>are the reason why the Malays can hold important positions in government and private companies</i> - <i>are the reason why Islam is protected</i> - <i>have dignified Islam</i> - <i>have made Malaysia an exemplary Muslim country</i> <p>“BN/UMNO” [THE HONOURABLE] who have <i>berjasa</i> (done noble deeds and great works to help and benefit us)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>have done a lot for the people</i> - <i>the reason why the people enjoy living in prosperity</i> <p>“BN/UMNO” [THE NEOTERIC], “WE” are committed to change</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>are pro-change</i> - <i>allow space for transformation in this country</i>
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6.2.2.1. The reliable (one with a proven record)

On a more macro-legitimatory level, the Malay-language editorials and columns boast about the performance of the BN and UMNO government. Boasting about one’s performance, according to Chilton (2004, p. 46), is one of the strategies to establish a claim to rightness, which is a necessary step towards legitimation. The coalition’s achievements as the modernizer of the country in industry and agriculture were foregrounded, citing recent economic growth, infrastructural developments and increased opportunities for higher education as typical examples.⁶⁶ This predication theme attempts to conflate current achievements with glories of the past, which then echoes a rhetoric of

⁶⁶ See, among others, Ainol Amriz Ismail, 26 April 2013, Utusan Malaysia; Azman Anuar, 28 April 2013, Mingguan Malaysia; Ruhainie Ahmad, 29 April 2013, Utusan Malaysia; Veena Rusli, 3 May 2013, Berita Harian.

actuality that views the present as the result of the past and the foundation of the future, as discussed in Chapter 2: “in most respects the future will be like what the past has been” (Aristotle, 350BCE/2004, 1394a 7–9). On the supposition that “we are most fully persuaded when we consider a thing to have been demonstrated” (Aristotle, 350BCE/2004, 1355a 5), the Malay-language op-eds emphasise the discursive qualification of the government, “the one who is reliable, the one who has a proven record”. Consider the excerpts below:

- (4) Barisan Nasional (BN) **telah sekian lama memerintah** dalam realiti masyarakat majmuk yang rumit. UMNO sebagai teras BN **telah berjaya** membawa negara ini bergerak maju ... (Rencana, 28 April 2013, *Mingguan Malaysia*) / Barisan Nasional (BN) has governed in the complex reality of a multi-racial and multi-religious country for so long. UMNO, the backbone of BN has succeeded in developing the country...
- (5) Kita perlu lihat dari dahulu hingga sekarang kepimpinan kita telah **berjaya mengekalkan kestabilan dan keamanan** tanpa sebarang masalah besar (Zainal Rampak, 21 April 2013, *Utusan Malaysia*) / We must see, since the old days until now, that our leadership has succeeded in maintaining stability and peace without any great issues.
- (6) Rakyat yakin apa yang disenarai BN mampu untuk dilaksanakan kerana rekod pentadbiran parti itu sejak 50 tahun lalu ...sudah membuktikannya (Adha Ghazali, 2 May 2013, *Berita Harian*) /Rakyat have faith that BN are capable of delivering what has been listed (in the manifesto) because of the party’s administration record in the past 50 years ... they have proven so.

These three excerpts have two things in common. First, they presuppose proof, demonstrations that the government has been working hard and has been doing what it is expected to do, while implicitly assuming its accomplishments. Second, they suggest in a metaphorical sense a journey, ‘*sekian lama*’ (for so long) (4), ‘*dahulu hingga sekarang*’ (since the old days until now) (5), ‘*sejak 50 tahun lalu*’ (in the past 50 years) (6). The journey implies the passage of time with UMNO and BN that has already lasted for more than 55 years during the GE13 campaign period. References to time (‘*past... now*’,

‘since...55 years ago’) and progress (‘*transformation*’, ‘*development*’) semantically evoke an intense sense of the past, present and future. The temporal dimension here echoes the nation moving through time as a unified community (see Anderson, 1983) which commands such profound emotional legitimacy. In addition, there is also a distinct ideological resonance of a socially placed historical perspective in the columnists’ use of the metaphorical ‘journey’, where its persuasive potential lies in being retrospective. Evidently, it is highly expressive since, according to Charteris-Black (2011), “[Journeys] integrate underlying positive experiences of successful arrival at destinations with the knowledge of what can go wrong ... journey metaphors are rhetorically successful because they rely on rich underlying cognitive patterns and on subliminal associations” (p. 324). A journey involves both positive experiences – in the case of the selected excerpts, such as *transformation*, *development*, *stability*, *peace* and *prosperity* – as well as negative ones. However, the latter are not explicitly mentioned but are made known semantically by considering “the reality of [a] complex multicultural and multi-religious society”.

6.2.2.2. The carer

As a multi-racial, multi-cultural country, the government is also positively represented as taking care of all races to emphasize the government’s inclusivity in Malay-language op-eds. Perhaps, it is in an attempt to garner non-Malays’ support or to win the votes of Malays who feel uncomfortable with the chauvinism of Malay ‘special privileges’. Consider the excerpt below, which starts with an assertion of what BN (and UMNO) is not, i.e., literally, a coalition with a nationalist ideology:

- (7) BN memang *jelas bukan gabungan yang ada ideologi* walaupun orang kata UMNO nasionalis. Tujuan utama BN adalah **menjaga semua kaum di negara ini** (Mona Ahmad, 2 May 2013, Berita Harian) /BN is obviously not a coalition with an ideology even though people say UMNO is nationalist. The main objective of BN is to take care of every race in this country.

While (7) implies the columnist’s attempt to detach the government from being exclusively Malay nationalist to inclusively multi-racial Malaysian nationalist, the

representation of the government as ‘the carer’ of all races also implies a metaphoric paternalism, of the strong and the weak. This paternalistic view, in a sense, marginalizes the people, as the races in (4) are seen as children who need to be ‘taken care’ of by the government. While paternalism focuses on obligations, it assumes the government is beneficent while implying that a third-party intervention is appropriate (see for example Childress, 1984; Beisecker and Beisecker, 2009). A paternalistic state, according to Hardy (2017),

...act[s] as an authoritative father figure to the [assumed] weak and flawed citizens, providing for their care and maintaining order by regulating their behavior. [It] is hierarchical and unequal and aims to protect that status quo by preventing any uprising of the working classes ... It is a key aspect of one-nation conservatism ... [as it includes] a belief that inequality is both natural and desirable ... [as it] implies that there are natural leaders who will form the elite and who will act in a responsible way, as they see fit, rather than acting in a representative way. This put[s] most conservatives in opposition to democracy. (p. 43)

In other words, paternalism implies disparities in power, it focuses on obligations, it assumes the government is beneficent, while considering that third-party intervention is appropriate (see also examples in Childress and Siegler, 1984; Beisecker and Beisecker, 2009). It is premised upon an assumed need for protection and immaturity, which is the antithesis of autonomous action. Since paternalism can be justified where an individual can be said not to be *autonomous* (Le Grand and New, 2015, p.10), to treat an adult like a child, therefore, implies an inherent form of injustice because adults are assumed to be autonomous individuals free from the dictates of another. It disrespects individual autonomy, the moral worth of another person, and rejects any possible political status of that individual as an equal member of society, also excluding them from an adult, public and political world. In the words of Nakata (2015): “where autonomy serves to include citizens, the absence of autonomy equally serves to exclude by legitimizing and maintaining the conditions for paternalistic practices” (p. 21). Such discussion is closely related to the paternalistic policies the government adopted, particularly on the Malaysian media system, that I argued in Chapter 1 after the race riots of 13 May 1969 (see Chapter 3 for further details on the riots).

6.2.2.3. The Protector

Despite the collective political imaginary above, the next predication theme in the positive representation of the government contradicts the previous one. In many instances in Malay-language editorials and columns, although the government is represented as the one who fights for all races, there are no specific mentions of the Chinese or Indians; instead, they remain contained within the genericization of ‘all races’ category. In contrast, Malays are specifically mentioned and always foregrounded. Skey (2013) discusses a similar case of an ethnic majority in terms of hierarchies of belonging that operate in any given nation so that some groups are seen as belonging more than others, and therefore deserve more than others. Consider the extracts below:

- (8) Apa yang dilakukan [oleh kerajaan] ... adalah **yang terbaik untuk menjamin hak** dan kestabilan masyarakat di negara ini (Zainal Rampak, 21 April 2013, *Utusan Malaysia*). What has been done [by the government] ... is the best to guarantee the rights and stability of the people in this country.
- (9) **[H]ak istimewa orang Melayu, Bahasa Melayu dan Islam...** Dalam manifesto Pakatan Rakyat perkara di atas tidak jelas tetapi dalam aku janji **BN** ia jelas (Rencana, 28 April 2013, *Mingguan Malaysia*)/ **[S]pecial** privileges of the Malays, the Malay language and Islam ... This is clearly stated in the BN manifesto, but it is absent from Pakatan Rakyat’s.
- (10) **[U]ntuk UMNO terus memperjuangkan kepentingan dan hak kita** (Mat Lutu, 22 April 2013, *Berita Harian*)/ For UMNO to continue fighting for our benefit and rights.

The assumed Malay proprietorship of the country, as has been argued in Chapter 3 and as has been established in the referential strategy discussed above, makes this predication theme a central one. The government is positively constructed as merely pursuing and protecting ‘our (i.e. the Malays’) rights’ and nothing more, thereby ensuring Malay political primacy among the various races. As part of the deliberative rhetoric within the

context of a general election like GE13, with UMNO's (and BN's) uninterrupted rules since independence in 1957, representing the government as 'the protector' is particularly persuasive. As Rochat (2014) explains, an intrinsic part of the sense of ownership is the possibility of losing control and being dispossessed, because ownership can be challenged, disputed or threatened. Chandra (1979, pp. vii, 1) expresses his concern over the reproduction of the cycle of "Malay protector-protected relationship", that the Malays inherited historically from the Malacca Sultanate era in the 15th century, in the ruling party, UMNO. This relationship between the ruler and the ruled, as argued by Mohd Azizuddin (2009), is "particularly strong within the majority Malay community ... [who have been] reinforced by the deep psychological need for a "protector" to look after the community's interests in the face of the competition from the economically better-off Chinese minority" (p.49), especially after the 13 May 1969 race riots. Abbott (2006) points out that "the fundamental basis of UMNO's role as protector of the Malays is enshrined in the party's constitution (Article 4)" that "the protection of Islam and the Malays constitutes to mediate the political elites' operating philosophies, indeed the fundamental basis" (p. 84). Such a discourse of protection of the Malays is exclusive, in the sense noted by Nair (1997):

...[w]hile Islam is perceived as an integrative instrument in the Malay community, it does not function as an effective symbol of legitimacy for other Malaysians. All symbols of Malay political culture have in fact largely served to reassure Malay dominance but have had [an] alienating effect on Malaysia's non-Malay constituents. (p. 7)

It also creates a state of dependency, as the protector supervises and monitors the protected, which (or who) is dependent on the protector for its assumed sovereign autonomy.⁶⁷ Chandra (1998) argues that this protected-protector relationship is described as one of "neo-feudal psychology":

The protector is averse to any attempt by anyone especially among the protected to question, criticise or challenge his policies and position while the protected is reluctant to evaluate, scrutinise or admonish the protector even when he has erred or is in the wrong. (p.1)

⁶⁷ See for example, Zainal Rampak, 21 April 2013, *Utusan Malaysia*; Hafizahril Hamid, 28 April 2013, *Mingguan Malaysia*.

6.2.2.4. The one who has *berjasa*

The next main predication strategy that features significantly in the Malay-language op-eds as well as English-language op-eds (See Chapter 8) is predication that draw on positive government representation as one that does noble deeds (Malay: *yang berjasa*). UMNO/BN is lexically repeatedly represented as one who was '*berjasa*'. *Kamus Online Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka* (Institute of Language and Literature Online Dictionary, 2007) defines *jasa* (*kata nama*, noun) as *perbuatan yang baik (terhadap negara, manusia dsb)* (good, noble, honourable, unselfish deeds (towards the country, humans etc.)). UMNO/BN good deeds are repetitively described with plenty of detail. For instance, consider (11), below, written by Mat Lutu in *Berita Harian* on 24 April 2013:

(11) **Hujan emas di negeri sendiri**

Siapa yang tak ingat jasa BN dan UMNO? Mat Lutu nak ingatkan orang kita, negara ni sebetulnya hujannya emas, bukan batu. Syukur alhamdulillah. Hasil bumi kita banyak dan kita makmur. Sebab itu ramai orang datang sini. Cari makan kat sini. Ada yang masuk secara haram. Sebab nak rasa nikmat negara bertuah ini. Pembangunan kita pun hebat. Orang kita makin ramai duduk bandar. Kampung pun dah maju, bukan zaman dulu lagi. Berterima kasihlah sikit. (Mat Lutu, *Berita Harian*, 24 April 2013)/ **Gold rains in our own country**

Who does not remember the noble deeds of BN and UMNO? Mat Lutu⁶⁸ wants to remind our people that this country actually rains gold, and not stones. Thank you, Allah. Our natural wealth is abundant, we are prosperous. That is why many people (immigrants) come here to work. Some people even come in illegally. Because they want to taste the blessing of this blessed country. Our development is great. Many of our people left the villages to live in the cities. Even the villages are now developed, unlike before. Be thankful.

⁶⁸ In Malay, the use of a person's first name is used as a first-person pronoun to indicate proximity.

The headline is adapted from a Malay proverb: *Hujan emas di negeri orang, hujan batu di negeri sendiri, lebih baik negeri sendiri* (literally: Gold rains in someone else's country, while hailstones drop on our own country, still one's own country is better). Proverbs often arise from folk wisdom and, according to Gandara (2004), they echo "a culture's evaluative attitudes towards certain facts or events; they are impregnated with value judgements and legitimise behaviour, attitudes or point of view" (p. 347). The notion of the argumentative potential of proverbs is not new (see Gandara, 2004; Lim, 2010). Erasmus once said, "of all the arguments, a proverb can have great force, should you either wish to persuade or refute your adversary with a sarcastic saying, or even defend your position" (Montandon, 1992 quoted in Gandara, 2004, p. 346).

In (11), the proverb's role in argumentation here is structural and its adaptation is clearly denotative, as made explicit in the extract: "*negara ini sebetulnya hujannya emas, bukan batu*" (this country actually rains gold, and not stones), indexing the explicit mention of prosperity, wealth and the great development of our country, which is linguistically represented as the truth or facts of a situation through the adverb '*sebetulnya*' (actually). It serves as a 'guide' to reflection and is a reference to a well-known mental schema. The text begins with the columnist begging the question: *Siapa yang tak ingat jasa BN dan UMNO?* (Who does not remember the noble deeds of BN and UMNO?). The question, instead of demanding an answer, assumes that no one has forgotten BN's and UMNO's noble deeds, which presupposes that BN and UMNO have done noble deeds. This could also serve as a reminder and a set up for a mental schema about 'our own country' that "has been so blessed under the leadership of BN and UMNO".

The use of a deontic expression at the end of (11), '*Be thankful*', which in the original extract is intensified by the Malay-language particle *-lah*, marks discursive power and constructs an authoritative position for the UMNO and BN government. Such linguistic constructions of gratitude, according to Cialdini (1984[2007]), are one of the six motivations of persuasion, the reciprocation rule "that we should try to repay, in kind, what another person has provided us" (p.17), which Soules (2015) regards as "an ancient and powerful force of influence" (p. 102). Put it this way, what the government has provided for the people is hence seen as 'a favour' instead of as a 'responsibility' of government. The former denotes "something that you do for someone in order to help them or be kind to them" (LDOCE, 2015), while the latter is part of "a duty to be in charge of someone or

something” (LDOCE, 2015). While ‘responsibility’ does not entail reciprocation (as people are usually paid to do their work), a ‘favour’ is bound to a reciprocity norm that emphasizes reciprocal concessions, in which, according to Cialdini (2009), people feel socially obligated to return a favour that someone has bestowed upon them as the feeling of ‘indebtedness’ to others imposes a psychological burden on the receiver.⁶⁹

6.3. Negative representation of the government

The Malay-language editorials and columns scarcely criticize the government throughout the 15-day GE13 campaign. While there are no negative nominations that represent the government in terms of referential strategies, of 135 texts about the government, only two instances may imply criticism of the government. However, they tend to get short shrift, remain implicit and refer only indirectly or vaguely. For example:

- (12) Malah Najib sendiri dengan penuh rasa rendah diri sudah beberapa meminta maaf kepada seluruh rakyat Malaysia jika ada kesilapan yang dilakukan itu mencuit hati dan perasaan (Hafizahril Hamid, 28 April 2013, *Mingguan Malaysia*)/ Najib himself has apologized humbly a few times to all Malaysians for his wrongdoings.

The apology in (12) presupposes that the prime minister, Najib Razak, has committed some form of misconduct that may “*mencuit hati dan perasaan*” (hurt people’s feelings), but that remains ambiguous in the text. Such apologies, or as Luke (1997) labels them “political apologies”, i.e. apologies which centrally involve a politician as the perceived apologizer, are according to Harris, Grainger and Mullany (2006) “often generated by (and generate further) conflict and controversy ... [they] are often in response to a ‘demand’ ... rather than a spontaneous offering on the party of the politician” (p. 721). Therefore, they undermine both the sincerity and, hence, the perceived validity of the apology as a formal speech act, which must be acknowledged as such, although they have apparent cultural as well as political significance and power. Also, in the case of (12), the apology that comes earlier to some extent mitigates, if not neutralizes, the wrongdoings, while the use of the positive adverb ‘humbly’ to modify the verb ‘apologize’ is an overstatement, since to

⁶⁹ See for example Rais Yatim, 24 April 2013, *Berita Harian*; Zaini Hassan, 24 April 2013, *Utusan Malaysia*

apologize is to humble oneself. This, I argue, has a positive effect instead of a negative one.

6.4. Positive Representation of the Opposition

The opposition is represented in a bad light. This is especially where Habermas's (1989) or Mill's (1982[195]) Western-based models, discussed in Chapter 1, are incompatible with Malaysian democracy. Malaysian mainstream op-eds, in contrast to Rosenfeld's (2000) aspiration, are not ready to share different perspectives on issues (see Chapter 2 for more discussion on editorials and columns), as is the case with the English-language op-eds too (see Chapter 8). The Malaysian marketplace of ideas and the public sphere, although they exist, are controlled and regulated (see Chapter 3). In the Malay-language op-eds, even when there is a single praising article about the opposition, it refers to an event in the past, before 1998, the year when Anwar Ibrahim, now leader of the opposition (the then former deputy prime minister), was sacked from his government posts, expelled from the ruling UMNO and imprisoned as he was subjected to a barrage of flimsy allegations in the media, involving sexual indecency, hindering police investigations and sedition (see Chapter 3):

- (13) Sebelum tahun 1998, pembangkang berjaya memainkan peranannya sebagai 'watch dog' **kepada kerajaan tetapi sekarang tidak lagi.**
(Rencana, 28 April 2013, *Mingguan Malaysia*)/ Before 1998, the opposition managed to play their role as watchdog over the government, but now that is no longer the case.

The opposition is described using the metaphoric 'watchdog' over the government in (10), which indicates the surveillance function of the opposition at the time. However, this trait is later voided by the use of the discourse marker '*tetapi*' or 'but'. The first conjunct, "the opposition managed to play their role as watchdog over the government" implies an assumption which is contradicted by the second conjunct, "that is no longer the case". As in (9), what seems to be a positive description turns out to be another negative attribute of the opposition.

6.5. Negative representation of the opposition

6.5.1. Referential strategy

The mainstream Malay-language as well as the English-language (see Chapter 8) editorials' and columns' rhetoric is strongly loaded against a constructed and delegitimized Other. The nomination and predication strategies to legitimize the government discussed in the previous section were constructed in such a way that they, explicitly or implicitly, simultaneously delegitimize the opposition. Consider, first, the nominal and predication strategies invoked in the ways the opposition is named in Table 8 and described in Table 9 during the GE13 campaign:

Table 8: Referential strategies in the Malay-language editorials and columns for negative construction of the opposition

Discursive Strategy	Objectives	Categories
Referential/ Nomination	Discursive construction/ delegitimation of the opposition	<p>Pronouns: <i>They, Them, Their, Theirs</i></p> <p>References to the opposition coalition and/or political party: <i>Pakatan Rakyat, Parti Keadilan Rakyat (PKR), Democratic Action Party (DAP), Parti Islam-Semalaysia (PAS, Islamic Party)</i></p> <p>References to political leaders: <i>Anwar Ibrahim</i></p> <p>Reference to a slogan: <i>Undi Bawa Anda Hanyut (UBAH) (A vote will make you go through life aimlessly)</i></p> <p>Ideological anthroponyms: <i>Abolisher of Malay rights, Megalomaniac (kemaruk kuasa), Mat Jenin (Malaysia's Walter Mitty), anti-Malay, anti-Malay rights, Pakatan Ranap (Wrecked Alliance), Pakatan Longgar (Loose Alliance), Pakatan Keco (Raucous Alliance)</i></p>

The emphasis on a positive government as protector of the rights of the Malays functions based on a shared (or strategically communicated) understanding of the qualities of the Other, i.e. the opposition as anti-Malay, and therefore the ones who attempt to abolish *bumiputera* or special privileges. In the same way, a positive interpretation of the attribution of our unity is built on the assumption of diachronically established disunity on the side of the opposition. The use of ‘*kata ganti nama ketiga*’, ‘*mereka*’ or ‘*dia orang*’ (literally, those people) or third-person pronouns ‘they’ and ‘them’ are ubiquitous throughout the Malay-language editorials’ and columns’ content. Although it is also the case in the English-language op-eds, in contrast to the Malay-language op-eds, third-person pronouns are not only used in an oppositional but also in an affiliative context, as we will see in Chapter 8. This reflects a dichotomous view that links to the papers’ general argumentative strategy.

In contrast to the government, which is always represented as a team, the opposition is generally referred to as individual parties in the coalition, i.e. PKR, DAP and PAS instead of as Pakatan Rakyat (People’s alliance, PR) or the opposition coalition. The acronym ‘PR’ is even derided as *Pakatan Ranap* (Wrecked Alliance),⁷⁰ *Pakatan Longgar* (Loose Alliance)⁷¹ or *Pakatan Keco*h (Raucous Alliance)⁷². These appellations not only represent the opposition negatively but also contribute to the construction of a (presupposed) legitimate government. The discursive construction of the opposition is also achieved by referring to their slogan, ‘*Ubah*’, which literally means change in Bahasa Melayu. However, it is taken by the Malay-language op-eds as having a dual meaning. First, it is taken as conventional change, i.e. an act or process through which something becomes different. Second, *ubah* is treated as a contrived acronym, *Undi Bawa Anda Hanyut* (see Ainol Amriz Ismail, 26 April 2013, *Utusan Malaysia*) to mean metaphorically that a vote, presumably for the opposition, will cause you to go through life aimlessly. This could also suggest a warning: If you think of changing (*ubah*) the government, your vote will UBAH (make you go through life aimlessly). The construction of delegitimate opposition in Malay-language newspapers also focuses on references to the opposition leader, Anwar Ibrahim (see Chapter 3 for a brief history). Among others, Mat Lutu for *Berita Harian*, for

⁷⁰ See for example Mior Kamarul Shahid, 28 April 2013, *Berita Ahad*

⁷¹ See for example Khairuddin Mohd Zain, 28 April 2013, *Mingguan Malaysia*

⁷² See for example Mat Lutu, 29 April 2013, *Berita Harian*

example, constantly addresses Anwar Ibrahim as ‘*Tuk Sheikh Anwar*’, a sarcastic term⁷³ designed to censure him over numerous sex scandals.⁷⁴ The opposition is also delegitimized by using a referential strategy for Mat Jenin (Malay’s Walter Mitty) (Lanang, 23 April 2013, *Berita Harian*). In Malay bardic tales (*cerita penglipur lara*), Mat Jenin is the ageing *jagoh* kampung (village champion) who never tires of daydreaming of his daring plans to save his race while climbing coconut trees. Meanwhile, he is busy idling his life away, so he loses his grip on the coconut tree, falls to the ground and dies. The use of Mat Jenin as a metaphor for such a character and type of behaviour is catapulted into a headline in *Berita Harian* as a reference to the opposition:

(14) **Mat Jenin nak tawan Putrajaya**

Pembangkang berangan nak tawan Putrajaya. Nak ubah kerajaan, tapi bagai Mat Jenin yang jatuh dari pokok kelapa. (Lanang, 23 April 2013, *Berita Harian*)/

Mat Jenin wants to conquer Putrajaya

The opposition daydreams to conquer Putrajaya. [They] want to change the government, but like Mat Jenin who falls from the coconut tree.

The columnist rhetorically used cataphora across sentences in (14) when the noun *Mat Jenin* (the cataphor) appears earlier than the noun *Pembangkang* (the opposition, i.e. the postcedent) that it refers to. Moreover, the Malay-language editorials and columns also focus on constantly stereotyping DAP as “a sly, manipulative Chinese party with a hidden agenda”, an established trope/stereotype in the reporting of the ‘threatening’ Chinese, who use “the Malays who joined their party as puppets”,⁷⁵ a party that “practices cronyism”,⁷⁶ “a communist party”⁷⁷ that is “staunchly anti-Islam” with “secularist and democratic

⁷³ See Mat Lutu, 22 April 2013, *Berita Harian*; Lukman Ismail, 26 April 2013, *Utusan Malaysia*; Mat Lutu, 2 May 2013, *Berita Harian*; Mat Lutu, 3 May 2013, *Berita Harian*) – ‘sheikh’ an Arabic word for a leader in a Muslim community or organization

⁷⁴ Among others, Imlan Adabi, 23 April 2013, *Berita Harian*; Zulkefli Hamzah, 28 April 2013, *Mingguan Malaysia*; Rencana, 28 April 2013, *Mingguan Malaysia*.

⁷⁵ See for example Ainol Amriz Ismail, 26 April 2013, *Utusan Malaysia*.

⁷⁶ See for example Zulkefli Hamzah, 28 April 2013, *Mingguan Malaysia*.

⁷⁷ See for example Ainol Amriz Ismail, 26 April 2013, *Utusan Malaysia*.

socialists”⁷⁸ who want to create a Malaysian-Malaysia (as opposed to Malaysian-Malay) oriented country.

6.5.2. Predicational strategies

The negative presentation of the opposition is continued through the use of the main predicational themes identified in the table below:

Table 9: Predicational strategies in the Malay-language editorials and columns in a negative representation of the opposition

Discursive Strategy	Objectives	Content Categories
<p>Predicational Strategy:</p> <p>What characteristics, qualities and features are attributed to social actors</p>	<p>Discursive construction and delegitimation of the opposition</p>	<p>‘THEY’ (PR) are not united</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>DAP rejects PAS’s hudud</i> - <i>Still fail to show unity</i> <p>‘THEY’ (DAP) Anti-Malay and Malay rights</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Argue against Malays; rights.</i> - <i>Seize Malays’ lands</i> - <i>Are democratic socialists</i> - <i>Have a secular understanding of ‘equality’</i> - <i>want to create a Malaysian-Malaysia oriented country</i> - <i>want to divide the Malays and destroy Malay solidarity</i> - <i>benefit from the disunity of the Malays (PKR Malays and PAS Malays)</i> - <i>reject Malay leaders</i> - <i>sow hatred towards the government</i> - <i>have a hidden agenda</i> - <i>are chauvinist and anti-Malay</i> - <i>are racists and hypocrites</i> - <i>insult our race (Malay) and religion (Islam)</i> - <i>a party for the Chinese, not multiracial, they don’t nominate Malay candidates</i> - <i>provoke the Chinese to hate the BN government and the Malays, “the government doesn’t treat the Chinese</i>

⁷⁸ See for example Editor, 28 April 2013, *Mingguan Malaysia*.

		<p><i>community nicely, it is unjust and grants privileges to the bumiputera”</i></p> <p>“They” PAS Are weak</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>neglect and dismiss their jihad (struggle) to protect the aqidah of the Muslims ummah for the sake of their friendship with the DAP and PKR</i> - <i>are a joke</i> - <i>are irrelevant</i> - <i>are hypocrites</i> - <i>do not have any say in the coalition</i> - <i>use hudud as their political ploy</i> - <i>must break their ties with the DAP and PKR if they want to implement Muslim shariah</i> <p>They “PKR” Anwar Ibrahim</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>is obsessed with becoming prime minister</i> - <i>is a pluralist</i> - <i>is a homosexual with low moral values</i> - <i>is an extremist</i> - <i>has a hidden agenda</i> - <i>is scandalous</i> - <i>is a supporter of Karl Marx</i> - <i>is the DAP’s puppet</i>
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6.5.2.1. Not United

One of the major themes found in the Malay-language editorials and columns, in terms of characterization of the opposition, is a group of predications in which they are encapsulated as lacking unity. The opposition alliance, PR, is represented by the Malay-language op-eds as “a triumvirate coalition of strange bedfellows with differing ideologies” – the PAS, DAP and PKR are represented as parties who share the same goal of toppling BN, but they do not have a common interest, philosophy or methodology in reaching that goal (see Chapter 2). During the GE13 campaign period, that goal is represented as personal and due to a ‘repressed grudge’, not for a better Malaysia, or even

for the sake of the *rakyat*, in the Malay-language op-eds.⁷⁹ The foregrounding of the infighting and lack of cooperation⁸⁰ amongst the opposition in the Malay-language newspapers is certainly opportunistic, deepening the abyss between Them (the opposition) and Us (the government and the *rakyat*). Described as suffering from ideological polarity due to a lack of cohesive leadership, the Malay-language op-eds repeatedly criticize the opposition's inherent ideological differences, particularly over Islamic law *hudud*.⁸¹

There are many instances in the Malay-language op-eds where the DAP's (a mainly Chinese party) and the PAS's (Islamist party) enormous differences in opinion over *hudud*, the penal laws of Islam based on the Quran and Hadiths (sayings of the prophet), are picked up on to highlight the opposition's disunity in the Malay-language op-eds. The *hudud* law may resonate with the religious foundation of PAS as an Islamist political party; however, it contradicts DAP's Malaysian Malaysia secular ideology (see Chapter 3). In the example below, the delegitimation of the opposition is linguistically realized by using the performative verb *menolak* (reject) expressed in a material process, as it requires action that subsumes any verbal elements:

- (15) **DAP juga *menolak* hukum hudud dan negara Islam yang dicanangkan PAS.** Dalam erti kata lain, **DAP *menolak* PAS** (Minda Pengarang, 23 April 2013, *Utusan Malaysia*) /DAP also rejects the hudud laws and (the idea of an) Islamic country disseminated by PAS. In other words, DAP rejects PAS.

The columnist makes a strong commitment to the truth of the statements about the act of dismissing in (15), 'DAP *rejects* hudud and the notion of an Islamic country ... DAP *rejects* PAS', thus intensifying their disunity on issues affecting the people. Similarly, consider the extract taken from a positive government text '*Kesepakatan dan janji BN*' (BN's unity and promise) in the excerpt below:

- (16) **Pakatan pembangkang masih gagal menunjukkan kesepakatan sebagai satu pasukan yang mantap untuk memimpin negara** seperti dilakukan

⁷⁹ See for example: Hafizahril Hamid, 28 April 2013, *Mingguan Malaysia*; Editor, 28 April 2013, *Mingguan Malaysia*; Rencana, 28 April 2013, *Mingguan Malaysia*.

⁸⁰ See Hafizahril Hamid, 28 April 2013, *Mingguan Malaysia*; Mohd Zin, 27 April 2013, *Utusan Malaysia*; Azman Anuar, 28 April 2013, *Mingguan Malaysia*.

⁸¹ See among other Rencana, 28 April 2013, *Mingguan Malaysia*.

BN selama ini. Itu belum melibatkan soal kepentingan rakyat dan masa depan negara (Hafizahril Hamid, 28 April 2013, *Mingguan Malaysia*)/ The opposition alliance still fails to show unity as the best team to lead the country, as BN has been doing this all the while. Let alone matters that involve the well-being of the rakyat and the future of the country.

The Other, which is referred to as *pakatan pembangkang* (opposition alliance), is discursively delegitimated through two devices: the explicit contrast as well as an explicit comparison. The former is done through the headline about BN's unity which is contrasted with the content of the text which is about the opposition's disunity, while the latter is used in a predication strategy that specifically compares the opposition with the government. This is linguistically realized by using the preposition '*like*'. The conjunction '*itu belum melibatkan*' (let alone), on the other hand, is a negative polarity item, which is used after one negative clause to introduce another, usually broader and more important, clause, whose negation is implied by the negation of the first (see Fillmore, Kay and O'Connor, 1988, p. 514). In other words, the improbability of the contrasting descriptions about the opposition in the extract is intensified: They are disunited, they can't even stand on common ground involving issues of principle and ideology, *there is much less or nothing to say* about matters related to the well-being of the people and the future of the country. This triggers an implication that when they lead the country, their disunity will put the well-being of the people and the future of the country at risk.

6.5.2.2. Anti-Malays

The Malay-language editorials and columns also further represent the opposition negatively through the reference made to the DAP as a threat to the Malays and their imaginary nation. In the extract below, DAP was discursively constructed as anti-Malay and a threat to Malays' rights.⁸² Consider the extract below:

- (17) **DAP dengan aliran sosialis demokratnya ditunjangi faham sekular “sama rata sama rata”** ingin menghasilkan negara berorientasikan Konsep Malaysian

⁸² Lanang, 24 April 2013, *Berita Harian*; Lanang, 25 April 2013, *Berita Harian*

Malaysia. (Editor, 28 April 2013, *Mingguan Malaysia*) / DAP with their democratic socialist movement is oriented towards a secular understanding of “equality”, they want to create a Malaysian-Malaysia oriented country.

In (17), the positive attribute of being equal has a negative connotation, through the negative emotional and imaginative association surrounding the word that the Malay-language op-eds use to constantly represent the opposition. The editor uses an ambiguous term, a ‘secular understanding’ of equality to implicitly refer to Lim Kit Siang’s (the DAP leader) endeavours for a ‘Malaysian Malaysia’, as opposed to a ‘Malay Malaysia’, which again refers to the idea of a hierarchy of belonging, i.e. entitlement with Malays in charge, as discussed previously. A ‘Malaysian Malaysia’ country presumes the obliteration of Malay privileges. Therefore, this idea that encapsulates people’s right to fairness for all, irrespective of race and religion so that all will be able to appreciate justice, freedom and democracy, is taken as a threat to the status quo and to the Malays’ identity, as well as to their special position as stated in the Constitution (see also Chapter 3).

6.5.2.4. Threat to the official religion, Islam

Closely linked to the previous predication theme is the negative representation of the opposition, again through a reference made to DAP, in which DAP is described as a threat to Islam as the official religion of Malaysia:

- (18) [S]ikap mereka menghina Melayu yang telah berlaku sejak 1969 lagi, tetapi turut menghina Islam dalam isu kalimah Allah SWT... lihatlah bagaimana seorang pemimpin mereka telah mengarahkan imam di sebuah masjid di Selangor agar tidak menggunakan pembesar suara semasa melaungkan azan Subuh kerana mengganggu ketenteraman awam. (Ainol Amriz Ismail, 26 April 2013, *Utusan Malaysia*) / Their insults towards Malays and Muslims have continued ever since the 1969 and particularly recently in the case of the use of the word ‘Allah’ by non-Muslims ... Look at how their leader asked the *imam* [the one who leads the prayers] at a mosque in Selangor not to use the loudspeaker during the morning call to prayers (azaan) because it is inconvenient for the public.

In (18), the columnist is proposing that the status of Islam, as the official religion of the country and of Muslims who form the majority of the population, must be protected from

the threat from DAP. In a sense, (18) involves a strategy of patronisation by framing a narrative (e.g. *Look at how...*) invoking insecurity and an inferiority complex (see Chapter 3) that fuels deeper suspicion towards the Chinese, and other non-Malays in general. The reference made to the tragedy of 13 May 1969 again aims to evoke a sense of fear.

6.5.2.4. Threat to Malay unity

Another main predication theme in the negative representation of the opposition in the Malay-language op-eds is the threat to Malays' unity. The opposition is described as the one who wants to polarize Malays and the one who will benefit from the disunity of Malays;⁸³ in the case of (19) below, it is through a reference made to the DAP:

- (19) Yang untungnya **DAP** kerana **berjaya lihat Melayu pecah**. Ada Melayu UMNO. Melayu PAS dan Melayu PKR. Akhirnya yang rugi adalah Melayu. Yang berkuasa dan memencilkan kuasa Melayu adalah pihak lain. **Kita dapat tulang, depa dapat isi** (Lanang, 24 April 2013, *Berita Harian*)
/ DAP gains a lot from Malay disunity. There are UMNO Malays, PAS Malays and PKR Malays. In the end, the ones who are at a loss are the Malays. The ones who have power and intimidate the Malays is them. We get bones, they get meat.

In (19), DAP is described as capitalizing on Malay disunity through the ideologically evaluative attribution 'yang untungnya' (the *beneficium*, i.e. the one who gains), as well as the through the figurative 'meat and bone' at the end of the extract. Such a predication strategy to negatively represent the opposition, used as part of the argumentation, is an example of argumentum ad baculum (see, for example, Eemeren, Grotendorst and Kruiger, 1987, p. 89; see Chapter 7 for an analysis of the argumentation strategies in the Malay-language op-eds), a rhetorical-pragmatic fallacy, in which threat is used in a persuasive way ("with the rod"), it contain some implicit external threatening scenarios that are

⁸³ See for example Ainol Amriz Ismail, 26 April 2011, *Utusan Malaysia*.

intended to evoke irrational fears. In the particular case of (19), Malay unity signifies continuity, in the sense emphasized by Syed Husin (2008):

There is a belief now that all that the Malays have left is their political power ... The question of Malay unity has often been associated with Malay power, which is often referred to as *ketuanan Melayu* ... UMNO ... strongly believes that only with united Malay support will it be able to carry out programmes designed for Malay interests. If the Malays are disunited and their support is divided among the different opposing parties, their power and influence will be reduced, with the result that the policies and programmes that they claim will benefit the Malays cannot be carried out. (p. 46)

In other words, UMNO (or BN) is able to remain in power only as long as the Malays are united, this presupposes that any Malay support for the opposition is support for the Chinese party, DAP. When Malays' support is divided between the government and the opposition, the DAP, presumably the Chinese, i.e. the threatening 'other', will be at an advantage.

6.5.2.5. Weak

The negative representation of the government is also made through a reference to PAS, which is described as 'weak':

- (20) **Pas** yang sejak hampir 60 tahun lalu berjuang menjadi benteng mempertahankan akidah umat, kini atas tuntutan teman setiakawan DAP dan **PKR terpaksa mengetepikan dan menggugurkan jihad mempertahankan akidah yang diperjuangkan selama ini** (Hassan Ali, 23 April 2013, *Utusan Malaysia*) / PAS which has been the fort protecting the *aqidah* of the Muslims' ummah, now, for the sake of their friendship with DAP and PKR, has to neglect and dismiss their jihad to protect the *aqidah* that they have been fighting for.

In (20), while DAP and PKR are represented as fighting the same fight, PAS on the other hand is portrayed as a victim. PAS's primary aim – to establish an Islamic State in

Malaysia – is under threat as it prepares to try to regain support after the Anwar Ibrahim saga. PAS being part of PR has put the party back to where it used to be: on the fringe of the system, merely an opposition political party with its own set of leaders and views. The implication of the excerpt is twofold: (1) PAS is seen as its their values and principles for the sake of being in politics, making UMNO outdo PAS in championing Islam and (2) this is another reason why PKR and DAP (and PAS and hence PR) should be rejected.⁸⁴

6.5.2.6. Power-obsessed (*kemaruk kuasa*)

The final main predication theme revolves around the leader of the opposition, Anwar Ibrahim; in many cases, negative representations of the opposition are made through references to him as someone whose obsession with power and his attempts to achieve power are ungainly and frightening. The predicates of the Malay-language op-eds' predication strategy often involve *ad hominem*, i.e. a fallacious argumentative strategy attacking the character and attribute of a person (see, for example Walton, 1998).⁸⁵

Consider the extract below:

- (21) Anwar memimpin pakatan bukan untuk membina satu pasukan yang kukuh. Beliau hanya memimpin pakatan untuk menjahanamkan UMNO (Rencana, 29 April 2013, *Utusan Malaysia*) / Anwar does not lead the alliance create a strong team. He only wants to lead the alliance in order to destroy UMNO.

In (21), Anwar's motive in leading the opposition coalition is questioned. The questioning of motives strategy, while it is the most common, is also the most pernicious of rhetorical

⁸⁴ See also Awang Selamat, 22 April 2013, *Utusan Malaysia*; Rencana, 22 April 2013, *Utusan Malaysia*; Nizam Yatim, 22 April 2013, *Utusan Malaysia*. PAS collaboration with PKR and DAP is also represented as a joke, deeming PAS's struggle as irrelevant (among others see Mohd Radzi Othman, 23 April 2013, *Utusan Malaysia*; Lukman Ismail, 26 April 2013, *Utusan Malaysia*; Hussaini Amran, 27 April 2013, *Utusan Malaysia*; Helmi Mohd Foad, 27 April 2013, *Mat Lutu*, 27 April 2013, *Berita Harian*; *Utusan Malaysia*; Rencana, 28 April 2013, *Mingguan Malaysia*; Mahathir Mohamad, 28 April 2013, *Berita Ahad*).

⁸⁵ See Minda Pengarang, 27 April 2013, *Berita Harian*; Rencana, 28 April 2013; *Mingguan Malaysia*; Zulkefli Hamzah, 28 April 2013, *Mingguan Malaysia*; Syukri Shaari, 29 April 2013, *Utusan Malaysia*. See among others, Rencana, 22 April 2013, *Utusan Malaysia*; Nizam Yatim, 22 April 2013, Wan Roslili Abd Majid, 22 April 2013, *Berita Harian*; *Utusan Malaysia*; Hafizahril Hamid, 23 April 2013, *Utusan Malaysia*; Hasan Ali, 25 April 2013, *Utusan Malaysia*; Tokki, 26 April 2013, *Utusan Malaysia*; Rencana, 26 April 2013, *Mingguan Malaysia*; Azman Anuar, 26 April 2013, Azhar Abu Samah, 26 April 2013, *Berita Ahad*; *Mingguan Malaysia*; Azhar Abu Samah, 28 April 2013, *Berita Harian*; Hasan Ali, 30 April 2013, *Utusan Malaysia*.

habits, especially in political debate. Waldman (2012, p. 43) explains that such a strategy assumes that the person whose motive is questioned is wrong, and that he or she is a ‘bad person’, and that questioning one’s motives implies that the person is a liar, untrustworthy and driven by some nefarious goal.

6.6.Summary

In this chapter, I have discussed the representation of the government and the opposition in Malay-language editorials and columns during the GE13 campaign by focusing on two discursive strategies, namely referential and predication strategies. In this chapter we have seen that the government coalition is represented in a positive light; and within that coalition, the Malay ‘centre’ stands for the rest and is seen to be at the heart of the nation. The focus on representation of the government through references made solely to Malays signifies a belief in inherent Malay superiority. On the other hand, the non-Malays, who are by right Malaysian citizens too, are implicitly regarded as a migrant community that is taken care of by the government. The non-Malay opposition, DAP in particular, is regarded as a threat to the Malays’ supremacy and Islam. Simultaneously, the government is represented as one who will protect the supremacy as well as the privileges of the Malays (and Islam). The discussion in the Malay-language op-eds focuses on a positive representation of the government and a negative representation of the opposition; editorials or columns that refer negatively to the government and positively to the opposition are absent. The next chapter will focus on the argumentative strategies employed by Malay-language op-eds.

Chapter 7

Argumentation Analysis in Malay-language editorials and columns

7.1. Introduction

In the previous chapters, we have seen that in Malay-language mainstream editorials and columns, the nomination and predication strategies of the BN government stand in diametric contrast to the PR coalition (see Chapters 5 and 6). This dichotomized discussion of good government-bad opposition not only opposes the idea of democratic media, it also shows the absence of at least one key component of development journalism discussed in Chapter 1, i.e. the independence of the media from the government to allow them to make constructive criticism of it. Thus, it also shows the incompatibility of Malay-language op-eds with the idea of op-eds as a vehicle for an intellectual transaction between writer and reader, as discussed in Chapter 2, as they only publish articles that share the same opinions, values and assumptions as the newspapers' boards. The analysis in Chapter 6 has shown that the opposition, through references made to the mainly Chinese party in particular, is regarded as a threat to Malays' supremacy and to Islam. The government, on the other hand, is represented as one that will protect both the supremacy and the privileges of Malays and Islam. This chapter discusses the ways of reasoning with (or persuading) the readers of the validity of such truth claims and normative rightness found in Malay-language op-eds. This chapter argues that instead of using sound topoi, the Malay-language op-eds use fallacies in their argumentation. I begin with my justification of this claim in section 7.2. Subsequent chapters explore the argumentative nature of the fallacies employed in the editorials and columns of Malay-language newspapers.

7.2. Argumentative fallacies in Malay-language editorials and columns

Following the discussion in previous chapters, Reisigl and Wodak (2001) argue that:

...the distinction between argumentation ready for rational negotiation, i.e. attempts to convince (*'überzeugen'*), and its strategical perversion, i.e.

manipulative attempts to persuade (*‘überreden’*), is, first of all, an abstract and theoretical one, for one important criterion of distinction is manipulative intentionality, which is at best recognisable indirectly, as it is scarcely communicated explicitly and since nobody can look directly into the human head. (p. 70)

However, the rules for rational disputes and constructive arguing described in Chapter 4 are useful for identifying and distinguishing the reasonableness of argumentation (see also Reisigl and Wodak, 2001, pp. 70–71; Richardson, 2007, pp. 166–7; Reisigl, 2014, pp. 79–80). Therefore, to begin with, I argue that, with homogenous positive government and negative opposition texts, these Malay-language newspapers have already violated rule 1 of the 10 commandments, i.e. *the freedom rule* (freedom from arguing), as only opinions for the government were published while those against it (or for the opposition) were not (see Chapter 1 for a discussion of Malaysia’s media system and developmental journalism and Chapter 3 for a discussion of sociopolitical history in Malaysia to understand the reasons for this). Imposing certain restrictions on opinions that may be advanced or called into question restricts the fundamental right of the other party to advance or cast doubts on whatever opinions they choose. Reiterating van Eemeren and Grootendorst (1987), in principle, “everyone is entitled to advance a point of view on any subject and to call any standpoint into question” (p. 283). As such, the violation of one or more of these rules leave us with fallacies and no longer with sound *topoi*, as will be discussed in the following.

7.2.1. Appeal to fear of the unknown

The number of politics of fear texts is quite high, as it contributes 10.1 per cent to the whole discussion in the editorials and columns during the GE13 campaign (see Chapter 5). Therefore, a central and recurring fallacy in the macro-legitimatory arguments of the government in the Malay-language op-eds during the GE13 campaign is *argumentum ad baculum*, which involves an appeal to fear of the unknown instead of using plausible and relevant arguments. Consider first these examples:

- (1) Pengundi mempunyai tanggungjawab dan tidak boleh mempermainkan atau bereksperimen dengan masa depan kerana sentimen 'hendak mencuba' (Azman

Anuar, 2 April 2013, *Mingguan Malaysia*) / The voters have the responsibility and must not play or experiment with the future just for the sake of ‘trying’.

- (2) Masa depan bukan bahan uji kaji dan sepotong peringatan Datuk Seri Najib Razak di pentas Perhimpunan Agung UMNO hujung tahun lalu “Kecundang bukan pilihan” (Veena Rusli, 3 May 2013, *Berita Harian*) / The future is not an experiment and as we were reminded by Datuk Seri Najib Razak at the annual UMNO general assembly last year, “losing is not an option”.

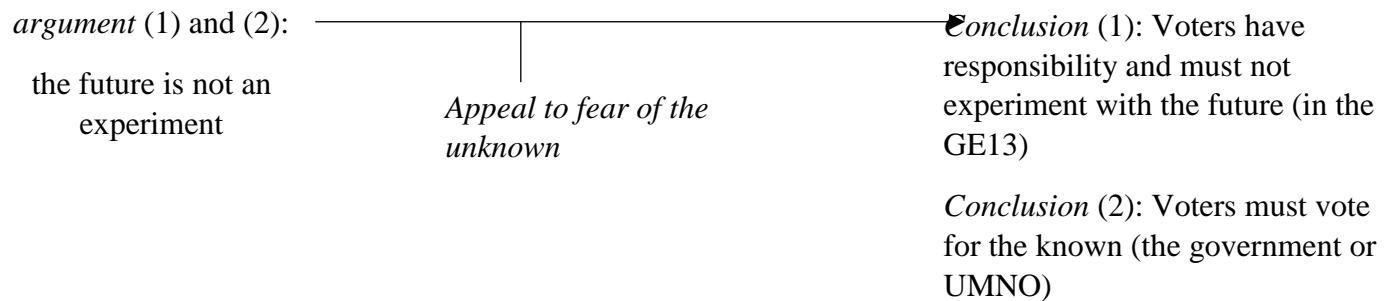
On the speech-act level, the locution in (1) has the illocutionary force of a directive; the degree of strength of the illocutionary goal is reflected in the deontic use of the modal auxiliary verb ‘must’ + ‘not’, or its Malay equivalent, *tidak boleh tidak, wajib, mesti* (DBP, 2016), which connotes a subjective obligation not to do something (i.e. prohibition). However, (1) is expressed through a weak performative, “reminding”, as it starts with a reminder about voters’ responsibility in the first clause. Its direction of fit is world-to-word: the writer tries to get the readers not to forget their responsibility and not to experiment with the future. On the other hand, (2) has the illocutionary force of an assertion, about the future not being an experiment. The state of affairs represented by the propositional content contains the writer’s belief that the future is not something that should be put at risk. It exhibits a word-to-world direction of fit, i.e. the future not being an experiment fits an independently existing state of affairs in the world. The assertion in (2) is followed by a reminder from authority, i.e. prime minister Najib Razak, expressed through internal intertextuality, i.e. a direct quote. The phrase ‘*kecundang bukan pilihan*’ (losing is not an option) is often idiomatic, and in the case of UMNO being defeated as the outcome of GE13, such a case is considered an unwise or undesirable choice.

Comparatively, the arguments in (1) and (2) have a common propositional content: *the future is not an experiment*. Performing a directive (1) or assertive (2) speech act, in Kopperschmidt’s (1987, p. 56) view, implies a guarantee that the underlying validity claim can be made legitimate. In the regulative speech act in (1), where a moral rightness claim is dominant, the columnist is also committed to an epistemic claim (he can provide reasons why the reader should not experiment with the future). However, he does not, in the first

instance, claim validity for what he writes. As Habermas (1992, p.8) suggests, the thematic emphasis is not on the propositional content of the utterance in such a regulative speech act. Thus, we might say that the main point about (1) is not that it raises a validity claim of normative rightness, rather it is that it is constitutive of a certain kind of intersubjective relationship. This relationship, I argue, is one of obligation – more precisely, one of moral obligation, i.e. a social force that binds the reader to the course of action demanded by that force, an obligation arising out of considerations of right and wrong. On the other hand, in the constative speech act in (2), the truth validity claim is thematised – whereby the columnist commits to knowing the truth about the future not being an experiment.

Although the word ‘experiment’ can be positive, as an indication of progress, a search for proof, the discovery of the unknown or a test of a hypothesis, in (1) and (2), it carries a negative connotation, emphasising doubt. Conversely, the extracts entail stagnancy or regression: it is better to stay with what is known, not with what might be better. As has been shown in referential and predication strategies (see Chapter 6), the ‘known-ness’ of the government is presented as a positive quality, but here, in the extracts, *what* is known about the government is taken for granted. This implies that voting for the unknown (i.e. the opposition) is represented as an experiment. It is not seen as freedom of choice or the practising of citizenship by making one’s own voice heard and registering one’s opinion as well as judgements on whom one thinks should rule. Such a connotation of ‘experiment’ victimizes the people, making them guinea pigs instead of seeing it as a form of autonomy in a democracy. This suggests a sense of paranoia or fear of losing the election, as vocalized in direct speech from Prime Minister Najib Razak himself: ‘losing is not an option’ (2). In a sense, it also maintains the illusion of choice in a democratic society, reducing the choice to: vote for the known (i.e. the government) and you’ll be safe or second, vote for the unknown (i.e. the opposition) and you’ll be doomed. The tautological argument thus proceeds as follows: the future should not be an experiment, GE13 should not be treated as an experiment by the voters, the future is not child’s play and this experiment should not be done just for the sake of ‘trying’. Rather than a rational argument, it offers a barrage of condescending rhetoric. This immediately suggests the patronizing of two social subjects in the political process: the practice of democracy itself that should allow for such freedom of choice and Malaysian voters who are not seen to be

capable of making their own decisions.⁸⁶ The arguments in (1) and (2) can be simplified as shown below:



Thus, this appeal to fear of the unknown presented in (1) and (2) specifically violates rule 4, i.e. the relevance rule (obligation to ‘matter-of-factness’). In both cases, pathos takes the place of logos when rhetorical ruses are used instead of proper argumentation to exploit the emotions of the reader.

7.2.2. Fallacy of reality

Closely related to the previous fallacy in the macro-legitimatory arguments in the Malay-language op-eds during the GE13 campaign is the fallacy of reality, i.e. fallacy based on the state of things as they actually exist: therefore, “because reality is as it is, a specific decision should be made” (see Wodak, 2015, p. 79):

- (3) 5 Mei 2013 adalah tarikh keramat. Tarikh keramat itu adalah tarikh penentuan. Tarikh yang akan menentukan pada malam dan keeseokan harinya sama ada Malaysia menjadi negara suram dengan gerhana atau penuh bercahaya memancarkan sinar harapan untuk generasi akan datang... Sering disebut akhir-akhir ini bahawa PRU-13 adalah ‘mother of all election’. Ini membawa erti PRU-13 dalam sejarah pilihanraya di negara ini

⁸⁶ See also Azman Anuar, *Mingguan Malaysia*, 23 April 2013; Azmi Azman, *Utusan Malaysia*, 25 April 2013; Hasan Ali in *Utusan Malaysia*, 25 April 2013; Veena Rusli, *Berita Harian*, 3 May 2013;

merupakan PRU penentu sama ada negara ini menjadi ‘*BaldatunTayyibatun Wa Rabbun Ghaffur*’ atau negara yang sentiasa dalam kelaknatan Allah SWT (Hasan Ali, 25 April 2013, *Utusan Malaysia*) / 5 May 2013 is a ‘*keramat*’ date. The ‘*keramat*’ date is the deciding date. The date that will decide whether Malaysia will be all doom and gloom or bright and shiny with hopes for the future generation ... It has always been mentioned that GE13 is the ‘mother of all elections’. This means GE13 in the history of elections in this country is the deciding GE on whether this country will be ‘*BadatunTayyibatun Wa Rabbun Ghaffur*’ [a fair land and oft-forgiving Lord] or a nation that is always cursed by Allah SWT.

On the speech-act level, (3) has the illocutionary force of a declarative assertion, wherein GE13 is represented as the determinant that will cause a profound change in Malaysian sociopolitical reality. This is done through the choice of the columnist’s appellations: the hyperbolic ‘mother of all elections’, ‘*PRU penentu*’ (the deciding election), ‘*tarikh keramat*’ (‘*keramat*’ date) and ‘*tarikh penentu*’ (the deciding date). In its literal Malay sense, the use of the adjective *keramat* to describe the GE13 voting date (5 May 2013) means the date is holy and sacred, and therefore it is believed to be endowed with superpower (i.e. the ability to cure sickness, provide protection etc). In other words, given the holiness of the day, GE13 is worthy of veneration, which implies that it is a day that someone does not want to mess with because after the voting ends, the decision taken on that day will decide the fate of Malaysia and future generations.

The state of affairs represented by the propositional content, GE13 is X (as bold in the excerpt above), because the columnist holds that X represents the state of affairs of GE13 (and not the state of affairs of previous general elections), contains the columnist’s belief that GE13 is the deciding election [*PRU penentu*] and it is true in the universality of the statement. Therefore, we can identify the existence of an assertive commitment [word-to-world direction of fit] in achieving the illocutionary declarative point [world-to-word direction of fit], with a double adequacy direction: to change the world and to represent the world as changed. Having said this, the columnist strongly commits to a truth validity claim. This fallacy of reality in (1) is rhetorically tautological (see Wodak, 2015; Reisigl and Wodak, 2001), as assertions made are repeated, using different phrasing, making the proposition logically irrefutable:

Assertion 1	5 May 2013 is a ' <i>keramat</i> ' date. The	
Assertion 2	' <i>keramat</i> ' date is the deciding date. The date that will decide whether Malaysia will be all doom and gloom or bright and shiny with hopes for the future generation...	The GE13 is important as it will
Assertion 3	GE13 is the 'mother of all elections'.	decide the
Assertion 4	GE13 ... is the deciding GE on whether this country will be ' <i>BadatunTayyibatun Wa Rabbun Ghaffur</i> ' or a nation that is always cursed by Allah SWT.	future of Malaysia

On one level, the declarative assertion in (1, Assertion 1-4) as a speech act can function as a legitimate part of '*nasihat*' (advice) or *pesanan* (reminder), or what Walton (2010) would call a "prudential argument" (p. 171). Therefore, in the dialectical context of (1), it can be argued that the columnist is reminding or advising the reader about the importance of GE13, assuming that voters are deliberating on the decision that they ought to make on voting day, 5 May 2013. The importance of GE13 in (1) is also emphasised through the recontextualization (see the discussion on intertextuality and recontextualization in Chapter 4) of a particular verse in the Quran⁸⁷ (Chapter Saba' 34, verse 15): '*BadatunTayyibatun Wa Rabbun Ghaffur*'. The verse can be literally translated as "a fair land and oft-forgiving Lord" (Yusuf Ali, 2000, p. 357), which denotes to a country that is just, rich, peaceful and prosperous; where everyone gets what they rightfully deserve, those in power will rule accordingly, those who do good will be blessed equally.

However, on a second, deeper level, is where the fallacy of *ad baculum* argument arises. The verse is taken from a particular context that alludes to the fate of the tribe of Saba'. The people of Saba' were once righteous people, but they were not grateful for all the

⁸⁷ The Quran is the central religious text of Islam, which Muslims believe to be a revelation from Allah. For Muslims, the Quran is the words of Allah.

abundance of sustenance, happiness and ease that they initially lived in. As they turned away from Allah and took others (Allah the Creator's creations) for worship, they were cursed by Him and inevitably brought upon themselves destruction and devastation (see Ibn Kathir, 6/504). The *ad baculum*, through the device of an indirect speech act, characteristically causes a shift from what seems to be merely advice (or a reminder) in the prudential argument of a text, to a warning and later a threat. Searle (1969, p. 67) distinguishes between categorical and hypothetical warnings, suggesting that most warnings are probably hypothetical. As an example of a hypothetical warning, he gives the following statement form: "If you do not do X then Y will occur." Presumably, in the use of such a form as a warning, Y is an event or state of affairs that is bad for the hearer, and X is some state of affairs or an event that the hearer can bring about or not. In the case of (3), it is done implicitly through a reference to a commonly accepted religious precept, e.g. a threat of ingratitude. Considering the macro-context of (1), i.e. a negative opposition text, the columnist is, in effect, saying:

GE13 is important as it will decide the future of Malaysia.

Be grateful and do X (i.e. vote for the government).

If you are ungrateful for what you're enjoying now and do not do X,

Then Y (what happened to the tribe of Saba') will occur.

Therefore, I'd suggest you vote for the government.

Literally, (3) is a prudential argument – a reminder or piece of advice using a speech act that is a declarative assertion. Secondly, it functions as a warning. But such a hypothetical warning also takes the form of making a threat (See Walton, 1992, p. 173) through a secondary move that operates by suggestion and implication. It looks like a prudential argument on the surface, but it is meant to convey a threat of the consequences for not voting for the government which has been described as the one who protects Islam, while the opposition (including the Islamic party, PAS) is often described as a threat to religion (see referential and predication strategies in Chapter 6). Thus, this fallacy of reality specifically violates rule 7, i.e. the validity rule (logical validity). This rule is broken because (3) applies an unsuitable scheme of argumentation in two ways. First, it establishes the truth or acceptability of a standpoint by referring to some kind of authority (symptomatic argumentation): a religious authority, i.e. a Quranic verse (*argumentum ad verecundiam*). Second, it tests the truth or acceptability of a standpoint by pointing out

undesirable consequences (causal argumentation): ‘Then Y (what happened to the tribe of Saba’) will occur’ (*argumentum ad consequentiam*).

7.2.3. Argument about the future

The arguments in the Malay-dailies op-eds during GE13 featured a presumptive type of deductive reasoning concerned with hypothetical conjectures about what will, may or might happen in the future. The future constitutes ‘an ideologically significant site in which dominant political actors and institutions can exert power and control’ in the present (Dunmire, 2011, p. 19). This gravitation towards a hypothetical future in GE13 did not only assist in legitimizing the government’s political position, it also reflected power legitimization. Such reasoning, according to Grosz (1999), echoes Foucault’s notion of power whereby it functions “to dampen and suppress” the potentiality and possibility inherent in the future and seeks to “link it as firmly and smoothly as possible to that which is already contained” in order to maintain the status quo and “make the eruption of the event part of the fabric of the known” (p. 16). Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca (1969) call this a “pragmatic argument’ (see also Toulmin (2003, p. 369)) and such causal arguments oriented towards the future are quite often instances of such a scheme of argumentation (see Kienpointner and Kindt, 1996, p. 566). Consider first, (4) below:

(4) Ingat bangsa, ingat agama, ingat anak cucu

Mat Lutu cuma nak ingatkan kita semua. Ingat bangsa, ingat agama, ingat anak cucu. Jangan ikut sedap hati, ikut marah, ikut benci. Kita bukan kerengga. Kita manusia. Kena pakai otak waras. Jangan korbakan bangsa kita... jangan pecah belahkan anak bangsa. Jangan kerana nak menang, hina bangsa sendiri. Burukkan bangsa sendiri. Pemimpin bangsa sendiri... Mat Lutu nak ingatkan jangan kita rosakkan masa depan anak cucu kita. Jangan sampai kita ikut cakap helang makan buah belolok. Jangan kerana kita nak menang kita hancurkan bangsa kita, agama kita, masa depan anak cucu kita. Mat Lutu doakan kita mengundi dengan tenang esok. Ingat dalam otak kita, maruah bangsa kita kesucian agama kita dan masa depan anak cucu kita. Jangan fikir lain. Kita pakat tolak mana-mana yang tak boleh bagi tiga jaminan itu. Kita pakat tolak parti yang bersengkongkol dengan musuh kita dan mereka sendiri kerana nak menang. Kita tolak pemimpin yang tak

bermoral. Kita tolak orang yang ikut fahaman liberal serba boleh (Mat Lutu, 4 May 2013, *Berita Harian*)

(Remember [our] race, remember [our] religion, remember [our] progeny).

I just want to remind all of us. Remember [our] race, remember [our] religion, remember [our] progeny. Don't follow our heart, our anger, our hatred. We are not weaver ants. We are humans. [We] must use our sanity (literally a sane brain). Don't sacrifice our race. Don't sacrifice the future of the children of our race. Don't insult your own race, the leader of your own race just for the sake of winning ... I just want to remind [us all], don't ruin our progeny's future. We shouldn't go to the extent where we listen too much to what others have to say because, in the end, it will ruin us [idiom: jangan sampai kita ikut cakap helang makan buah belolok]. Don't ruin our own race, our own religion and our own progeny's future just for the sake of winning. I pray that we can vote in peace tomorrow. Remember this [in our brain]: the dignity of our race, the sanctity of our religion and the future of our progeny. Don't think about anything else. Let us together reject any of those who can't guarantee us these things. Let us together reject the party that is abetting with ours and their own enemies just for the sake of winning. Let us reject the immoral leader. Let us reject the one who has a liberal view about everything.

On the speech acts level, (4) has the illocutionary force of a directive in which the columnist, Mat Lutu, commits himself to a validity claim of normative rightness. It performs the function of conveying the writer's plan to the reader, who is expected to do what the writer wants him or her to do. It exhibits the world-to-word direction of fit. The headline: **Ingat bangsa, ingat agama, ingat anak cucu** serves as a *pesanan* ('instruction, reminder): '*sesuatu (seperti perintah, nasihat, dll) yang mesti dilakukan atau mesti disampaikan kepada orang lain*' (KPBM, 1989, p. 513) ('something (such as an order, advice etc.) which has to be done or attained for someone else'). This three-part list of instructions to think about [our] race, [our] religion and [our] progeny is repeated throughout the excerpt. The explicit verb choice of '*ingat*' used in (4) presupposes that the reminder is not simply focused on *thinking*, but more specifically, on *remembering*, which provides a link between past thoughts and future thoughts (via present thoughts). As

Bolinger (1971) argues, the use of *remind* as a verb “does not merely trigger something into consciousness, but something held there” (p. 527).

Again in (4), the speech act on the surface is merely a reminder, but covertly this speech act also functions as a threat through its essentially enthymematic argument, in the sense that it contains non-explicitly stated premises. It is also an example of *petitio principii*, also known as *circular argument/ reasoning*, in which what is controversial and in question, and has thus to be proved, is presupposed as the starting point of the argumentation. The fact that in the argument it is assumed that what has to be proved has already been proved is linguistically hidden using varying formulations, i.e. paraphrasing of the same proposition in the premises and in the conclusion (Resigl and Wodak, 2001, p. 73). The fallacy in (4) violates rule 6: The starting point rule: a standpoint must be regarded as conclusively defended if the defence takes place by means of arguments belonging to a common starting point. The argument in (4) is tied to an argument about the future, as will be illustrated in the following, and the argument about the future is dispensed throughout Malay-language editorials and columns in which fear is aroused by depicting a personally relevant and significant threat of voting for the opposition, and then there follows a description of a threat by outlining that voting for the government is effective and feasible to deter negative consequences. This disjunctive form of argumentation postulates only two choices: either maintain the status quo by voting for the government to stay in power, or all gains will be reversed, and a fearful outcome will occur. When the reader is presented with an either/or, Walton (2000) argues that it is an indication of a fear appeal argument through the explicit use of a device that he calls “dichotomization” (p.15), which is summarized in the table below:

OPTION A: If we do not follow the columnist’s proposition in the present, i.e. vote for the government (Action A), it will lead to undesirable consequences, the future will be at risk:

Table 10: Summary of the conditional sentences used as threats in the Malay-language editorials and columns during the GE13 campaign period

PROTASIS⁸⁸ (the if-clause)		APODASIS⁸⁹ [then-clause]
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If [we don't vote for the government] • If [we vote for the opposition] • If [the government loses power] 	+	<p>1: The future of our race (Malays)</p> <p>→ our race will be sacrificed (Mat Lutu, 4 May 2013, <i>Berita Harian</i>)</p> <p>→ the Malays will have nowhere else to go, they will never be able to be in the position they are now in government (Hafizahril Hamid, 21 April 2013, <i>Utusan Malaysia</i>)</p> <p>→ 'Malaysian Malaysia' will be formed, where the backbone is the secular ideology of the "equality" concept (Rencana, 28 April 2013, <i>Mingguan Malaysia</i>)</p> <p>2. The future of our religion (Islam)</p> <p>→ the word 'Allah' will be used by non-Muslims (to refer to their God) in the Malay-language bible (Rencana, 28 April 2013; Azman Anuar, 28 April 2013, <i>Mingguan Malaysia</i>)</p> <p>→ <i>Shi'ite</i> teachings will be spread (Rencana, 28 April 2013, <i>Mingguan Malaysia</i>)</p> <p>→ liberalism and pluralism will engulf the nation (Rencana, 28 April 2013, <i>Mingguan Malaysia</i>)</p> <p>→ Zionism will be established, as it is on the agenda to convert Muslims with their liberalism-pluralism understanding of religion (Hafizahril Hamid, 23 April 2013, <i>Utusan Malaysia</i>)</p> <p>→ in the name of reformation and change, they will change Islam to be like Reformed Judaism (Hafizahril Hamid, 21 April 2013, <i>Utusan Malaysia</i>)</p> <p>→ the country will be shared and plunge us all into a hole of curses by Allah (Sahbulah Darwi, 21 April 2013, <i>Mingguan Malaysia</i>)</p> <p>→ Malaysian Malaysia will be formed, where the backbone is the secular ideology of the "equality" concept (Rencana, 28 April 2013, <i>Mingguan Malaysia</i>).</p> <p>3. The future of our progeny</p> <p>→ the children (of our race) will be divided. The future of our progeny will be ruined. The future of our progeny will be destroyed (see Nizam Yatim, 22 April 2013; Rencana, 28 April 2013, <i>Mingguan Malaysia</i>; Mat Lutu, 4 May 2013, <i>Berita Harian</i>)</p>

⁸⁸ The clause expressing the condition in a conditional sentence

⁸⁹ The main clause of a conditional sentence

Throughout the GE13 campaign period from 20 April to 4 May 2013, projected events are constructed as a variation of a conditional statement. That is, they follow an if/then construction, as illustrated in Table 10. In conditional statements, information in the apodosis (then-clause) is constructed as dependent for its realization on the outcome of the situation presented in the protasis (if-clause). Palmer (1986) explains that the purpose of conditional sentences is not to state that “an event has occurred (or is occurring or will occur); the sentence merely indicates the dependence of the truth of one proposition on the truth of another” (p. 189). Or in slightly different terms, according to James (1982), the protasis sets up an imaginary world in which the proposition in the apodosis is the case. Information that is presented through a conditional statement, then, is presented as speculation about conditions and their contingencies. Dunmire (1997) suggests that what is significant here is how this conditional statement has been written such that the hypothetical and contingent status of the information in both the protasis and apodosis is suppressed.

OPTION B: In contrast, if we do follow the columnist’s proposition, the future of our race, our religion and our progeny will be in good hands. But the future is uncertain. Hence, rendering the future as known is paradoxical or, as Dunmire (2011) puts it, to “deny it as future, to place it as given, as past” (p. 40).

This relationship between Option A and Option B is summarized in the figure below:

Figure 6: Legitimization of arguments through a sample timeline

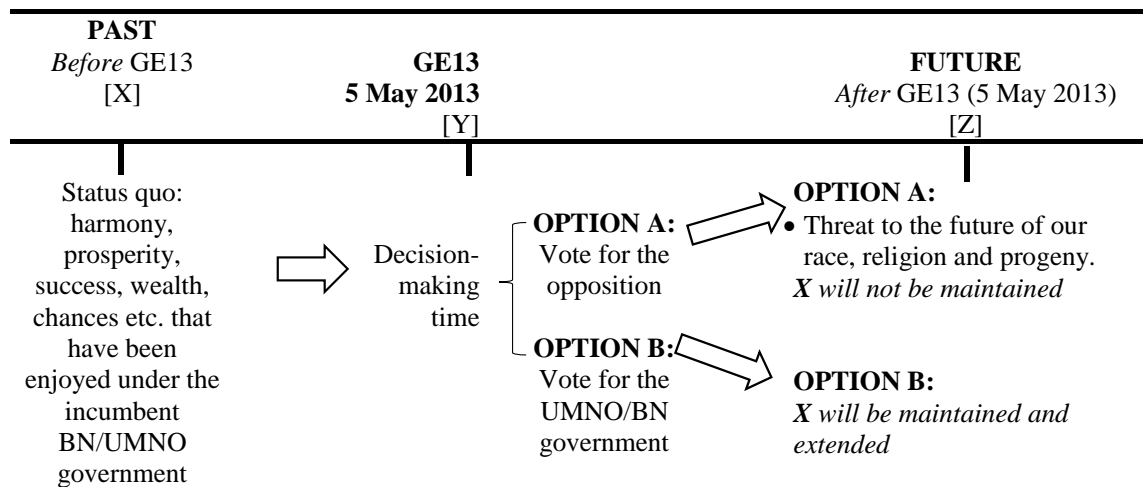


Figure 6 shows how the Malay-language editorials and columns legitimize their arguments during GE13 through a sample timeline. During the GE13 campaign period, the monolithic projection of the future in the Malay-language op-eds submits to the status quo and values the present in terms of its relation to the past (see retrospective texts, for example Zainal Rampak, 21 April 2013, *Utusan Malaysia*; Editor, 27 April 2013, *Berita Harian*; see also Chapter 6). In Givon's (1994) words, "futurity by definition involves epistemic uncertainty" (p. 275). Similarly, Fleischman explains that:

What purports to be a *statement* describing a future event is therefore, of necessity, a subjectively modalized utterance ... The subjectivity factor is a crucial one, since the distinction drawn [between contingent and assumed events] depends not on any objective, ontological notion of "future reality" but on the *speaker's conviction* that the predicated event will at some future moment constitute reality. (Fleischman, 1982, p. 20)

However, given the role of campaign discourse in the political process, references to or threats about future developments and announcements or promises about future action should be expected. But, contrary to Fleischman (1982), van Dijk (1997) and Dunmire (2011), in the Malay-language newspapers, references to the present tend to be positive, and those to the future negative. There are two potential explanations for this: First, there is a need to maintain the status quo. And from the incumbent government's perspective, it is not only the BN as a governing coalition that is challenged during GE13, also at stake is the

entire uninterrupted for 56 years political system that has been built and steered by UMNO, the dominant party in BN. Second, there is an expectation of something better than the status quo. And from the *rakyat*'s perspective, there is the big question of whether GE13 will be conclusive, or whether there will follow a period of uncertainty, if not instability, and what this would mean for Malaysia and the region. This kind of argumentative move is thus opportunistic, especially when individual preferences are not stable.

In the Malay-language columns and editorials, the future is emphasised through unfavourable imagined scenarios. Consider now the extracts below:

(5) “Bayangkan, jika mereka ditakdirkan diberi mandat, maka bercelaru**lah** negara!” (Awang Selamat, *Utusan Malaysia*, 23 April 2013, I have bolded *lah* above to increase its saliency) / Imagine if they are fated to be given the mandate, the country will be chaotic!

(6) *Di peringkat diri sudah dibayangkan bencana membelakangkan akidah.* (Hasan Ali, *Utusan Malaysia*, 25 April 2013) / The consequences for an individual can already be imagined [if one] trivializes *aqidah* (Islamic creed).

On the speech-act level, (5) is a directive that primarily involves a validity claim of normative rightness, while (6) is an assertion that primarily claims the truth. Consider now the conceptually very dense (5), which starts by setting up a hypothetical space by means of the imperative ‘*Bayangkan*’ (Imagine). Within this space is a counterfactual conditional sentence. Roughly, the antecedent of the sentence (the *if* part) is: ‘if they (the opposition) are fated to be given the mandate’. The consequence: ‘the country will be chaotic’.

Although the possibility of the consequence has not yet been actualized or taken place through the use of the modal *will* (Malay: *kata bantu ragam [KBR]*), it is intensified by the particle *lah*,⁹⁰ making it accurate to translate it as: ‘Imagine if they are fated to be given the

⁹⁰ I struggle to compare the elusive meaning or function of the particle *lah* in (1) with that of a similar particle in English. The translation equivalents are problematic simply because different languages have different particles, they very rarely match up in number let alone in meaning (see Goddard, 1994; Mohammad Fadzeli, 2015; Tay et al., 2016). The particle *-lah* is multifunctional (e.g. softening, confirming, emphasising, parsing, intensifying and expressing) and it very much depends on the reader’s linguistic intuition to infer what the various uses have in common and how they differ. Examples cited from Goddard

mandate, the country will [definitely] be chaotic!’ The particle *-lah* is non-obligatory, in that (5) does not become ungrammatical if it is removed. So, from a rhetorical point of view, its use implicitly signals a higher degree of certainty about the validity of a proposition while manifesting commitment: the degree to which the columnist commits himself to the validity of what he is writing. In other words, the absence of hedges or modal adjuncts (i.e. probably, maybe, perhaps) and the deliberate choice to use the particle-*lah* in the column not only express the strong commitment of the columnist towards the statement, but also give the statement the validity he seeks in making it a matter of fact.

On the other hand, the verb *bayang* (imagine) is affixed in (6): *dibayangkan* (prefix *di* and suffix *kan*) which then changes its meaning to ‘being imagined’. In (6), it is no longer an order to form a mental image or concept of what will, may or might happen in the future, but a consequence that has been mentally formed by the columnist. Putting (6) into the context of a negative opposition text: if one trivializes *aqidah*⁹¹ by voting for other than the government i.e. the opposition, the columnist has already roughly sketched out a possible disaster as the outcome of a proposed action without any real proof being given that this outcome will occur. *Aqidah* or the Islamic creed is the most important thing in Islam. It is what a person takes as religion. Someone who has the correct *aqidah* means someone who has the right beliefs. *Aqidah* is an action of the heart, it is to believe and affirm something in the heart. This is also what marks out the Malay-language editorials and columns, the focus on Islam and defining ‘us/our’ as Muslim.

In (5) and (6), the columnists promote people’s fear, attempting to dupe the other party into reasoning erroneously. The fallacy is delusional in character, as the reader is fooled by his or her anxiety into thinking that they must accept this as the truth, if the claim in question is justified. With BN’s total dominance over politics in its over five-decade rule, it is only to be expected that those who want change during GE13, albeit enthusiastically, are still worried about the consequences of change as well as the future of the country.

(1994) prove that *-lah* has never been consistently translated in English: Baskaran (1988, p. 342) glosses *-lah* as ‘for heaven’s sake’ (declarative) and ‘I am pleading’ (imperative), Kwan-Terry (1978, p. 23) and Bell and Ser (1983, p. 13) offer ‘of course’ and ‘really’, respectively, for some contexts, but point out that in other contexts these would-be equivalents will not do.

This is only understandable, as a new government would be a momentous change for one of Asia's most economically dynamic nations. While there is growing dissatisfaction, particularly amongst younger, urban voters regarding government inertia on tackling corruption and cronyism, and reforming laws and policies decried as authoritarian and racially discriminatory, older (Malay) Malaysians remain fiercely loyal to BN as the architects of independence, and as the custodians of a long-standing peace, or assumed inter-ethnic 'harmony' and economic growth, especially after the violence of 13 May 1969. Throughout the campaign, the Malay-language editorials and columns, intimidate the reader via a kind of innuendo suggesting that the bad consequences are very scary and that the future is very uncertain and dangerous.

Fairclough (2003) refers to this kind of prophecy as 'futuresology' (p. 167). In the Malay-language op-eds, legitimization is also done through a time frame or time line connecting 'our' (the writer and the reader, the Malays; see Chapter 6) past, present and future. The representation of GE13 as the Deciding GE presupposes a period that requires making crucial decisions about choosing who should be in power. The choices are connected to the status quo (i.e. when the BN government was in power, which occurred in the past, i.e. before GE13) and a consequence (which may occur in the future, i.e. after GE13). In other words, in the past, the cause of our success, peace and harmony was the BN government, and it now triggers imminent action in order to maintain and extend the existing state of affairs in the future. Making sure BN is still in power after GE13 is the only way 'we' (the writer and the reader, the Malays; see Chapter 6) can enjoy a successful future. This argument about the future is again a violation of rules 4 and 7.

7.2.4. Argument about responsibility

Consider examples (7) and (8) which are taken from from a positive government text, **Populariti Najib tingkat sokongan terhadap BN: Program transformasi dapat sambutan rakyat** (Najib's popularity increases support for BN: The transformation programme is welcomed by the people) written by Mona Ahmad in *Berita Harian*. The text begins with (7):

(7) Jagalah amanah ini (Mona Ahmad, *Berita Harian*, 2 May 2013)

Fulfil this *amanah* (responsibility)

The text starts with a plea '*Jagalah*' (Fulfil, literally: take care of, guard) which would otherwise be cohortative, but the use of the particle *-lah* mitigates the command which is expressed through the jussive that stands at the beginning of the extract. However, '*jaga*' is a transitive imperative tense verb, in which the imperative to fulfil (or take care of or guard) is expressed with *amanah* being the object that needs to be fulfilled (taken care of or guarded). On the speech-act level, the verb '*jaga*' is a directive that claims the normative rightness of an action. This choice of lexeme, a loanword from Arabic, '*amanah*', is an interesting one, in that when it is used together with a plea, as in (7), it becomes almost emotionally laden; what has been explicitly mitigated through the particle *-lah* at the beginning is implicitly intensified by the noun '*amanah*' (trust), which signifies an obligation in a responsible position. In tafsir Ibn Kathir (2000, p. 489), *amanah* refers to responsibility, it entails commitment or one's moral responsibility to fulfil one's obligations to Allah; those who fulfil the commitment will be rewarded, but those who fail to do so will be punished.

In (7), what the columnist really meant by '*...amanah ini*' (...this amanah) is later elucidated in the same text shown in (8), which then makes 'this' a cataphoric as it refers to the 'main assets of the country', i.e. Malaysia's stability, prosperity and peace. The absence of the agent who entrusted the reader with the *amanah* reflects a covert marker of hierarchy and power asymmetry in discourse as well as *behind* discourse. The columnist continues:

- (8) [J]angan memperjudikan masa depan negara dengan pilihan yang silap. Renungilah kestabilan, kemakmuran dan kesejahteraan Malaysia. Ia adalah asset utama negara yang perlu dipertahankan...Tidak perlu berfikir secara mendalam, sekali imbas saja kita sudah boleh membuat keputusan sama ada mahu masa depan negara diperjudikan kerana kesilapan kita atau sebaliknya. Mahukah keselesaan dan keamanan serta kebebasan yang dikecapi kini diragut hanya kerana kesilapan kita memilih kerajaan?... Masa depan negara terletak di tangan kita. Mahukah kita melihat masa depan negara kita musnah hanya disebabkan kita salah membuat pilihan akibat daripada terpengaruh dengan emosi tanpa memikirkan akibatnya. Tepuk dada tanya iman⁹² (Mona Ahmad, *Berita Harian*, 2 May 2013) / [D]on't

⁹² *Tepuk dada tanya iman* is an adaptation of a Malay proverb *tebuk dada tanya selera* (literal translation: pat your chest and ask what your appetite is like), meaning, think thoroughly before you act. *Iman* (Arabic) in its simplest translation is faith. *Iman* is to believe with one's heart, to confess with one's tongue and to

gamble the future of the nation with the wrong choice. Consider Malaysia's stability, prosperity and peace. These are the main assets of the country that need to be defended ... [You] don't need to think too deeply, at a glance we can already make the decision on whether we want the future of the country to be gambled because of our own mistake, or vice versa. Do we want the comfort and peace as well as the freedom that we've been enjoying stolen just because of the mistake we make in choosing the government? ... The future of the nation is in our hands. Do we want the future of the nation destroyed just because we choose wrongly due to being influenced by emotions without thinking about the consequences? Pat your chest and ask *iman*.

The columnist continues to write authoritatively about what is, what will be and what should be, and binds these together. In (8), she continues in a prohibitive mood, which is linguistically realized by the negative imperative '*jangan*' (Do not) that simultaneously expresses a moral statement, indicating that the act of gambling the future of the nation is not permitted:

'... **gamble** the future of the nation with the wrong choice'.

'...the future of the country to be **gambled** because of our own mistake, or vice versa'

The verb '*memperjudikan*', *diperjudikan* (root word: *judi*, gamble) demands attention, not only because throughout the extract its occurrence is repetitive, but also because of its connotation. Gambling presupposes hope as it is about taking a risky action in the hope of success. Prohibiting this risk-taking action is somewhat predetermined between right and wrong choices or what could be a correct decision or simply a mistake, subtly closing down lines of possibility, of hope, of what could be better, while intensifying her illocutionary force using deontic modality. This is another instance of how the Malay-language op-eds prophetically creating perceptions of value for unexplored and unknowable spaces that exist at a time-distance from the here-and-now in the future, and

demonstrate in one's physical actions. There are six pillars of *iman*: Believe in Allah, His Angels, His Messengers, His Books, The Last Day (Day of Resurrection and Judgment) and Fate and Destiny; good and bad.

hence limit the potential. As Fairclough (2003) asserts, “the power of futurological prediction is a significant one, because injunctions about what people must do or must not do now can be legitimized in terms of such predictions about the future, and extensively are” (p. 167). The irony lies in this: the reader, presumably a voter, is expected to make a choice between two, let us say, the government, A, or the opposition, B. Let us try to assess the logical cogency of the argument in (8) by reconstructing an underlying practical inference structure along the lines:

1. But B is the wrong choice.
 2. Making a wrong choice will gamble the future of the nation.
 3. Gambling the future of the nation will sacrifice the nation’s assets [i.e. the assumption that nation has been stable, prosperous and peaceful].
 4. Sacrificing the nation’s assets is a mistake.
 5. Making a mistake would mean the comfort, peace and freedom that we’ve been enjoying will be stolen from us.
 6. When our comfort, peace and freedom are stolen, our future will be destroyed.
- Therefore, vote for A, don’t vote for B.

The arguments seem to postulate a sequence of negative consequences resulting in some terribly bad outcome, where the first step, i.e. making the wrong choice by voting for the opposition, is linked by a sequence of connected events to some fearful final outcome. And the threat of the outcome is expressed in the form of rhetorical questions: Do we want the comfort and peace as well as the freedom that we’ve been enjoying stolen just because of the mistake we make in choosing the government? Do we want the future of the nation destroyed just because we choose wrongly due to being influenced by emotions without thinking about the consequences? These rhetorical questions provide an answer to an ostensible question in the way that the question is phrased. No one would want to lose their freedom (positive prosody) or consent to something being stolen (negative prosody) from them. In this case, “if a man tries to prove what is not self-evident by means of itself, he begs the original question” (Aristotle in Walton, 1980, p. 42). This is another example of *petitio principii*, in which the account of fallacy here is epistemic. To beg the question is a violation of rule 4: the relevance rule (obligation to ‘matter-of-factness’) in which the writer advances an argument that amounts to the same things as the standpoint.

Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca (1969) recognize argumentation from consequences as a legitimate type of argument, wherein they define a pragmatic argument as one that “permits the evaluation of an act in terms of its favorable and unfavorable consequences” (p 266). However, in (8) it becomes fallacious, as the premises only deal with the consequences that are likely to ensue from accepting the proposition. This fits into what Walton (2000) terms a ‘fear appeal argument’, which refers to a specific type of argument that has three central characteristics: (i) it cites some possible outcome that is fearful for the target audience, (ii) in order to get that audience to take a recommended course of action, (iii) by arguing that in order to avoid the fearful outcome, the audience should take the recommended course of action. (8) is another typical example of a fallacious use of *ad baculum*, as the columnist is using scare tactics to manipulate, not ‘logically’ persuade, the reader. The argument is weak as it bases the fear aspect more on suggested possibilities, as the columnist make claims that are highly implausible and presents no evidence for them (at least as far as the whole text is concerned, in the presentation of the arguments in the extract above).

7.3. Summary

In this chapter, I have discussed the argumentation strategies of Malay-language editorials and columns during the GE13 campaign. Pragma-dialectics’ norms of argumentation have helped to identify manipulative fallacies within the framework of the DHA. These fallacies fall under four legitimacy overarching fallacies: fear of the unknown, reality, future and responsibility. These appeals are inextricably linked to religion and race/ethnicity, which engender fear among the readers of these Malay-language publications to maintain the status quo. They rely on prejudices, i.e. preconceived opinions that are not based on reason or actual experience, in the readers, to stir them up; the writers of the editorials and columns direct their arguments at what they take to be the deeply held emotional commitment of the readers. Such tactics exploit the bias of their readers toward their own interests – whether, for example, these be financial interests, social interests or a combination of these. Normatively, as we have discussed in previous chapters, there should be a free flow of discussion, so that another party can reply to an argument in whatever way he or she thinks will best fulfil his or her obligation or express his or her

view. But fallacies that appeal to emotions are used to capitalize on a bias that shifts or twist the context of discussion, i.e. the general election in Malaysia. The following chapter will discuss the findings of the DHA analysis of English-language editorials and columns.

Chapter 8

Discourse-historical analysis of English-language editorials and columns

Introduction

This chapter presents the findings of a DHA analysis of the op-eds in two English-language newspapers, *The Star* and *New Straits Times*, as well as in their Sunday editions, *Sunday Star* and *New Sunday Times*. Since the grammatical structures of Malay and English, particularly in aspects of morphology and syntax are different, the devices of the strategies in the Malay-language op-eds in Chapters 6 and 7 may not be consistent with the devices used in this chapter. They may not be linguistically comparable, but comparisons can still be made in terms of the strategies used to legitimate or delegitimize the government or opposition in the editorials and columns during the GE13 campaign. This chapter particularly focuses on three discursive strategies discussed in Chapter 4. First, referential strategy, i.e. how social actors are named. Second, predication strategy, i.e. how they are evaluated as part of argumentation to legitimize the government and delegitimize the opposition. The findings show that, in contrast to the Malay-language op-eds, the government is represented as every race's hero in the English-language newspapers and the opposition as a threat to the multiracial, multi-religious coalition.

8.2. Positive representation of the government

8.2.1. Referential Strategy

The concerted effort to represent the government as multiracial is continued in the English-language editorials and columns. However, in contrast to the Malay-language op-eds, the positive representation of the government is made solely through references to the Barisan Nasional (BN, National Front) as a coalition, the coalition's chairman and country's premier, Najib Razak, and his team, as well as the coalition's manifesto (see Chapter 6 for a discussion on Malay-language op-eds). The absence of any references to any of the individual parties in the coalition, i.e. UMNO, MIC or MCA, implies unity. It presupposes the oneness, as in spirit, purpose, aims and interests, of a coalition that is made up of diverse racial and ethnic parties. It also connotes solidarity, i.e. firm and complete unity

within the coalition, and suggests the greatest possible strength in influence, action etc. during GE13. The table below summarizes the nominal strategies invoked in the ways the government is positively represented during the GE13 campaign:

Table 11: Referential strategies in Malay-language editorials and columns for positive construction of the government

Discursive Strategy	Objective	Categories
Referential/ Nomination <i>examining the ways that people, things etc. are named</i>	Discursive construction of the government	<p>References to the government coalition and/or political party: <i>Barisan Nasional (BN)</i></p> <p>References to the political leader: <i>Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak</i></p> <p>References to the people: <i>Malaysians, rakyat (people)</i></p> <p>Pronouns: <i>They, their, he, his (while referring to the Prime Minister, Najib Razak), it</i></p>

In contrast to the Malay-language newspapers, Table 11 indicates a lack of use of personal pronouns to positively represent the government in the English-language newspapers. However, in referring to the government and the prime minister using their full names, i.e. Barisan Nasional and Najib Razak, this, I argue, also suggests legitimacy in the sense that it is a reflection of reverence for the government and prime minister. ‘They’ is often used to identify an ‘other’ and this ‘other’ according to Bramley (2001, pp. 25–6) can exist not only in oppositional context but also in affiliative and neutral relationships created in contexts of discussion in which ‘they’ are embedded in the writer. In regard to this, I am in quasi-agreement with Bramley as to how Wilson (1990) puts it, “there can be little doubt that [‘they’] is [simply] employed in a neutral manner” (p. 68). The English-language op-eds pronominal choices of the prominent third-person (singular and plural) ‘he’ and ‘they’ are not solely used to convey direct contrast or opposition, as in the case of ‘*dia*’, ‘*mereka*’ or ‘*dia orang*’ (literally, those people) in the Malay-language newspapers (see Section

6.5). The use of ‘they’ in the English-language op-eds also occurs in an affiliative and ‘neutral’ context while representing the government. The use of the third pronoun ‘he’, to refer to the prime minister, Najib Razak, and ‘they’ to refer to the BN coalition, can be said to impart detachment, formality and objectivity if the editor/columnist of an English language op-ed neither closely affiliates with nor disaffiliates him/herself from the ‘other’, i.e. by not negatively or favourably evaluating them. But in the English-language editorials and columns, it is worth emphasising that the use of ‘they’ is dichotomized; it is either positive or negative (See section 8.5). In this sense, the use of ‘they’ in an affiliative context to positively represent the government includes ‘us’ through the construction of a group of people, i.e. the government with whom s/he is affiliated but which is still ‘other’. Here, the English-language op-eds take a positive position towards the ‘other’ (i.e. the government), invoked by ‘they’, by making positive evaluations of the prime minister or the government coalition, which will be discussed in the section below. The government that is invoked by ‘they’ in an affiliative context includes examples of groups for whom the English-language newspapers want to create an image of a good relationship.

8.2.2 Predicational Strategy

The following predicational strategy for representation of the government in the English-language editorials and columns describes the government positively as the party with a proven record, one that is united, a reliable, winning team, an agent of change and multiracial. The predicational themes in the English-language op-eds are not very different than those in the Malay-language op-eds, but the focus in the former is more on the government being a multi-racial and multi-ethnic coalition instead of solely emphasising a single race/ethnicity, as discussed in Chapter 6. This goes back to the target audience of the newspapers, and since the English-language newspapers target a multi-faceted, (English-) educated urban middle class, they are less likely to stir up emotions based on race (see Chapter 4). The predicational strategies in the English-language op-eds are summarized in the table below:

Table 12: Predicational strategies in the English-language editorials and columns vis-à-vis positive representations of the government

Discursive Strategy	Objective	Content Categories
<p>Predicational Strategy:</p> <p>What characteristics, qualities and features are attributed to social actors</p> <p><i>examining the ways that people, things etc. are described</i></p>	Discursive construction and legitimization of Self	<p>“BN” is the one with a proven record</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the only workable coalition which has a reasonably good track record - has the capacity to govern a complex country like Malaysia - ‘a tested coalition’ (quote), one that has a remarkable track record on all accounts - has proven Najib Razak can deliver - since 2009, the state government has invested more in housing, jobs, infrastructure and economic development <p>“BN” is reliable</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - when BN promises it delivers - has shown that it keeps its promises to the rakyat (people) - has enabled Malaysia to emerge from the credit crisis in a position of relative strength under the management of prime minister Najib Razak <p>“BN” is united</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - united through a power-sharing formula - has the principles of sharing, give and take -willing to share, sacrifice and concede so as to stay together <p>“BN” is a winning team</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - is going to win GE13. - Malaysia cannot have it any other way - takes Malaysia on the road to progress and transformation for the people - a team of young, experienced and proven leaders <p>“BN” is an agent of change</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - has a transformation team - [Najib Razak] has rebuilt the house of UMNO, revitalized BN and transformed the economy and government - [Najib Razak] has opted for a major overhaul of policy and mindsets with an emphasis on transformation

		<p>“BN” is the voter’s choice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - will be in power again – uninterrupted since independence in 1957 - BN is good government; a good government doesn’t need to be replaced. - BN has provided the people with almost everything - has been championing ‘people first’ <p>“BN” is multiracial</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the only party which is nearest to being multiracial - take care of all races - does justice to the people
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8.2.2.1. United BN

The government’s greatest advantage during GE13 was the opposition’s disunity.

Therefore, one major predicational theme that immediately arises from the texts in the English-language op-eds is the BN’s unity. For example, in (1) and (2), the positive qualities of the government are described through relational processes:

(1) **The three BN component parties are united** by the same BN constitution_which allowed them to reach a consensus on any issues affecting any particular race they represented without infringing on the rights of the others. **BN has a power-sharing formula**. (Satiman Jamin, 30 April 2013, *New Straits Times*)

(2) Although **it is a coalition of parties**, **it functions as a single party** with every race in Malaysia represented equally in its central council irrespective of the size of the component. The basis of this cooperation is the principle of sharing; of give and take and of willingness to sacrifice and concede so as to stay together ... **This willingness to sacrifice and to share is** what makes **BN unique**. (Mahathir Mohamad, 25 April 2013, *New Straits Times*)

According to Halliday (2014[1985], p. 433), relational processes are ones of being and becoming. Therefore, while they establish a symbiotic relationship between the carrier and the attribute, identified and identifier, token and value, they present and inform ‘the way things are’ about the BN coalition. Simultaneously, it also shows the writer’s commitment to truth about the coalition’s unity. Such unity is represented as the consequences of ‘BN’s sharing formula’ in (1) as well as ‘the principle of sharing and the willingness to sacrifice and share’ mentioned in (2).

8.2.2.2. One with a proven track record

Taking advantage of BN being in power for almost six decades, the second main predication strategy to legitimize the government is its representation as one with a ‘proven track record’. In (3) below, positive representation is made through reference to Malaysia’s prime minister, who was also the president of UMNO and chairman of BN. This is again described explicitly using the relational process below:

(3) Najib has proven he can deliver

The leader who can deliver his promises and tackle the hard issues facing the country ... In four years as Prime Minister, Najib has proven he can deliver. (A Jalil Hamid, 21 April 2013, New Straits Times)

This predication strategy in (3) is linguistically realized using a copular verb to connect the subject (carrier) with the complement (attribute): (5) Najib + prove + he can deliver. The verb phrase (has proven) in the present perfect tense is composed of two elements: the auxiliary verb to have (has) + the past participle of the main verb (proven), this provides additional semantic and syntactic information about the main verb. It shows the continuation of a past situation that has ongoing relevance and it “expresses a particular evidential category, one that indicates the availability of indirect evidence for the truth of a proposition” (Izvorski, 1997, p.1). In the case of (3), it occurs within the columnist’s perceptual world as factual (non-modal). On the other hand, ‘can’ is undoubtedly a modal verb in English, if defined formally. But in (3) ‘he *can* deliver’, ‘can’ has a dynamic modality that is concerned with the subject’s own ability and disposition, as it expresses what also seems to be a factual non-modal statement. This is because it involves neither the attitude nor the opinion of the columnist (except that it is true), but simply asserts that

Najib Razak, also referred to as ‘the leader’, has the ability to deliver on his promises and tackle hard issues facing the country. The tense choice in ‘Najib has proven’ indicates that this ability to deliver has been demonstrated in four years of being prime minister and is still being demonstrated at the time the column was written.

In the same vein, in (4), the government is further constructed positively as one with a proven record through a reference to the state government:

- (4) **TRACK RECORD:** Since 2009, the state government has invested more in housing, jobs, infrastructure, and economic development for the people. (Audrey Dermawan, 29 April 2013, *New Straits Times*)

The material process used as part of the English-language op-eds’ predication strategy to legitimize the government in (4) foregrounds the actor (i.e. the state government) as one who does things and make things happen or, as van Leeuwen (1996) puts it, ‘the active dynamic forces in an activity’ (pp. 43–4). ‘The people’ are depicted as a beneficiary (for whom something is done) of the material process carried out by the state government. Its underlying eventuality does not only hold throughout the interval specified by the adverbial *since* 2009, but also at its endpoint, i.e. an utterance of time, as in the case in (5). It conveys that this past eventuality has some bearing on the columnist’s evaluation of the state government’s performance or contribution, basically what has been done for the people, i.e. the Malaysians rather than the Malays, as in the case of Malay-language newspapers. Here, it is also seen how the present perfect is used as a rhetorical strategy, inviting the reader to infer the situation at the reference time, which makes the past eventuality relevant to the current issue in the GE13 campaign discourse.

In (5) and (6), English-language op-eds use explicit comparisons as part of their predication strategy to discursively construct a legitimate government. Instead of trying to emphasize similarities, the differences between the legitimate government and the delegitimate opposition are intensified by using ‘in contrast’:

- (5) In one stroke, he retired some old-timers, brought back proven leaders who were sidelined in the last election and roped in young and promising leaders. **In contrast**, Pakatan retained some of the[ir] ageing leaders. In essence, the BN campaign will

be built around Najib, whose popularity has consistently ranked higher than BN, and his team of young, experienced and proven leaders. (A Jalil Hamid, 21 April 2013, *New Straits Times*)

- (6) On nomination day, Barisan unveiled another surprise: the high proportion of fresh young candidates. In states like Penang, the percentage of new faces reached 70%. **In contrast**, Pakatan parties are still led mostly by older people: Lim Kit Siang, Karpal Singh, Nik Aziz And Hadi Awang, with Anwar himself six years older than Najib. (Bunn Nagara, 26 April 2013, *The Star*)

Also, notice that the strategy to legitimate the government is linguistically realized using a noun phrase which bears argumentative functions about the subject: Najib's team is described as comprising 'young, experienced and proven leaders' (5) and 'fresh young candidates' (6).⁹³ Since 'young' denotes inexperience and immaturity, the use of apparently contradictory terms that appear in conjunction with a nominative prepositional phrase is an oxymoron. As a strategy, it implicates an overachievement rhetoric about the government in contrast to the underperforming opposition, which will be discussed further in Section 8.5.2.2.

8.2.2.3. An agent of change

The following example further legitimates the government by describing the prime minister Najib Razak and his team as a 'transformation team':

- (7) **TRANSFORMATION TEAM:** BN has fully learnt the lessons of March 8, 2008, when the rakyat⁹⁴ rejected the old ways of BN and denied it the two-thirds majority in Parliament for the first time ever ... BN's campaign will be built around Najib and his team of young experienced and proven leaders. (A Jalil Hamid, 21 April 2013, *New Straits Times*)

⁹³ See also Bunn Nagara, 26 April 2013, *The Star*; A Jalil Hamid, 21 April 2013, *New Straits Times*; Zubaidah Abu Bakar, 3 May 2013, *New Straits Times*; Nik Imran Abdullah, 22 April 2013, *New Straits Times*

⁹⁴ The word *rakyat* generally means citizens, Malaysians, the people (see also discussion of the word in Chapter 6).

The lexical choice ‘team’ in (7) is significant. First, a ‘team’ as opposed to a ‘group’ denotes a group of people with a full set of the complementary skills required to materialize the transformation goal. Second, it presupposes that the team members under the leadership of prime minister Najib Razak are highly interdependent, share authority and responsibilities, and are all accountable for their collective performance while working towards a common goal, i.e. transformation. What is also significant is that, by including young, experienced and the proven leaders, it implicitly suggests that the government has already gone through its first transformation, i.e. its gerontocracy. Young people had been side-lined from decision making, had little or no say over the course of policies and actions that affect them, but bringing them on-board as part of the team presupposes acknowledgment of their potential contribution.

The construction of the positive government as the agent of change was also done via the verb to denote actions as in (8) and (9):

- (8) Najib has so far successfully rebuilt the house of UMNO, revitalized BN and transformed the economy and government. (Johnson Chong, 20 April 2013, *The Star*)
- (9) As soon as Datuk Seri Najib Razak assumed the premiership in April 2009 ... He opted for a major overhaul of policy and mindsets with the emphasis on transformation. (Bunn Nagara, 26 April 2013, *The Star*)

The very notion of ‘change’ through rebuilding, revitalisation, overhaul and transformation in both of the extracts above also shares a reformatory zeal as they are semantically similar; they connote changes from within. The metaphorical expressions that refer to the reconstruction of a building, with such words as *rebuild*, *revitalize*, *transform* and *overhaul*, which according to Kövecses (2010) seem to aim to re-establish “a well-structured and stable or lasting complex system” and therefore “[re]creating a well-structured and lasting abstract complex system is making a well-structured, strong building” (p. 159). In a sense, treating BN as a house that needs to be reconstructed presupposes a strong base or foundation of the coalition. It also presupposes that they embrace the importance of change in order to remain relevant, even though they have been in power for almost six decades (see also Chilton and Lakoff, 1995, p. 54; Musolff, 2004,

p. 153 for more discussion of the house metaphor). This, at the same time, dismisses the battle cry of the opposition, ‘*Ubah*’ or change in Bahasa Malaysian, as redundant.⁹⁵ Such use of metaphor is significant, especially given how Lakoff and Johnson (1980) put it “[m]etaphors may create realities for us, especially social realities [and] may thus be a guide for future action. Such actions will, of course, fit the metaphor” (p. 156). There are other metaphors used in the English language op-eds, building and marriage/divorce (see 8.5.2.1) and MEDICAL (see 8.5.2.4.) to describe the opposition.

8.2.2.4. Multiracial

The final predication theme in the English-language editorials and columns is BN’s representation as a multiracial coalition. This is important, considering the newspapers’ target audience, i.e. English-speaking readers who are more liberal in their views, as previously discussed. Also, considering the English publications with readers of different mother-tongue backgrounds (see Chapter 4. See also e.g. Amira, 2006; Nain, 2016), it would be difficult to promote the causes of Malay, Chinese or Indian interests only (see Chapter 4). In (10), the construction of a positive government is achieved through the reference to BN as a party, instead of a coalition, and it is linguistically realized via a relational process:

- (10) The willingness to share and sacrifice has enabled BN to keep parties representing different races together for more than half a century. In Malaysia, there is not a single political party which can claim to be truly multiracial as all parties in Malaysia are strongly dominated by one race or another. The only party which is nearest to being multiracial is BN. (Mahathir Mohamad, 25 April 2013, *New Straits Times*)

The concept of sharing, or what is called ‘*kongsi*’ in Malay, presupposes a contested ownership of the nation and membership of their “Malay land” and “native lands” as the ‘sons of the soil’ (see also Chapters 3 and 6). While the excerpts above use *kongsi* in its literal sense, i.e. ‘sharing’ in Malay, the Malay-language editorials and columns in contrast conjure up imagery of Chinese *kongsi* in its historical sense to portray Malaysian

⁹⁵ See among others, Chong, 20 April 2013, *The Star*; Datuk Dr Zakri Abdul Hamid, 2 May 2013, *New Straits Times*; Datuk Ibrahim Ahmad Badjunid, 3 May 2013, *New Straits Times*.

Chinese citizens as a threat to the core values of the Malay-Muslim establishment, including the notion of '*bumiputera*' (i.e. sons of the soil) and the Malays' supremacy. In the case of (10), the assertions that "there is not a single political party..." and "the only party which is nearest to being multiracial..." presuppose a particular cognitive schema that contributes to the construction of a subtly ordered Malay and non-Malay dichotomy, which BN is not part of. On the other hand, (11) below also focuses on conceptual '*kongsi*' while positively representing the government through a reference made to one of BN's ruling states, i.e. Johor:

(11) **New Straits Times: The Johor way of moderation is a time-tested model of 'kongsi'**

Justice for all

Johor has always been a Barisan Nasional stronghold. Unlike the other Malay states, it never, even for a moment, flirted with the idea of a Pas government and yet, it is a state where Islamic education is exemplary and has always been. This southernmost state of the peninsula was one to be reckoned with, even while the British were around. It is, too, the home of Malay nationalism, but this is an indication of its advanced command of modern politics, rather than jingoism. It is this sound foundation that made Johor what it is today, wealthy and stable. Here, the concept of "kongsi" has always been the preferred socio-political concept.

(Editorial, 1 May 2013, *New Straits Times*)

The concept of *kongsi* in (11) is linked to the concept of moderation, which implicitly implicates the government's concept of *Islam Hadhari*, i.e. a model of tolerant and democratic co-existence between Muslim and non-Muslim citizens. The concept of sharing connotes openness, compromise and mutuality, as well as justice, to create and regulate social ties between Malay Muslims and Chinese/ Indian non-Muslims. It is stated in contrast to PAS's narrow emphasis on the implementation of the Islamic criminal code of hudud, as its most prominent expression of Islam. In fact, *Islam Hadhari* is a concept created by Mahathir, Malaysia's fourth prime minister, and continued by his successor to counter the idea of Islamic State from the Islamic party, PAS (Mohd Azizuddin, 2008, p. 1). The excerpt above also foregrounds the issue between religious moderates and

extremists, while backgrounding it between Muslims and non-Muslims, in the government's representation as a multi-racial coalition. In addition, the English language op-eds also emphasise the idea of territorial belonging and identity 'home' for all races. For example, while texts that specifically mention Indians and Chinese are absent from the Malay-language editorials and columns (see Chapter 6), (12) below focuses on Indians, the third and smallest of the main ethnic groups in Malaysia (after the Malay and the Chinese):⁹⁶

- (12) Najib has transformed himself into a benefactor and protector of the Indians, careful to mark their many temple-based festivals, their national holidays and their cultural practices. He even dresses in Indian kurtas for Indian religious and cultural events such as Thaipusam ... if anything, a big percentage of BRIM recipients are Indians and their backing for Najib is also because of the payments as well as the 1malaysia clinic and numerous other projects that are impacting their life. (K Baradan, 20 April 2013, *The Star*)

In multicultural Malaysia, if the Malays are politically dominant and the Chinese have economic influence, the Indians have neither.⁹⁷ Indians continue to be looked down upon and mantras like "the Malays are lazy, the Chinese are greedy and the Indians are cheats" (see Chapter 4) are still part of Malaysian lore, degrading each community. Under the Malay hegemony model, it will be difficult for Indians to obtain a fair chance of economic development (Kesavapany and Ramasamy, 2008, p. 358). In (12), Najib Razak is represented as a hero for the Indians. It also demonstrates the extent to which Indians are treated as second-class citizens to be given gifts, especially in the way that the columnist dichotomizes the "powerless" Indians and the benefactor and provider Najib Razak (and his government). Najib Razak is also collectively recognized as being part of the Indian group, as he "dresses in Indian kurtas for Indian religious and cultural events such as Thaipusam". This kind of collective identification, according to Barker (2001), is key to understanding the legitimization of the government, and legitimization is one of the principal functions of identification. This rhetoric and rituals of 'collective identity' give central

⁹⁶ Also see K. Baradan, 4 May 2013, *The Star*.

⁹⁷ In the Ninth Malaysian Plan report, it was highlighted that ethnic Indians control only 1.2 per cent of the corporate wealth in Malaysia, a decline from the 1.5 per cent they controlled previously (Osman, 2007, p.1).

place to the BN government, a hero for all races. The choice is no longer between ruler's power and people's power, just a leader who is depicted as sharing an identity with his people.

8.3. Negative representation of the government

Similar to the negative representation of the government in the Malay-language editorials and columns, throughout the 15-day GE13 campaign, the instances that may imply criticism of the government tend to be ambiguous, implicit and backgrounded, indirect and vague. However, although the English-language op-eds are also predominantly pro-government (see Chapters 3 and 5 for more discussion on newspaper ownership), apart from the government being criticized trivially for holding GE13 on a Sunday (Tan, 21 April 2013, *Sunday Star*), one criticism is constructive and more in the sense to improve the ruling coalition/ its parties.⁹⁸ The English language op-eds acknowledge that the government coalition is not perfect and has its flaws, which is realized linguistically in the relational process below:

- (13) Coalition is **not perfect**, but it has proven its worth since Merdeka. (Johan Jaaffar, 4 May 2013, *New Straits Times*)

However, the discursive manoeuvre or semantic move via the use of the conjunction *but* after the negative 'Coalition is not perfect' introduces what is true instead, 'but it has proven its worth'.

8.4. Positive Representation of the Opposition

Similar to the Malay-language editorials, out of 136 texts, none, taken as whole, positively evaluates the Opposition throughout the 15-day GE13 campaign in the English-language newspapers. The only thing that is applauded is the opposition's conflict:

⁹⁸ See, for example, Ahmad A. Talib, 21 April 2013, *New Straits Times*; Syed Umar Ariff, 23 April 2013, *New Straits Times*; Editor, 29 April 2013, *New Straits Times*.

- (14) Kudos to PAS for refusing to accept morally questionable candidates. (Editorial, 23 April 2013, *New Straits Times*)

In (14), PAS is praised for having a disagreement over candidates of the opposition coalition's choice. While this represents a single party in the opposition coalition, i.e. PAS as a party with principles, it also implies disunity of the parties in the opposition coalition.

8.5. Negative Representation of the Opposition

8.5.1. Referential Strategy

The mainstream English-language editorials and columns strategies also focus on a negative representation of the opposition, as in the Malay-language newspapers. Similarly, the nomination and predication strategies to legitimize the government discussed in the previous section are constructed in such a way that they, explicit or implicitly, simultaneously delegitimize the opposition. Consider, first, the nominal and predication strategies invoked in the ways that the opposition is named in Table 13 and described in Table 14 during the GE13 campaign:

Table 13: Referential strategies in the English-language editorials and columns for a negative construction of the opposition

Discursive Strategy	Objective	Categories
Referential/ Nomination <i>examining the ways that people, things etc. are named</i>	Discursive construction/ delegitimation of the opposition	Pronouns: <i>They, Them, Their, Theirs</i> References to the opposition coalition and/or political party: <i>Pakatan Rakyat (PR⁹⁹), Parti Keadilan Rakyat¹⁰⁰ (PKR), Democratic Action Party (DAP), Parti Islam-Semalaysia¹⁰¹ (PAS)</i> References to political leaders: <i>Anwar Ibrahim, Abdul Hadi Awang</i>

⁹⁹ People's Alliance.

¹⁰⁰ People's Justice Party.

¹⁰¹ Malaysian Islamic Party.

		Ideological anthroponyms: <i>Unholy pact, loose pact, disunited pakatan (disunited Alliance)</i>
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The emphasis on positive government, first and foremost as a united coalition, functions on a shared (or strategically communicated) understanding of the qualities of the Other, i.e. the opposition as a disunited coalition. The success of a positive representation of the government is inextricably linked to a negative representation of the government, in the sense that it is vital and indispensable in establishing and maintaining a positive image of the government. Therefore, similar to the Malay-language op-eds, the English-language op-eds, most of the time, refer to the opposition as separate, individual parties in the coalition, i.e. either *Parti Keadilan Rakyat (PKR)*, *Democratic Action Party (DAP)* or *Parti Islam-Semalaysia (PAS)*, to emphasize the infighting and absence of cooperation in the coalition.¹⁰² When they do refer to them as a coalition, they use negative appellations to represent them. The delegitimation of PR is done through references to the opposition alliance as a ‘loose pact which comes together just for the sake of a marriage of convenience’ (Dermawan, 29 April 2013, *New Straits Times*) and ‘an unholy pact’ motivated solely by a common hatred of UMNO and the BN government, and who are incapable of representing different interest groups (Satiman Jamin, 30 April 2013, *New Straits Times*). In contrast to the Malay-language newspapers where the government is mainly represented as the protector of Islam, the government in the English op-eds is represented as a multiracial, multi- religious coalition. The opposition, on the other hand, is represented as a threat to the multiracial, multicultural and multi-religious society through their representation of PAS, the Islamic party and DAP. The English-language op-eds emphasize PAS’s quest to establish, were it to come to power, a theocratic state through the implementation of sharia (Islamic) law, i.e. hudud. While the DAP, being a Chinese-majority party, is represented as racist and chauvinistic. The English-language op-eds focus on a negative representation of the opposition through references made to PAS and DAP in particular. This continues to stir the emergence of feelings of prejudice,

¹⁰² See also Chong, 20 April 2013, *The Star*; Golingai, 20 April 2013, *The Star*; Alang Bendahara, 23 April 2013, *New Straits Times*; A Jalil Hamid, 21 April 2013, *New Straits Times*; Editor, 23 April 2013, *New Straits Times*; Syed Umar Ariff, 23 April 2013, *New Straits Times*; Dermawan, 29 April 2013, *New Strait Times*; Golingai, 29 April 2013, *The Star*.

discrimination and distrust in Malay and non-Malay/non-Muslim relations in the English-language newspapers. The use of third-person pronouns is ubiquitous throughout the English-language editorials' and columns' content, just as could be seen in the Malay-language op-eds. 'They', in particular, is not only used in an affiliative context, as discussed in section 8.2.1, but also in an oppositional context. In the latter sense of the use of 'they', similar to how it is used in the Malay-language newspapers when they negatively represent the opposition, 'they' in the English op-eds is used in an oppositional context. The pronominal choice 'they' is employed to create a oppositional dichotomy between 'us' (i.e. the government and the people) and 'them' (i.e. the opposition) by taking up a negative position towards them. This creation of a dichotomy of 'us' and 'them' is strengthened by the critical words and sentiments attributed to 'they', making the 'us' and 'them' distinction strongly oppositional. This will be discussed in the following section through an analysis of the predication strategies for the representation of the opposition during the GE13 campaign.

8.5.2. Predicational Strategies

The negative presentation of the opposition is continued through the use of the main predication themes identified in the table below:

Table 14 : Predicational strategies in English-language editorials and columns for a negative representation of the opposition

Discursive Strategy	Objective	Content Categories
Predicational Strategy: What characteristics, qualities and features are attributed to social actors <i>examining the ways that</i>	Discursive construction and delegitimation of the opposition	<p>'THEY' are not united</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Prolonged infighting over seats Already had deep cracks - PAS's faith-based approach to all things would be impossible to gel with DAP - Have no common ground to unite them, other than the common objective to topple BN - PAS, PKR, DAP would probably be at each other's throats - Exist for political expediency - 'marriage of convenience' - 'chaotic power-grabbing formula' <p>'THEY'</p>

<p><i>people, things etc. are described</i></p>		<p>are not prepared for change</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Show themselves to be out of their depth - the people are ready for change, but the opposition coalition is not - are not even able to come up with an electoral pact - old leaders <p>‘THEY’</p> <p>have a proven bad record</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lacklustre record in governing Penang, Kedah and Selangor for the past five years - Water crisis in Selangor - Make empty promises - Sharp decline in investments and state revenue, resulting in the state government having to go on a massive logging exercise - Do not have a good track record - Pie-in-the-sky promises - Violent <p>“They” PAS and Islamic Theocracy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A threat to multi-religious Malaysia - [PAS] the closure of pig abattoir, the ban on women performers in the Chinese New Year show at the Mall - Weekly holiday may well be changed to Friday - Cannot be an Islamic alternative with Sharia (Islamic) law, i.e. <i>hudud</i>. <p>DAP Is racist</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pits the Chinese against the Malays - An end to ‘<i>kongsi</i>’ (sharing) if DAP wins - Chauvinist party - Appeals only to Chinese, anti-Islam and anti-Malays -
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8.5.2.1. Disunited PR

One of the major themes found in the negative construction of the opposition in the English-language editorials and columns is the PR’s disunity. The opposition’s ideological polarity and lack of cohesive leadership are emphasised. In (15), the delegitimization of

the Other through the reference to the opposition pact's infighting is intensified by the use of the adjective *prolonged*:

- (15) The opposition pact's **prolonged infighting over seats stems from miscommunication and self-serving priorities**. (Syed Umar Ariff, 23 April 2013, New Straits Times)

The extract above does not only presuppose disunity that has been continuing for a long time, but also immaturity (*infighting over seats*), incompetency (*miscommunication*) and egocentricity (*self-serving priorities*). The lack of unity in the opposition is further discursively constructed through the existential process in (16), which is realized through an expletive *there* in the subject position:

- (16) Even from the start of this campaign, **there were already deep cracks** in the opposition side, stemming from the infighting, walkouts and protests. (A Jalil Hamid, 21 April 2013, *New Straits Times*)

Comparably, the conflict is also emphasized through a metaphor (see discussion in Section 8.2.2.3 on how the government is represented positively using the HOUSE metaphor). However, in (16), the metaphoric cracks intensified by the adjective '*deep*' for the opposition imply a defective structure and the failure of the coalition to accommodate defects – making them appear unreliable, weak and dangerous. The choice of adverb 'already' points towards a long-term (temporal) dimension of the period the opposition has been in disagreement with each other. The English-language op-eds also use MARRIAGE/ DIVORCE metaphors a lot when describing the disunity of the parties in the opposition coalition, particularly the Islamic party, PAS and mainly-Chinese party, DAP. For example:

- (17) In the Islamic matrimonial system, suitability and compatibility (*Kafa'ah* in Arabic) is crucial for sustaining a happy marriage. Potential spouses have to ensure that their interests, values, politics and socio-economic backgrounds are *Kufu'* – a match. Incompatibility will result in the couple having to work very hard to achieve happiness together and may very well result in divorce. When Islamist party and PAS and secularist party DAP came together to form part of the very loose opposition alliance called Barisan Alternatif in 1999, it was obvious to all that this

was hardly a match made in heaven. PAS's main pillar and aim was to set up the Hudud penal system and a theocratic state, while DAP's was that Malaysia is, and should remain, a secular state. These differences were huge, but they were ignorable, because it was only an electoral pact to get them through the elections against Barisan Nasional. There was no real expectation of actually having to continue the relationship after the elections, so they did not consider it a marriage. But 14 years later, with the opposition pact thinking it has a chance at Putrajaya, PAS and DAP are, to all intents and purposes, married; though not necessarily happily, and very probably not "forever after". Neither part has changed their principles of belief. (Editorial, 25 April 2013, *New Straits Times*)

In (17), the marriage/divorce metaphor is lexically exemplified using the words: *Islamic matrimonial system, suitability and compatibility (Kafa'ah in Arabic), happy marriage, Potential spouses, Kufu' – a match, Incompatibility, couple, happiness, together, divorce, match made in heaven, relationship, married* and "*happily forever after*". According to Đurović and Silaški (2018, p. 6), the marriage metaphor is one of the conventional metaphors in political discourse. Highly abstract concepts such as the relationship between political parties can be made more comprehensible if associated with something more tangible and familiar (see, among others, Silaški & Đurović, 2014; Wee, 2001). As Chaban, Bain and Stats (2006) point out, "[s]uch conceptualisations are familiar and immediately recognised, thus their use ... make a difficult subject easily and readily consumable by journalists and audiences alike" (p. 79). According to Musolff (2016, pp. 31–2), the marriage metaphor in political discourse is part of the broader love metaphor and the family scenario, it is one of the metaphors that can "carry evaluative and attitudinal biases that are related to the particular political dispositions and preferences of the respective national discourse communities" (Musolff, 2006, p.23). It shows, via a metaphorical expression as a surface, language vehicle of this (marriage) metaphor how discourse participants structure the issue of political relations between the two sides in question. In (17), the relationship between PAS and DAP is portrayed as a *marriage of convenience; they are incompatible* and *hardly a match made in heaven* describes the partnership between the two parties for their mutual (or illegitimate) benefit and being

unsuited to work together due to the different political ideologies of each party. Hence, emphasizing their disunity.

8.5.2.2. Proven bad record

Another main predication theme in delegitimizing the opposition is ‘the proven bad record’ of the PR coalition. This includes the PKR’s failure to solve the water crisis in Selangor and PAS’s Kelantan’s¹⁰³ poor development because it has been governed with a theocratic bent by PAS. PAS is associated with a relatively extreme view of political Islam that seems to command little support outside the traditional *Islamic heartland of the Northeast*.¹⁰⁴ PAS is also portrayed as a threat to the readership of the English-language newspapers. It is described as struggling to extend its support into the rapidly expanding urban context, limiting its political potential, and so the ‘promises of a place in heaven for those who support PAS’ are claimed to be wearing thin after 23 years of PAS being in power in Kelantan, which again points towards a long-term (temporal) dimension, as in (18):

- (18) **[S]upport for PAS in 2008 has been a disaster** ... the closure of the abattoir, the ban on women performers at Chinese New Year show at a mall, the 50% quota for bumis [*bumiputera*, i.e. the Malays and aborigines] in housing properties and the sharp decline in investments and state revenue, resulting in the state government having to go on a massive logging exercise. (Wong, 27 April 2013, *The Star*)

In (18), the temporal dimension of PAS’s bad record is intensified by using the present perfect tense: *has + been*, which again shows the ongoing relevance of PAS’s failures. The support given to PAS is not only directed towards economic regression that affected the people (Muslims and non-Muslims) in Kelantan, it also points towards infringements of non-Muslims’ rights, which is designed to provoke the fear of non-Muslims.¹⁰⁵ It dismisses the idea of ‘change’, or *Ubah* as emphasized by the opposition, and the call for

¹⁰³ The Kelantan city of Kota Bahru is known as the Islamic capital of Malaysia. It is ruled by the opposition PAS, which is trying to expand the powers of Islamic courts over criminal matters in Malaysia.

¹⁰⁴ The term refers to the poorest states in the Northern Malaysian peninsula: Terengganu, Kelantan, Kedah, and Perlis.

¹⁰⁵ See, among others, Nik Imaran Abdullah, 22 April 2013, *New Straits Times*; Editor, 3 May 2013, *New Straits Times*; A Jalil Hamid, 21 April 2013, *New Straits Times*; Tan, 21 April 2013, *Sunday Star*.

‘change’ as demanded by the Malaysians in the series of the Bersih’s rallies¹⁰⁶ as it suggests change in the opposition’s ruling states instead of ‘change’ to the government of Malaysia.

8.5.2.3. Islamic Extremists (PAS)

Another important predication theme focusing on a negative representation of the opposition is made through references to PAS and its objective of a theocratic state in Malaysia. The currency of Islamic discourse in Malaysian politics has been demonstrated on more than one occasion when UMNO and PAS exchanged charges on *kafir* (infidels) to delegitimize each other as they attempted to claim the position of an authentic Islamic party (see Kamarulnizam, 2003, pp. 194–95; Nagata, 1997, p. 144). The Malay-language editorials and columns are one-sided, it seems that the government is the only body trying to appear as the protector of Islam (see Chapter 6), but the effort to claim the position of Islamic authenticity between UMNO and PAS actually results in mutual attempts to out-Islamize each other. On the other hand, throughout the GE13 campaign, the English-language newspapers only focus on PAS’s vision to turn Malaysia into an Islamic state in the absence of any proper account of UMNO’s Islamic agenda, other than vaguely mentioning the concept of ‘moderation’ (see, for example, 8.2.2.4).

In the English-language newspapers, antagonising rhetoric is used to scare non-Malays through the representation of PAS, which again assists in legitimizing the government and delegitimizing the opposition. While unity and harmony are only attributed to the BN’s power-sharing apparatus, as discussed here in Chapter 8 and previously in Chapter 6, (according to BN logic) any party standing in opposition to the status quo presents a threat to the peaceful coexistence of ethnic and religious groups. The previous excerpt (16) is a typical representation of PAS in the English-language editorials and columns in which PAS is presented as one that will forbid eating pork, drinking alcohol and gambling, and will even introduce sharia law in an attempt to scare non-Muslims voters. Just as similar rhetoric is used in an attempt to scare Muslims in the Malay-language op-eds: a win for the

¹⁰⁶ A series of Bersih’s (it literally means clean in English) rallies was held in 2007, 2011 and 2012, before the election in GE12 in 2008 and twice before GE13 in 2013, in which thousands of Malaysians rallied for reform and change to government as well as for free and fair elections.

Chinese party (DAP, hence the coalition PR) will affect the position of Islam in Malaysia. Consider the excerpt below:

(19) If Tan feels so strongly that Catholics in his diocese should not be inconvenienced on a Sunday because it is a holy day, then all the more he should urge them to consider carefully before voting for PAS as the weekly holiday may well be changed to Friday should they come into power! (Roger Tan, 21 April 2013, *Sunday Star*)

Situating something in the future unavoidably involves an element of uncertainty: one can never know be sure what will eventually happen. (This does no doubt explain why the future tense modal *will* has developed an epistemic meaning). However, the syntactically common conditional *if-then* used in the excerpt to present factual apodosis (a consequence, i.e. the weekly holiday may well be changed to Friday) implies that the columnist accepts that state as the *reality*; instead of presenting a future possibility, he emphasises an accepted truth. The apodosis clause not only indicates the columnist's commitment to *reality*, it also carries other overtones, suggested by the idiomatic 'may well'. In this case, it indicates that the apodosis is likely to happen and/or be true, as is logically deduced from present accepted truths (AT) that:

AT1: [GE13 is held on 5 May 2013]

AT2: [5 May 2013 is a Sunday]

AT3: [Sunday is a holy day for Catholics]

If PAS comes into power in GE13, the weekly holiday may well be changed to Friday (Muslims' holy day)

The implicit message lies in the imperative that is represented by the anankastic conditionals *If want (p), must (q)* or *If not want (p), must not (q)*. That is, as repeatedly discussed in the English-language newspapers throughout the campaign, if the entente between PAS and DAP survives GE13, non-Malays must be prepared for an Islamic theocratic government to emerge and run the country (see, among others, Editor, 26 April 2013, *New Straits Times*; Azhari Karim, 27 April 2013, *New Straits Times*; Zubaidah Abu Bakar, 4 May 2013, *New Straits Times*). This means it is more than being forbidden to eat

pork, drink alcohol and gamble, and it definitely means more than just sharia (Islamic law), i.e. hudud and the use of the word ‘Allah’ for non-Muslims (presumably non-Malays). This kind of gravitation towards a hypothetically fearful future is also continually reiterated in the Malay-language editorials and columns, the only difference is that while the Malay-language op-eds target Malay readers, the English-language op-eds target non-Malay readers (see Chapters 6 and 7). Consider the excerpt below:

- (20) Pas cannot be the Islamic alternative with the hudud. An Islamic political party is by definition duty bound to put into place Islamic institutions when it wins power and important among these is the law. Islamic penal law has four categories and hudud, more than any other, relates directly to divine injunctions, hence, without it the law cannot be said to be Islamic. However, as it deals with very serious crimes, the punishment is necessarily heave – among them stoning to death for adultery, amputation of the hand for theft and death for the apostate – and to modern sensibilities these are barbaric. Not unnaturally, for non-Muslims especially this is unacceptable even when the promise is that hudud will apply only to Muslims. PAS is not a plausible Islamic alternative without the hudud and for the DAP to agree to the hudud, even if it is just political expedience, it would be suicidal. (Editor, 26 April 2013, *New Straits Times*)

The PAS-hudud saga in the English-language op-eds is always portrayed from the perspective of PAS and DAP relationship. The division among the opposition parties not only implies the disunity and incompetence of the PR as a coalition, it also implies the possibility that it will lead to political instability should they come to power. This is seen as a threat to the present racial harmony in Malaysia and is underpinned by the paradigm of ‘us’ (i.e. Malays=Muslims) and ‘them’ (i.e. the Chinese particularly, and Indians, non-Muslims). On a very abstract level, while the Malay-language op-eds equate voting for PAS with voting for DAP and their ‘Malaysian (as opposed to Malay) Malaysia’, which threatens the status of Islam as the official religion in Malaysia and the status of the Malays as sons of the soil, in the English-language op-eds, voting for DAP equates voting for PAS with their objective of making Malaysia an Islamic state. As in (20), PAS’s idea of sharia law, i.e. hudud, is framed as a negative concept that does not suit the context of a

modern multi-religious Malaysian society, rigid and leaving no room for religious freedom and tolerance. Hudud is mentioned merely as a harsh Islamic concept, without any conceptualisation or explanation of its meaning. The perceived harsh nature of hudud, among the often-quoted ones: stoning to death for adultery, amputation of a hand for theft and death for apostasy, are designed to generate fear, not only among non-Muslims (see, among others, Kuppusamy, 25 April 2013, *The Star*; Lai, 2 May 2013, *The Star*) but among Muslims as well. This (mis)representation of hudud through PAS in the English-language newspapers not only gives a distorted representation of Islam and its laws, but also, in many instances, derides PAS as an Islamic party in Malaysia (see Tan, 21 April 2013, *Sunday Star*).

8.5.2.4. Not ready for change

During GE13, the opposition's call for political change, i.e. a change of government, is dismissed in the next important predication theme in which the English-language op-eds describe the opposition as the ones who are 'not ready for change'. In (19):

(21) The PKR, PAS, DAP alliance is being helped by supporters and sympathisers, many of whom claim to be more enlightened than the rest of the population, who choose to ignore the bright-as-day inconsistencies and who legitimise the attempt to whitewash over the ideological gulf. No matter how unlikely or unsustainable the to-each-its-own alliance, it must be supported to deny BN. It is not that they do not know, they choose to ignore. The fact that they are ignoring such incongruity suggests the fatal flaw in the relationship – a wound allowed to fester with band aid-like solutions. Sooner or later it could turn gangrenous. This must be a classic case of cutting off the nose to spite the face. (Zainul Ariffin Md Isa, 1 May 2013, *New Straits Times*)

In (19), the columnist emphasizes the infighting and ideological differences between the parties in the opposition coalition to show that they are not ready for the change they have been calling for in GE13, especially through phrases laden with negative attributions: e.g. '*Bright as a day inconsistencies*', '*the ideological gulf*' and '*unlikely and unsustainable*'. The use of the epistemic modality 'must' indicates the level of commitment the columnist expresses in relation to the truth of what he is saying about the opposition's supporters, i.e.

they are aware of the conflicts in the opposition, but they support the opposition anyway just to ensure that the BN will be denied their power to govern. In (19), the columnist also uses a MEDICAL metaphor. Zavadil (2007) notices that Plato uses medical metaphors quite often in his political works to legitimize an idea of society that sees the politician-ruler as a doctor, i.e. as the only one who is endowed with the proper knowledge and thus allowed to “cure” society. According to Longo (1980), for Plato:

The society of the governed is represented as the class of the ill, subjects to the caste of physicians. Society appears as a body producing deviances and diseases which require a therapy, a control which is institutionally administered by the physician. (Longo, 1980 as cited in De Leonardis, 2008, p.37).

However, in (19,) the metaphor is used to delegitimize the opposition whose discrepancies are seen as a wound superficially treated by covering them; but covering them is not a solution to solve the conflicts in the opposition coalition; it just makes things worse. The columnist goes on further to claim that, eventually, at some unspecified future time, the festering wound will cause local death of soft tissues (i.e. gangrenous), which refers to deeper structural problems in the opposition. The expression ‘cutting off the nose to spite the face’ presupposes that there is something that the people are not satisfied with as regards the government but voting for the opposition is seen as a needlessly self-destructive over-reaction to such dissatisfaction with the government, because the opposition is not even ready for a change of government itself. This, in a way, also backgrounds the aspirations for change among Malaysians who are discontented with the government which has been representing them for almost six decades.

8.5.2.5. Racist

The construction of a negative representation of the opposition is also achieved through the predication theme of DAP being a racist party. The DAP’s fight for a Malaysian Malaysia is taken by the English-language op-eds as a fight against “*kongsi*” (or sharing in English) between the races (see discussion on *kongsi* in 8.2.2.4). As discussed in Chapter 3, historically, *kongsi* culture was imported from mainland China, hence making these connections also serve to emphasise the foreignness of the Chinese in Malaysia. The

Malay-language newspapers link the ‘Chinese *kafir*’ (Chinese infidels) identity to Chinese *kongsi* to locate the DAP and the Chinese in the Malaysian political landscape. The DAP in the Malay-language op-eds is also perceived to exhibit a lack of acceptance of the social contract (in other words the ‘limits’ of Malaysian politics), we can see how colonial imagery of the Chinese *kongsi* has been attached to the party, evoking tropes of militancy, detachedness and menace.

DAP is labelled as racist despite the party’s claim that they are multiracial (see <https://dapmalaysia.org/en/about-us/the-party/>); its leadership and the overwhelming majority of its members keep being represented as a contradiction. Its strategy is described as designed to pit Chinese against Malays, especially when, in many instances, even after six decades of independence, the Malaysian Chinese (and Indians) still feel that they are being treated as second-class citizens (see Kamal Sadiq, 2010, p. 18; Pak, 2011; Hefner, 2015, p. 174). Therefore, when DAP leaders and many Chinese speak of feeling that they have been made second-class citizens due to government discrimination in areas of economic, educational and cultural life, it is considered a threat to the concept of *Ketuanan Melayu*¹⁰⁷ (Malay dominance, see Chapter 3 for a historical discussion and Chapters 6 and 7 for a discussion of the concept in Malay-language editorials and columns). In a sense, *kongsi* can also be viewed as a way of managing legitimate minority grievances in Malaysia. For example, (20) below negatively represents DAP by making a reference to DAP’s predecessor, PAP:

- (22) An end to ‘*kongsi*’ if Kit Siang wins. In 1963, Singapore joined the new state of Malaysia. The people’s action party (PAP) did not believe in sharing power, it promoted meritocracy and rule by the elite by suggesting that Malaysia was not ruled by the cleverest and the most qualified but by Malays. This was intended to stop Chinese support for MCA and antagonise them against Malays and UMNO. (Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad, 30 April 2013, *New Straits Times*)
- (23) The coming general election finds the DAP adviser threatening to breach this BN fortress, of course, on the back of the party’s much touted meritocracy when in fact,

¹⁰⁷ See, among others, Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad, 25 April 2013, *New Straits Times*; Satiman Jamin, 30 April 2013, *New Straits Times*; Tan, 3 May 2013, *The Star*.

nepotism approaching a dynasty helms it. Loud contradiction – wearing a multiracial label and championing chauvinism. (Editorial, 1 May 2013, *News Straits Times*).

The excerpts above are laden with contradictions. First, while a meritocracy is a system in which people are only evaluated on the basis of merit, in (22), the columnist is equating meritocracy to ‘rule by the elite’ that led to inequality between the Chinese and the Malays, while in (23) meritocracy is again perceived negatively. Second, in (22) the writer also claims that the idea of PAP’s meritocracy is because they “suggested that Malaysia was not ruled by the cleverest and the most qualified but by Malays”, which in a sense is true. The column’s prognostic frame is typical prophetic rhetoric of *if x then y*, predicting the future if the DAP wins. Also, notice that (22) is syntactically anchored to the past, which plays with the Malay sentiment of “how PAP did not believe in the concept of ‘sharing power’ but ‘meritocracy’”. In (23), the idea of meritocracy is dismissed because DAP is described chauvinist and nepotist, a typical example of *ad hominem*. There are two points that I wish to highlight here: first is the connotation of the idea of ‘*kongsi*’ used by the author, and second is the idea of a rejection of ‘meritocracy’ because ‘Malaysia was [already] ruled by the cleverest and the most qualified [and] not just by Malays’. This implicitly alludes to a status quo which must be defended, and Malays who must be protected. While the former justifies positive discrimination, the latter is simply an oxymoron – why reject meritocracy if Malaysia is really ruled by the cleverest and the most qualified and not only by Malays? The answer is, because Malaysia is not.

8.6. Summary

In this chapter, I have discussed the representation of the government and the opposition in English-language editorials and column during the GE13 campaign by focusing on two discursive strategies, namely referential and predication strategies. Similar to the Malay-language op-eds, the analysis of the English-language op-eds also shows that the government coalition is represented in a positive light. But in this chapter, the focus is more on the government being a multi-racial and multi-ethnic coalition, instead of solely emphasising a single race/ethnicity. The opposition Islamic party, PAS, is associated with a relatively extreme view of Islam in the English-language op-eds, while the opposition’s

mainly Chinese-party, DAP, is represented as a threat to multiracial Malaysian society. The government is represented as the one who will protect the multiracial society and bring progress to Malaysia (as opposed to the ‘change’ demanded by the opposition). As in the case of the Malay-language newspapers, there are no editorials or columns that negatively refer to the government and positively refer to the opposition. The next chapter will focus on the argumentative strategies employed by the English-language op-eds.

Chapter 9

Argumentation Analysis in English-language editorials and columns

9.1. Introduction

This chapter aims to demonstrate the argumentation strategies of English-language editorials and columns during the GE13 campaign in Malaysia. In Chapter 8, we saw that, in contrast to Malay-language newspapers, in line with their target readers, the retreat from focusing on one race/ethnic group in the English language op-eds offers a new sense of security by offering a sense of individual identity and communal solidarity, which appears as a resolution to the problem of the alienation of outsiders discussed in Chapters 6 and 7. This chapter discusses ways of reasoning (to persuade) readers of the validity of such claims for truth and normative rightness made in the English-language op-eds. Similar to the Malay-language op-eds, since the English-language newspapers also publish editorials and columns that present the government in a positive light while deriding the opposition, they violate rule 1 of the commandments discussed in chapter 4. Therefore, this leaves us with certain fallacies, which will be discussed in this chapter:

9.2. Argument about DAP

9.2.1. *Argumentum ad hominem*

One of the main strategic moves in the English-language op-eds' argumentation is questioning the opposition's personality and character (i.e. their credibility, integrity, honesty, expertise, competence and so on), instead of trying to refute their arguments. Such a classic example of argumentation is called *argumentum ad hominem* (see Reisigl and Wodak, 2001, p. 72). Copi and Burgess-Jackson (1992) maintain that "whenever the person to whom an argument is directed (the respondent) finds fault with the arguer and concludes that the argument is defective, he or she commits the ad hominem fallacy" (p. 127). While in Hamblin's (1970) words, "according to modern tradition an argument *ad hominem* is committed when a case is argued not on its merits but by analysing (usually unfavourably) the motives or background of its supporters or opponents" (p. 41). Attacking the other party's ethos (see discussion on Aristotle and ethos in Chapter 2) in

arguments is a powerful persuasion mode as it leads to the conclusion that such a person lacks credibility and, therefore whatever argument they use, it may be discounted as worthless. Van Eemeren, Garssen and Meuffels (2009, pp. 53–55) identify three variants of *argumentum ad hominem*: (1) A direct attack, also called the *abusive* variant, (2) an indirect attack, also classified as the *circumstantial* variant, and (3) *tu quoque* or the “you too” variant.¹⁰⁸ While there are many instances of the *abusive* variant that attack the opposition by casting doubt on their integrity, reliability, expertise and intelligence, as well as their good faith, so that they lose credibility in the Malay-language op-eds (see Chapters 6 and 7), that particular variant is absent from the English language editorials and columns. However, as will be discussed in the following, there is evidence of the other two variants of ad hominem arguments in the English-language op-eds that are not concerned with the ‘facts’ of the matter in question but with attacking the (alleged) concealed motives of those who advance an argument. In that case, the ad hominem arguments employed here are a violation of the first (freedom) and fourth (relevance) rules for critical discussion: “participants must not prevent each other from advancing or casting doubt on standpoints” and “a participant may defend her or his standpoint only by advancing argumentation related to that standpoint” (see Chapter 2):

9.2.1.1. *Tu quoque ad hominem*

On the speech act level, the argument in (1) is put in the form of a warning: ‘You have been warned’, in which, on the speech act level, it shares the illocutionary force of directive utterances (e.g. “Don’t do that!”, “Watch out!”). As such, it primarily involves the normative rightness of a validity claim. Wierzbicka (1987) suggests that warnings have a double illocutionary purpose: “I say this because (i) I want to cause you to know it, (ii) I want to cause you to be able to cause this bad thing not to happen to you” (p. 178). In this sense, in (1), the columnist seems to be trying to avert a misfortune by offering

¹⁰⁸ Van Eemeren et al. (2009, p.53) note that in the standard approach to fallacies and in informal logic, there is not really any general agreement on the use of terminology. “Circumstantial” sometimes stands for accusations of inconsistency in general: “Given certain alleged facts about one’s opponent’s background, behaviour, prior commitments, or other circumstances, it is inconsistent for that opponent to accept (or reject) a particular point of view! (Brinton 1995, p. 214). The *tu quoque* variant seems to be restricted by some to responses to criticism or behaviour (“you also did it yourself”) and does not belong to an accusation of inconsistency. What is termed “circumstantial” in the pragma-dialectical approach is called “poisoning the well” by others, including Walton (1992, pp. 209–210). This confusion in terminology is symptomatic of the chaos noted by Hamblin (1970) that reigns in the standard approach to fallacies.

information about the opposition, by making a reference to Lim Guan Eng, the Secretary-General of DAP and the son of Lim Kit Siang, DAP's prominent leader.

- (1) The next general election is being touted by the opposition as 'the dirtiest ever' in the history of our country. For a political party that has largely thrived on primitive chauvinism and an ideology of hate, it would be totally out of character were they to support our recent call for an incident-free general election. The prospect of Lim Guan Eng in Putrajaya is too terrible to contemplate. The bad news for Malaysia is that there are more like him where he comes from. You have been warned. (Tunku Abdul Aziz, 27 April 2013, *New Straits Times*)

However, excerpt (1) is also a covert and indirect threat, i.e. the columnist is saying that if the reader does not agree with the information (or implicit recommendation) being put forward, then, the consequences will be "too terrible to contemplate" and against the interests of the reader. Such a threat is allied with ad hominem. Following Walton (2006, p.123), in the most basic ad hominem argumentation scheme, the argument in (1) can be presented as in the following:

Character Attack Premise: DAP has largely thrived on primitive chauvinism and an ideology of hate.

Conclusion: DAP's (or the opposition's) argument about a clean and fair general election should not be accepted.

The argument in (1) also fits the "*tu quoque*" type of ad hominem, in the sense that the columnist undermines the views of a dialectical opponent on the basis of inconsistency on the DAP's part regarding an incident-free general election:

1. DAP makes a call for an incident-free general election.
2. DAP has largely thrived on primitive chauvinism and an ideology of hate [that could make it possible to have an incident-free general election]
3. Therefore, the proposal made by the DAP to have an incident-free general election is false and DAP is not worthy of being followed on the basis of their advocacy.

Walton (1992, p.192) maintains that *tu quoque* ad hominem is where one party advances an argument to which the other party replies: “You can’t fairly criticize me on that basis, for you are just as bad. You are doing the same thing yourself” (p. 191). In a similar vein, van Eemeren and Grootendorst (1983) emphasise the *contradiction* of *tu quoque* ad hominem and they also argue that a discrepancy may be:

...within a single discussion, but it may also be a discrepancy between the point of view adopted by the other party in this discussion and the point of view that he has earlier defended during another discussion or on some other occasion. It is also possible that the point of view now adopted does not accord, or even conflicts, with the rest of the opponent’s behaviour or with certain principles that he may be expected to observe. (p. 190)

In the case of (1), the columnist suggests *tu quoque* that the DAP has no right to support the call for a clean and fair or incident-free election, which can also be an allusion to the Bersih movement (see Chapter 3). He argues that it is because DAP is a Chinese chauvinistic party and based on ideology of hate, an argument that was also made by the Malay-language editorials and columns in representing the opposition (see Chapter 6), which contradicts the idea of a just election (see also Chapter 8 for a discussion on how the opposition (and the DAP) are represented during GE13).

9.2.1.1.2. Circumstantial ad hominem

Similar to the *tu quoque* variant of ad hominem described above, an indirect attack (*circumstantial* variant) of ad hominem in (2) is also realized by attacking DAP’s ethos (see also Chapter 8 for representation of the DAP through nomination and predication strategies). However, in contrast to (1), the ethotic argument in (2) fits what van Eemeren and Grootendorst (1983) call ‘circumstantial ad hominem,’ which is “an [indirect] attempt to undermine the opponent’s position by suggesting that his only motive is *self-interest* and that the argumentation he puts forward is nothing but a rationalization” (p. 190, italics in original). This *self-interest* is portrayed as being in contrast with the government who are seen as acting in the interests of all groups in Malaysia, as discussed in the previous chapter. For example:

- (2) It is false assumption that meritocracy is the best form society can take. Those falling for this cheap trick forget that it is an unadulterated capitalist-driven

ideology. Even the classical economist Adam Smith advised some temperance that will serve the ends of social justice. And, as the modern economist John Maynard Keynes suggested, it is ridiculous to believe that the greediest among us, the capitalists, can be pursuing the greater good. To decry the New Economic Policy and its positive discrimination as not deserving merit, as DAP is wont to do then, is just a ploy. DAP is not predisposed to sharing or '*kongsi*', as the local expression goes. Given its blatant chauvinism, as one can presume that the party cherishes the notion that they are more deserving than the rest of us. us. The moderation that characterises '*kongsi*', on the other hand, is that philosophy which has informed the Malaysian social, political and economic ethos since the independence of Malaya and Johor has been at the forefront of its struggle: justice for all. If Johor voters are seduced, a black future of nepotism where merit is the preserve of the privileged, awaits them. (Editor, 1 May 2013, *New Straits Times*)

On the speech act level, the assertion made by the columnist in (2) involves four validity claims that can be questioned as they imply the columnist's commitment to knowing the truth. In the case of an ad hominem argument, (2) particularly questions the opposition's sincerity, as illustrated in Walton's (2006, p. 125) circumstantial ad hominem argumentation scheme below:

Argument premise: Meritocracy is the best form society can take.

Inconsistent commitment premise: DAP is not predisposed to sharing or '*kongsi*'; given its blatant chauvinism, one can presume that the party cherishes the notion that they are more deserving than the rest of us.

Credibility questioning premise: DAP's credibility and sincerity in believing in their own argument have been put into question (by the two premises above)

Conclusion: Meritocracy is not the best form society can take.

In (2), the columnist also strategically uses an *argumentum ad verecundiam* argument, i.e. fallaciously using "expert opinion to persuade someone to accept a proposition in

argumentation” (Walton, 1992, p. 47) to further justify his ethotic attack on the DAP, which can be formalised as follows:

Conclusion Rule: The classical economist Adam Smith advised some temperance that will serve the ends of social justice and the modern economist John Maynard Keynes suggested that it is ridiculous to believe that the greediest among us, the capitalists, can be pursuing the greater good.

Argument: Meritocracy is an unadulterated capitalist-driven ideology.

Conclusion: Thus, the DAP has an unadulterated capitalist-driven ideology [they are not sincere].

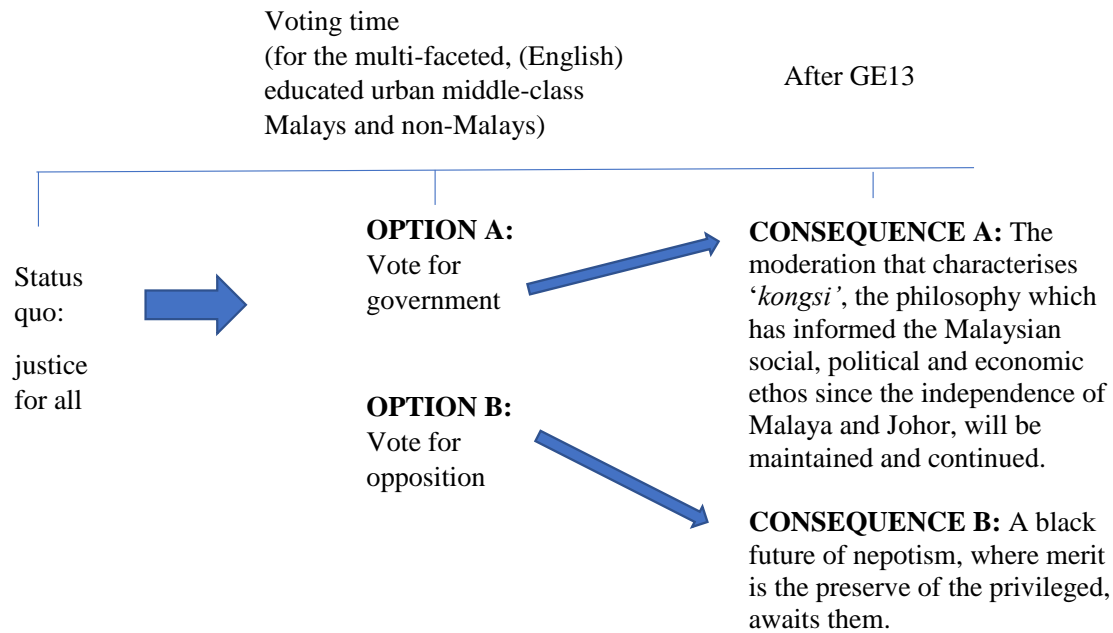
The columnist also implies that the New Economic Policy (NEP) and its positive discrimination are deserving of merit, which, I argue, is an example of a paradox employed in the English-language op-eds. This is because, as already discussed in Chapter 3, the NEP was announced in 1970 as part of a package of measures introduced after the political crisis of 13 May 1969. Jomo (2005) further explains:

It sought to ‘eradicate poverty’ and ‘restructure society to eliminate the identification of race with economic function’ [to] create the conditions for national unity ... Not surprisingly, the NEP has been principally associated with ‘restructuring’, i.e. efforts to reduce inter-ethnic economic disparities between Bumiputera indigenes and the non-Bumiputera, especially between ethnic Malays and Chinese. Hence, ‘restructuring’ has come to be associated with ‘positive discrimination’ or ‘affirmative action’ on behalf of the mainly Malay Bumiputeras. Such state interventions have resulted in significantly greater Bumiputera wealth ownership, business participation, education opportunities, public sector employment and promotion, as well as representation among professionals and managers/administrators. (p. 184)

Against this background, to regard the NEP and its positive discrimination as deserving of merit would be a contradiction. (2) ends with an *argumentum ad consequentiam* (literally, it means ‘argument to conclusion’), “in which unfavourable [or favourable] light is cast on a thesis by pointing out its possible consequence[s], without the rightness of the thesis

itself being disputed” (van Eemeren, Grootendorst and Kruiger, 1987, p. 30). In a sample timeline, the legitimization of an *argumentum at consequentiam* will be:

Figure 7: Legitimization of an *argumentum at consequentiam*



These arguments violate rules 1 and 4 of the commandments for rational dispute and constructive arguing. There are two ways in which these arguments violate rule 1. First, by launching a personal attack on the opposition, which is rhetorically realized through two variants of *argumentum ad hominem*. Second, by putting pressure on the readers, in the sense that they will have to face the consequences of their action (*argumentum at consequentiam*). Such causal argumentation is also a violation of rule 4, as the writers test the truth or acceptability of a standpoint by pointing out desirable and undesirable consequences.

9.2.2 Argument about change from within

Another substantial argument in the English-language editorials and columns is the argument about change from within, instead of having ‘regime change’:

- (3) If there's one thing that is crucial in this election, it's the promise of a better future for Malaysians. (A Jalil Hamid, 28 April 2013, *New Sunday Times*)
- (4) All it needs is for the winning team to bring this road to progress and transformation to the people. (Nurainisa Samad, 20 April 2013, *New Straits Times*)
- (5) SWINGING TOWARDS TRANSFORMATION. (Bunn Nagara, 26 April 2013, *The Star*)
- (6) TRANSFORMATION. The ultimate aim for transformation is a better life for all ... a life which is comparable in quality and material comforts with that of all developed countries anywhere in the world. (Idris Jala, 29 April 2013, *The Star*)

The words better (3, 6), progress (4) and transformation (4, 5, 6) share the same semantic property as they imply a positive change of state, from x-state (present) to y-state (future). Syntactically, (3) means: suppose that there is one thing that is important in GE13, it is the guarantee of a *better* future, where the adjective *better* used to describe the future implies a future that is better than the present, i.e. of a higher standard, or more suitable, pleasing or effective than before. In (4), 'progress', i.e. development towards an improved or more advanced condition and 'transformation', i.e. change, are used in a more optative sense, as the columnist expresses hopes and desires for what the 'winning team' will bring to the people. Similarly, in (5) it indicates a movement in an alternate direction, i.e. towards change. While in (6) it denotes that the objective of change is a life that is better, as in the sense of the discussion of (3). This change or transformation used in the extracts above alludes to the BN's National Transformation Agenda; in a similar vein, the phrase 'the promise of a better future' in (3) is also an allusion, as it indirectly refers to the BN's manifesto title '*Menepati Janji Membawa Harapan*' (Malay version, Fulfilling Promises, Heraldng Hopes) or the English version: 'A Promise of Hope'.

The lexical choice 'promise' is significant here for two reasons. First, instead of calling it a manifesto, i.e. a public declaration of policy and aims, BN decided to call theirs '*Aku Janji*', literally I promise, or an undertaking that is a formal pledge or promise to do something. Second, 'promise' is an interesting word, as it is an expression of commitment. As a verb, it is intended to assure someone that the speaker will definitely do something or that something will happen. As Searle (1969) puts it, in *promising*, the speaker (S) "predicates a future act A of S" (p.57). In his analysis, *promise* implies that the hearer would prefer "S's doing A to his not doing A", which can be stated more strongly as 'I know (assume?) that you want X

to happen?’ A promise does not imply that the hearer is weighing, in his mind, the respective advantages and disadvantages of the speaker’s “doing X” or “not doing X”. Rather, it assumes that the addressee wants the act to take place. Typically, promises follow requests, so in promising the speaker has every right to take the attitude ‘I know you want it’. But even when a promise doesn’t follow a request, the ‘promiser’ seems equally confident: his tone still conveys the same attitude of ‘I know you want it’. I favour, therefore, the phrasing ‘I know’ rather than ‘I assume’, though I do not insist on this point. The need to *promise* arises only if the speaker assumes that his saying “I will do it” will not release the addressee from his uncertainty. That’s precisely the reason why the speaker finds it necessary to “bind himself” by a promise, rather than give a mere assurance. Searle (1979, p.2) suggests that the illocutionary purpose of promising is “an undertaking of an obligation by the speaker to do something” (see also Searle 1969, p. 60). But in the case of promises in a manifesto for example, an ‘obligation’ undertaken is not an aim in itself. Rather, it is a means of strengthening the assurance given to the reader whereby BN wants to cause the *rakyat* to believe that they will perform the act of transformation or change.

However, the political choice for Malaysians in GE13 represented in the English-language columns and editorials is not whether to embrace change but, as one columnist put it, “which kind of change they prefer” (Bunn Nagara, 26 April 2013, *The Star*), i.e. BN’s *transformation* or the Pakatan’s *reformation* (Ssee Section 8.2.2.2. and Chapter 3).

Although reformation is in the same semantic field as transformation, the former connotes an amendment of what is defective, vicious, corrupt or depraved, while the latter is a complete change, usually into something with an improved appearance or usefulness. In other words, reformation comes from external pressure, while transformation comes from essential change from within. This explains the obvious attempt to naturalize the possible systemic problem in the ruling government in the English language op-eds during the campaign, as it was heavily geared towards the urgency of precluding regime change at all cost. The notion of ‘change’ in its general sense, as expressed in the English-language op-eds, is paradoxical; resistance to change (reform, replacing x with y) and the agent of change (transform, replacing x^{old} with x^{new}) are both used to represent the incumbent

government.¹⁰⁹ Therefore, while the idea of change in the Malay-language op-eds carries a negative connotation and is mainly associated with unfavourable future (see Chapter 6), in the English-language editorials and columns, ‘change’ in general is represented as simply superfluous, as discussed in the following. Here, the semantic ambiguity or lack of clarity used in these arguments violates rule 10 of the commandments, in which formulations must be neither puzzlingly vague nor confusingly ambiguous:

9.2.2.1. Fallacy of redundancy

The fallacy of redundancy may be subsumed under the conclusion rule: ‘[If it ain’t broke, don’t fix it!’ since, in the Malay newspapers, the English op-eds also focus on the long-standing coalition, i.e. because the government has a proven record, regime change is unnecessary, as can be seen in the following:

- (7) When we go to the polls on Sunday, we should consider that things will get better if the nation remains guided by trusted and capable hands. Why change when we are already on the right track? (A. Jalil Hamid, 28 April 2013, *New Sunday Times*)

On the speech act level, (7) has the illocutionary force of a directive, whose function is to convey the columnist’s action plan to the reader who is expected to do what the columnist wants him to do, and hence it involves a validity claim of normative rightness. In (7), the directive is linguistically realized through use of the deontic ‘*should*’ and what seems relevant is the probability of contextually given goals, given the prejacent, i.e. given that if the readers consider that things will get better, it is probable that contextually salient goal(s) are satisfied, i.e. if the nation remains guided by the government. However, (7) also has the implicit value of advice. Advice-giving is, quite often, invested with presumptions of epistemic trust, but also with considerations of expertise or judgement, indirectly “telling you what is best for you” in order to persuade the reader (see discussion in Chapter 6). On the other hand, on the speech act level, (8) below has the illocutionary force of an assertive, in whose function is to express that the columnist is making a truth claim, and hence it can question any of the four validity claims. While (7) is implicitly advice, (8) is a reminder, which is rhetorically realized when the columnist points out that ‘we have almost everything’ to bring, or to try to bring, it to the reader’s attention:

¹⁰⁹ See also, A. Jalil Hamid, 21 April 2013, *New Straits Times*; Editor, 22 April 2013, *New Straits Times*; Bunn Nagara, 23 April 2013, *The Star*; Mazwin Nik Anis, 29 April 2013, *The Star*

(8) The opposition pact's "Ubah" (change) slogan was not applicable in the country as it had no major problems that warranted a change in government. We have almost everything. What more do we ask for? There is no reason for our people to take to the streets to voice their unhappiness and demand for a change in government ... The ball is now in the rakyat's court to decide if they want a government with a firm footing and a proven track record, or a loose pact which comes together just for the sake of a "marriage of convenience". (Audrey Dermawan, 29 April 2013, *New Straits Times*)

However, (7) and (8) share the same illocutionary purpose, they both imply that we should stay with the incumbent government and avoid any attempt to correct, fix or improve what is already sufficient. While both implicate that any attempt at improvement is risky and might backfire, both also suggest a sense of apophasis where the idea of 'change' is brought up by denying its relevance. This classic resistance to change, according to Marshak (1993, p. 6), is a manifest expression of a deeper, sometimes preconscious, symbolic construct that informs and maintains the 'reality' for the speaker. At the same time, it suggests implicit hegemonic, hierarchically-biased assumptions about the capability of the incumbent government in conjunction with myopic self-interested opponents who irrelevantly demand a change in government. Similar to the Malay-language newspapers discussed in previous chapters, such change is represented as a disruption to the nation's aspirations, which are already on the right track.

(7) and (8) also involve interrogative speech acts which can question any of the four validity claims while simultaneously assuming a claim of truth in the sense that the reader should know the answer/ truth: *'Why change when we are already on the right track?'* *'What more do we ask for?'* Illie (1994) calls these questions rhetorical questions, where such a question is used "as a challenging statement to convey the addresser's commitment to its implicit answer, in order to induce the addressee's mental recognition of its obviousness and the acceptance, verbalized or non-verbalized, of its validity" (p. 128). These rhetorical questions, I argue, are an essential move in the English Language op-eds, specifically in giving expression to a special reproaching effect, which imperative or

assertive syntax alone would not achieve. Scholars, including Slot (1993, p. 7) and Ilie (1994, p. 148) who focus on the role of rhetorical questions in argumentative discourse, ascribe two main functions to rhetorical questions: first, they are used as a means of putting forward standpoints and arguments. Van Eemeren, Houtlosser and Snoeck Henkemas (2005), on the other hand, suggest that rhetorical questions can be analysed as proposals for a common starting point in the opening stages of a discussion. They point out that while it is unlikely in practice that parties will execute the opening move of a starting point dialogue by means of a fully explicit proposal to accept some proposition, arguers can, however, implicitly make such a proposal by asking a rhetorical question (Van Eemeren et al., 2005, p. 115). Snoeck Henkemas (2009, p. 16) maintains that “by asking a rhetorical question, the arguer shows that he himself believes that the proposition he proposes to the other party is indeed acceptable, which means that the sincerity condition for a proposal has also been fulfilled” (p. 16). In (7) and (8), the columnists are not only making proposals in the form of rhetorical questions, in fact, they are making assertions in which they present acceptance of the proposals as unproblematic. Ilie (1994) describes rhetorical questions as attempts by arguers to arrive at the same commitment:

The addresser’s commitment to the implicit rhetorical answer is indicated by his/her conviction that there is no other possible answer to the rhetorical question. The addresser’s expectation is to induce the same commitment in the addressee. (p. 218)

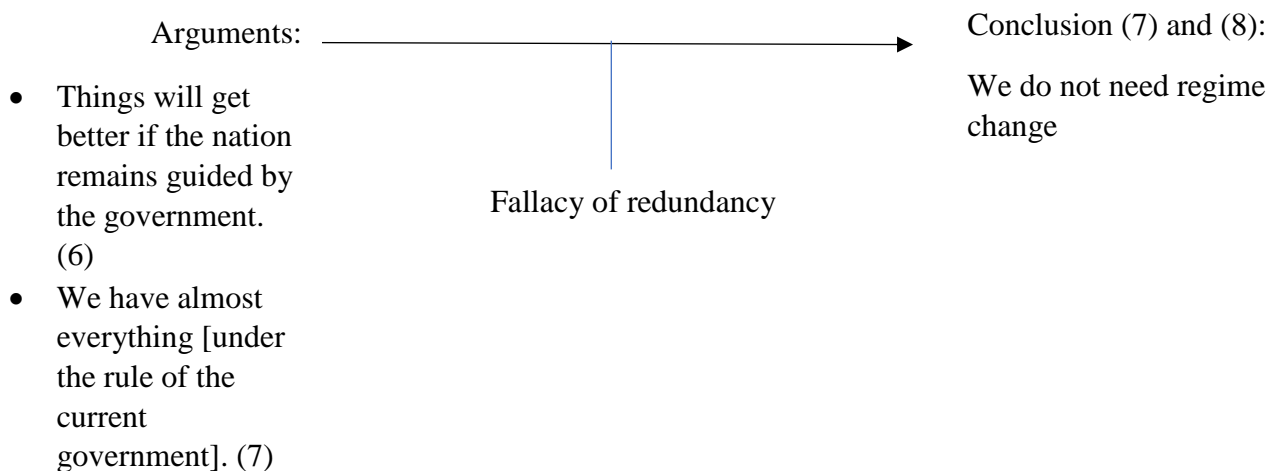
Rohde (2006) believes that a commitment shared by the discourse participants is a condition for felicitous rhetorical questions:

To be felicitous, rhetorical questions require that discourse participants share a prior commitment to similar, obvious, and often extreme answers. As such, rhetorical questions are biased, yet at the same time uninformative. Their effect is to synchronize discourse participants’ commitments, confirming their shared beliefs about the world. (p. 135)

As in the cases of (7) and (8) above, the proposal to accept a common starting point often serves at the same time as an argument in the argumentation stage. The columnists then take it for granted that the opponent will accept the proposal, so that they can use it as support for their standpoint. Ilie (1994) gives the following description of the arguer’s aims in using a rhetorical question:

The addresser's ultimate goal is to elicit the addressee's agreement with the message implied by the rhetorical question, i.e. the addressee's agreement with, and preferably, commitment to the implication of the rhetorical question. By pursuing the ultimate goal, the addresser of a rhetorical question intends to induce in the addressee the disposition and the willingness to act on this shared commitment. (p. 219)

At this stage, the rhetorical questions used in (7) and (8) can also be seen as indirect speech acts, because they violate two of the rules for communication when taken literally. First, the addresser already knows the answer, so the question is superfluous. Second, the question is insincere, since the addresser does not expect to get an answer from the addressee. According to Houtlosser (1995 in Snoeck Henkemans, 2009, p. 17), these violations of the Principle of Communication can be made good by assuming that by asking the question, addressers implicate that they want their addressees to accept the consequences of their commitment to what is indirectly asserted. Therefore, to simplify the argument in (7) and (8):



As shown above, since the consequent occurs covertly among the premises (arguments), (7) and (8) are also examples of *petitio principii* (begging the question, see also discussion in Chapter 6). This fallacy violates rule 6:¹¹⁰ The starting point rule (respect of shared

¹¹⁰ Rule 6: A standpoint must be regarded as conclusively defended if the defence takes place by means of arguments belonging to the common starting point. A premise must not falsely be taken as a common starting point and, conversely, a shared premise must not be rejected (see discussion in Chapter 2).

starting points). Also notice the synecdoche ‘trusted and capable hands’ used in (8). Its ambiguity reflects two possibilities; the author simply wants to avoid being specific or it is another naturalisation or automatization of hegemonic power, where the ‘trusted and capable hands’ represent the BN government. Beneath these excerpts, there is a sense of instilling gratitude through the rhetorical questions asked in them. The basic principle of democracy is that ultimate sovereignty, which is the right to wield political power, lies with the people (Lemiere, 2014, p. 3). Consequently, it is the government that should express gratitude to the people for allowing it to govern. However, in Malaysia, the reverse is true:

“Why change when we are already on the right track?” [Be grateful].

“What more do we ask for?” [Be grateful]

While a rhetoric of gratitude backgrounds any popular demands for change, it foregrounds the BN government’s self-schema that self-servingly represents them as the people who have been ruling and contributing to the nation’s prosperity, harmony and development. This kind of communicated linguistically legitimacy is another manifestation of the coercion spread by the English-language op-eds, as could also be seen in the Malay language newspapers – although they target different readerships, respectively. Among others, consider the boasting about performance in the excerpt below:

- (9) Will the folk in this university town vote for ‘change’ despite the fact that MCA has brought tangible benefits to their lives in the form of the Utar main campus? It’s a choice between good work by Barisan and Pakatan’s promises. (Wong, 22 April 2013, *The Star*)

The question posed by the columnist above is an interesting one as it seems almost rhetorical despite its structural similarity to a regular question. Its non-information-seeking status resembles an assertion as it highlights shared beliefs of the Malay proverb ‘*Orang berbudi kita berbahasa, orang memberi kita merasa*’ (each and every help must be remembered and returned), which according to Chee (2015, p.18) carries more or less the

same meaning as the Hokkien expression “*lang mai bou cheing bou gee, lang hou lai lang hou k’ee*”. Both sayings are a reminder of the reciprocation of good others have done, which in the excerpt reminds the residents of what the MCA¹¹¹ has done for them. Wrapping up a proposition in a presupposition, as in the cases of (7), (8) and (9), violates rule 6 of the commandments.

9.2.3. Argument about PAS and Islam

While Islam in the Malay-language op-eds is portrayed as being threatened by the opposition, particularly DAP, with the government being seen as the one who will protect it, in the English language op-eds, it is represented as a threat to English-language op-eds readers through the reference made to PAS. The following main argument in the English-language op-eds is about PAS and the Islamic State. Both (10) and (11) below begin with a question:

- NEW STRAITS TIMES: Is Malaysia ready to be a theocratic state? (10)
and
- Is an Islamic Theocracy in the making of Malaysia? (11)

Contrary to the rhetorical questions that we have discussed previously, the questions in (10) and (11) do not make assertions, in the way propositions are typically used to do, and questions do not have premises and conclusions, the way arguments do. But questions have presuppositions, and these presuppositions are statements that can often function in a dialogue much the same way arguments do (Walton, 2006, pp. 173–2). The is-questions in (10) and (11) presuppose the possibility of Malaysia being a theocratic state. Therefore, I argue, instead of having the illocutionary force of an interrogation that functions to express that, the columnists: (a) do not know something, (b) want to obtain information lacking from the reader or (c) assume that the reader knows the answer (see Chapter 4 and Reisigl, 2014, p. 71); the questions in (10) and (11) function more as confirmation of the truth

¹¹¹ The Malaysian Chinese Association (MCA) is a uni-racial political party in Malaysia that seeks to represents Malaysians of Chinese ethnicity; it is one of the three major component parties of the ruling coalition in the BN government.

about the presupposition, i.e. the possibility of Malaysia being a theocratic state. However, Wierzbicka (1987) argues that the illocutionary purpose of *confirming* is “I say it because I want to say what is true” (p. 332). Therefore, in contrast to *informing*, *confirming* is more concerned with saying what is true than with causing the addressee to know what is true. Having said that, she adds “this is not to say that confirming is totally unconcerned about the addressee’s knowledge or certainty. On the contrary, it does seem to include the component ‘I want you to be able to be sure that it is true’” (p. 332), which in the case of (10) and (11) is about the possibility of Malaysia being a theocratic state. In addition, I argue, such a move is also strategic in evoking fear in the reader about the future of Malaysia. Let us consider the continuation of (10):

9.2.3. Appeal to fear of PAS

- (10) PAS President, Datuk Seri Hadi Awang has come out and abashedly said that only a Muslim can be prime minister, since only a Muslim can be in charge of policies in an Islamic State; a non-Muslim can play a backup role ... The idea that Pas had, that it is nearing the gates of paradise should set alarm bells ringing. By pooh-poohing DAP’s chances at the premiership because it has a smaller number of candidates, Hadi has overtly expressed the opinion that despite the alliance, might is right, So, despite DAP’s adamant stand against Hudud and the theocratic state, what will a win for the opposition pact really mean for Malaysians? Without a doubt, Islam is a good way of life. But, would a theocratic state system be the compromises that minorities have had to accept there are evidence that the theocratic state would be incompatible with the larger multi-religious society that Malaysia is. (Editor, 25 April 2013, *New Straits Times*)

Excerpt (10) has the illocutionary force of an assertion with the editor continuing to make a truth claim. The editor justifies the four validity claims that he or she previously made by using internal intertextuality, linguistically realized through reported speech, i.e. indirect quotation of PAS’s president Hadi Awang, as in (10), the editor summarizes “the content of what was said or written, not the actual words used” (Fairclough, 2003, p. 49; see also Richardson, 2007, pp. 101–2). This indirect quote implies a religious exclusivism that is designed to evoke fear in readers of the English language press. While (10) is in general an assertion, it also contains a claim to normative rightness through the implicit warning

given about PAS, which believes that it is very close to winning GE13 through its use of the metaphoric gates of paradise and the idiomatic ‘set alarm bells ringing’, which directs the reader to think that this is something they should be worried about. There is also a rhetorical question in (10), which is asked after reminding the reader about “DAP’s adamant stand against Hudud and the theocratic state”. However, it has already been stated, earlier in (10), that DAP has no chance of the premiership, so the editor asks “what will a win for the opposition pact really mean for Malaysians?” A disunited coalition and a possible theocratic state that is seen as a threat to minorities as well as to Malaysia’s multi-religious society. In a similar vein, in (11):

- (11) If the entente between Pas and DAP survives the 13th General Election, Malaysians must be prepared for an Islamic theocratic government to emerge and run the country. This means it is more than hudud and the use of the word of “Allah” ... Generally, it is hard to imagine such a government taking shape in Malaysia. Malaysians have enjoyed its democracy for the last 56 years and are not about to let go its diverse and multicultural society, open economy and federalist system of government, however imperfect. (Azhari Karim, 27 April 2013, *New Straits Times*)

In the fear appeal argument in (11), the conditional *If* is a simple two-step connection between two propositions or events, first, if Pas and DAP survive the GE13, second, the emergence of an Islamic theocratic government that will run the country. In (11), the use of the deontic modality *must* in “Malaysians must be prepared” implies another claim to normative rightness made through a directive speech act; in this case it is a deontic necessity, as it no longer refers to a proposition ‘to be prepared’ but to an act ‘to be prepared’, should the protasis (if-clause) become reality. For the protasis to become reality, (11) implicitly implies a non-explicit conditional that if the reader votes for the opposition, then some bad event will occur that is fearful to them. What is alleged by the columnist is that if the reader carries out one action, then that will lead to another, and so forth, in a sequence of connected events that results in some fearful outcome. In a sense, the fear appeal argument in (11) is also a type of argument with negative consequences. Against this scheme, Walton (2000) adds:

What is fearful for the respondent in this fear appeal argument may be not only the final outcome, but also the uncertainty and insecurity attached to the uncontrollability of this sequence. Some dangerous event that, it is said, might happen in the future, raises gloomy forebodings and fears related to the uncontrollability of what could possibly happen in an uncertain world ... after a step in a certain direction is taken (pp. 14–15)

Following Walton's (2000, p. 143) fear appeal argumentation scheme, in (11):

- PREMISE 1: If you (the reader) vote for the opposition (A), then Malaysia will be run by an Islamic theocratic government (B)
- PREMISE 2: B is a very bad outcome (because it means more than hudud and the use of the word of "Allah"), from your (the reader's) point of view
- PREMISE 3: B is such a bad outcome (because it is a threat to the democracy that we have enjoyed in the last 56 years and to our diverse and multicultural society, open economy as well as federalist system of government), and that it is likely to evoke fear in you (the reader)
- CONCLUSION: Therefore, you (the reader) should not bring about A.

The appeal to fear of PAS and Islam specifically violates rule 1, through performing another attack on the opposition, rule 4 using pathos by playing on the emotions or prejudices of the audience and rule 7 through causal argumentation employed in the op-eds' arguments.

9.2.4. Argument from analogy

One of the main arguments that can be found in the English-language newspapers is argument from analogy, "it is used to argue from one case that is said to be similar to another, in a certain respect" (Walton, 1996, p.77). For example, in (12) and (13):

- (12) The GE13 is not Arab Spring but a legitimate act of exercising one's democratic right where there is no place for any form of violence. (Wong, 26 April 2013, The Star)

- (13) We have almost everything. What more do we ask for? There is no reason for our people to take to the streets to voice their unhappiness and demand for a change in government. (Audrey, 29 April 2013, *New Strait Times*)

On the speech act level, the locution in (12) and (13) has the illocutionary force of an assertive which commits the columnists to something being the case. Therefore, as Reisigl (2014, p. 71) argues, a commitment to knowing the truth can question any validity claims, as discussed in Chapter 4. In the case of (12), the columnist's use of negation in the intensive relational process attributed to GE13 offers an evaluative contrast with the averred actual situation, i.e. the Arab Spring. The Arab Spring or The Arab Awakening or the Arab Uprisings is a concept denoting a political upheaval, a revolutionary sweeping tide of demonstrations, protests and other forms of opposition to the authorities, both violent and non-violent riots in the Arab territories in 2010 (Elfatih, 2015, p. 121). The references to the Arab Spring in (12) and protest in (13) are an allusion to the series of Bersih rallies.¹¹² (12) also presupposes that there is a form of violence in GE13. Intertextually, in other texts, the English-language editorials have already explicitly established that GE13 is the "most violent in history",¹¹³ judging from the spate of violence at the BN as well as Pakatan events during the campaign which involved 'Explosive, Molotov cocktails, gang fights and even cyber bullying' (Wong, 26 April 2013, *The Star*). Although the conjunction 'but' in (12) introduces a dialectical opposite (not x but y), it points to GE13 as a 'legitimate act of exercising one's democratic right', (12) still implies an inductive argument in which perceived similarities are used as a basis to infer some further similarity yet to be observed. Such an argument from analogy, i.e. defending an opinion by comparing the matter in question with another, essentially different matter violates rule 7 of the commandments.

¹¹² Bersih (literally means 'clean' in Malay) refers to The Coalition of Free and Fair Elections (Malay: Gabungan Pilihanran Raya Bersih dan Adil). It is a civil society movement for free and fair elections, as well as concerns about a wide range of issues in Malaysia. The rallies were held in 2007, before GE12 in 2008. Prior to GE13, they were held twice, in 2011 and 2012 (see Chapter 3).

¹¹³ For example: Azura Abas, 26 April 2013, *New Straits Times*; Editor, 27 April 2013, *New Straits Times*; Andres, 28 April 2013, *New Sunday Times*

9.3. Summary

In this chapter, I have discussed the argumentation strategies in the English-language editorials and columns during the GE13 campaign. Similar to the Malay-language newspapers, the violations of the rules for rational dispute and constructive arguing leave the readers with fallacies instead of sound argumentation. In contrast to the Malay-language newspapers, the English-language op-eds focus on arguments about DAP and PAS that are viewed as a threat to multi-racial/ethnic and multi-religious Malaysia. Again, in this chapter, we have seen the construction of fear through the emotional appeal employed in the English-language editorials and columns. The following chapter presents the conclusion and a discussion of this study.

Conclusion and Discussion

10.1 Introduction

This study has investigated the discursive micro-politics of editorials and columns during the GE13 campaign in Malaysia from 20 April to 4 May 2013. It has looked at a data set comprising texts of Malay- and English-language mainstream newspapers, including their Sunday editions, which can be collectively regarded as a major potential force for political persuasion during the electoral campaign. This study draws on the literature on political communication and media, as well as argumentation theories. But, in contrast to Western-centric models of media and communication, and in line with DHA's emphasis on the broader sociopolitical and historical context, this study foregrounds culture in the research's conceptualization in an attempt to analyse mainstream Malay- and English-language op-eds. The study has focused on exploring the reproduction of the colonial ideological construct discussed in Chapter 3 by emphasizing macro-semantic strategies for categorising coalition groups during the GE13 campaign. First, there is the government positively portrayed as the in-group and the opposition as the stigmatised out-group. Second is the legitimisation of mainstream newspapers' world view as journalists work as government partners on what constitutes the larger social good. The contribution of this study can be divided into three parts, theoretical, methodological and empirical, and each will be discussed in turn below. The chapter ends by outlining the limitations of the present study and making suggestions for future research.

10.2. Theoretical contribution

In the intellectual endeavour to de-westernize the field of political communication, this study has followed two recommendations from Waisbord and Mellado (2014, pp. 3636). First, I have reassessed and expanded the ontological horizons of political communication studies by analysing issues that are understudied and absent, not only in the West but also in Asia, not only going beyond conventional geographical boundaries but also beyond theoretical boundaries when studying Malaysia. The underlying assumption is that developments and, in particular, the production of knowledge in a society is the reflection

of analytical subjects and questions in any given field (Waisboard and Mellado, 2014, p. 364). Although this study is locally grounded, it was inspired by theoretical questions and academic debates elsewhere. As important as this is, this thesis draws attention to issues that are absent from the analytical radar of Western scholars but important in the non-Western world. In studying Malaysia during the GE13 campaign, I have also focused on a non-Western context and thereby expanded the research agenda. I have probed the conventional analytical parameters of existing scholarship through discussing the complexity of the Malaysian media system and its developmental journalism/communication practices. Reorienting research to consider an under-investigated case, shaped by diverse political and sociocultural factors, has helped me to revisit some fundamental assumptions within the wider field of political communication.

In this study, I have challenged and critically evaluated the field of political communication, which has been one-sidedly dominated by Western-centric *theories* relating to and research, due to its strong empirical tradition dominated by the United States and Europe. While a *theory* may be understood differently by different disciplines (see, for example, Corvellec, 2013; Abend, 2008), in its simplest terms, a theory is a set of propositions designed to explain *particular* conditions or events in the world around us. And since much research in the field is generally confined to communication metatheory associated with industrially advanced Western countries, this has helped us understand political communication and elections in the West, but not in a non-western context. This study has argued that these theories are inappropriate and inadequate for explaining how political messages were communicated in the Malaysian mainstream op-eds during the GE13 campaign, as has been discussed at length (see especially Chapter 1).

Culture is absent from many definitions of political communication because Western perspectives are largely positivist, individually communicator-based oriented ones. From Aristotle's (350BCE/2004) *Rhetoric*, through Lasswell's (1948) five Ws model of communication, Mill's (1982[1959]) 'marketplace of ideas' and Habermas's (1989) theory of the public sphere, to Curran's (2000) idea of the 'free market', they all reveal that conceptualizations of communication contexts lack depth and clarity. Yum (1989) contends that:

Many communication theories that are based upon the individual as the unit of analysis have tended to account for human communication behaviour in terms of personality characteristics or individual socioeconomic positions. Such theories imply that the individual behaves in a context-free world as if internal predispositions alone can explain one's course of action. On the other hand, other theories imply that the message itself is the most important component in creating certain communication effects ... This overemphasis on the individual [and the message] at the expense of the social context in communication theories [is due to] the emphasis on individualism (p. 494)

In line with its CDA principles, this study views communication, focusing on argumentative discourse (i.e. editorials), as a *social process* (Chapter 2). It espouses the functionalist definition of discourse: 'language in use' (Brown and Yule, 1983, p. 1). Therefore, in contrast to formalists (or structuralists), the functionalist paradigm is based on the premise that language is a social phenomenon, hence it sees *form*¹¹⁴ and *function* as going hand in hand (see also Schifffrin, 1994; Cameron, 2001). Since language is used to *mean* and *do* something, newspaper discourse, as a (social) practice, cannot be isolated from the immediate context of speaker-text-audience and the wider sociopolitical context which binds together the communicative act in which the language is produced and interpreted. For example, we have seen that the same '*kata ganti nama pertama*', '*kita*' in Malay-language or the first-person plural personal pronoun 'we' in English, are used in editorials and columns (see especially Chapters 6 and 8). While Fetzer and Bull (2008, p. 275) note that pronouns are linguistically unambiguous in the sense that their referents can always be retrieved, and noun phrases put in in their place, this may not be the case from a discursive perspective. As shown in the textual analyses, '*kita*' or '*we*' is used to appeal to different readers, "which helps broaden their ability to persuade the audience to their point of view" (Allen, 2007, p. 12). Therefore, distinguishing pronouns with ambiguous referents such as '*we*' in a context-free or abstract discussion, when it comes to Malaysia, may mislead.

¹¹⁴ I.e. the syntactic structure up to the sentence level and its syntagmatic relationship between words within clauses and sentences.

This is the reason why considering elements of culture, particularly race and religion and their relationship with the colonial legacy in Malaysia, are important in understanding political communication in the country. Nakamura (2012) asserts that, “it will take a considerable effort to shake off racialized discourse and eradicate racial categorization from the minds of people in Malaysia” (p. 140). As Goldberg (1993) puts it:

[Race] has established who can be imported and who exported, who are immigrants and who are indigenous, who may be property and who citizens; and among the latter who get to vote and who do not, who are protected by the law and who are its objects, who are employable and who are not, *who have access and privilege and who are (to be) marginalized*. Race continues to assume significance in this complex way. (p. 87, emphasis added).

This thesis has argued that the concept of ‘race’ during the GE13 campaign in editorials and columns is a reproduction of the British ideological construct in Malaya.¹¹⁵ For instance, Hirschman (1986) notes that the British colonial administration developed paternalistic attitudes towards Malays, like “a father dealing with his children” (p. 342). The same paternalistic attitudes can be seen in the representation of the government as a *carer* (see 6.2.2.2). Likewise, regarding the stereotypes of Malays (by definition, in Article 160 of the Malaysian constitution a Malay is a “person who professes Islam”) as docile, lazy, loyal and dependent people, who have a weak intellectual capability (see for example Parliamentary Paper, 1874), they are represented in the GE13 op-eds as those who need to be ‘protected’ and given privileges. On the other hand, the Chinese who are portrayed as a threat to these ‘protections’ or privileges of Malays (see 6.5.2.2.2), due to them being stereotyped as more industrious, hardworking and capable (Nakamura, 2012, pp. 137–8). These two stereotypes, according to Syed Hussein Alatas (2009), were inherited from the expansion of “colonially controlled urban capitalist economic activities” (p.80). Therefore, as emphasised throughout the study, in the DHA *context* is key. In this study, I have offered the sociopolitical and historical background of Malaysia, which reflects its cultural context (Chapter 3). Moving away from Western-centric models of political communication, this study has also contributed to the literature on Asian political

¹¹⁵ British’s occupation in Malaya started in 1786 to 1941 before Japan invaded Malaya (1941-1945). British occupied the Malaya again from 1945 until Malaya gained its independence from the colonial on 31 August 1957.

communication scholarship by discussing the complexities of communication that reflect and respond to the cultural ethos of Malaysians.

10.3. Methodological contribution

In political communication research in general, and in Asia in particular, many scholars' reliance on quantitative methodology and statistical analysis sets boundaries regarding what one can do as "we tend to tackle only those research problems that can be handled by quantitative measures and statistical tests. We often let methodology determine our choice of research topics" (Chu, 1988, pp. 205–6). This tendency ignores the idea of communication as a *social process* (see especially Chapter 2). Fast forward 12 years, Nain (2000) maintains that Asia, particularly Malaysia, is still dominated by quantitative communication research. Nearly a decade later, the situation remains the same as that suggested by Awan (2009) in her PhD thesis on media and communication research in Malaysia, while Willnat and Aw (2009) confirm that the number of studies that focus on political communication in Malaysia remains relatively small. In 2014 little has changed (Amira, 2014).

Focusing solely on quantitative method overlooks, for instance, the implicit assumptions and insinuations, the veiling argumentation, the concealed fallacies and enthymemic as well as condensed argumentation by (often discriminatory) metaphors. Having said that, the call for a qualitative political communication does not imply a rejection of traditional qualitative techniques. As emphasised throughout this study, my position is simply that "to advance beyond the impasse... [the field of political communication] needs to reclaim its interdisciplinary heritage and become again, in practice, genuinely mixed methods" (Karpf, Kreiss, Nielsen and Powers, 2015, p. 1902).

This study, as discussed in detail (especially in Chapter 4), has applied DHA principles and used methodological triangulation through combining quantitative and qualitative methods, so that what is lost in terms of breadth in Chapter 5 is covered in terms of depth in Chapters 6, 7, 8 and 9. Also, since the DHA (as is the case with other approaches to CDA) is largely an interpretative exercise (Fairclough and Wodak, 1997; Widdowson,

2000; Hart, 2016), allowing a large representative set of data to be analysed for reoccurring patterns of use. In this study, content analysis methods allow for the dominance of particular discursive practices to be verified, thereby justifying this study's focus on investigating in critical detail. As Hart (2016) puts it, triangulation is "a guiding methodological principle intended to help ground analyses and guard against purely subjective reading of texts" (p.1).

In addition, as emphasised in the beginning of the thesis, my aim is to go beyond linguistic analysis and attempt to make sense of the social, political and cultural elements involved in the mainstream editorials and columns during the GE13 campaign. In maintaining CDA's commitment to triangulation, this study has also developed a number of multi-methodological approaches within the DHA framework by combining close text analysis with insights from, politics, communication, history, sociology, argumentation theory, speech act theory and linguistics in general. The explanatory approaches from other fields of knowledge also have helped reaching the aim of the thesis by going beyond the purely linguistic discipline.

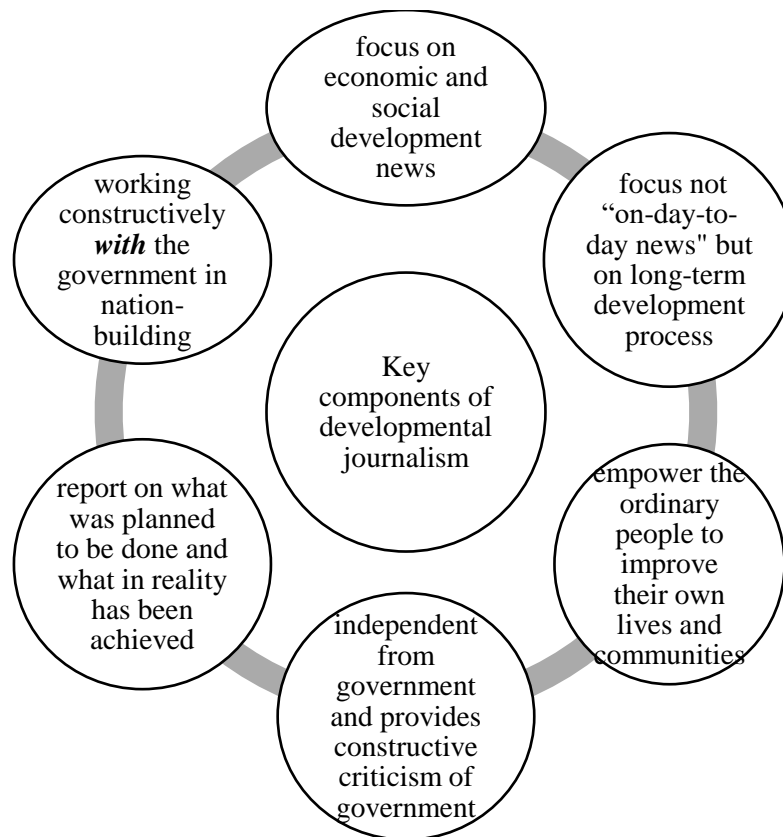
In this study, I have interpreted the linguistic data within their socio-political context, thus uncovering the persuasive, 'manipulative' function of the discursive practices in question. The historical, socio-political and sociological analysis have complemented the linguistic description and reconstruction while embedding the linguistic 'material' into a broader context. This is significant, as we are reminded by Reisigl (2014): "critical discourse analysts should not contend [ourselves] with a purely descriptive analysis of argumentation, because [we] have critical ambitions and take a critical stand" (p. 91). Therefore, integrating pragma-dialectics' 10 commandments (or rules of reasonableness) (van Eemeren and Grootendorst, 2016; pp. 208–12; van Eemeren 2004, pp. 190–6) into the DHA framework enables the study to differentiate between reasonable and fallacious argumentation. Hence, triangulation is not aimed at merely validating findings but also at deepening and widening the understanding of findings. It assists in ensuring that this study is both interdisciplinary and holistic.

10.4. Empirical contribution

10.4.1. The perversion of developmental journalism

The original idea of developmental journalism in Asia did not rely merely on government sources reporting the positive effects of their own policies and activities but had an independent and investigative character (see especially Chapter 1). We have discussed how, apart from promoting national economic development, development journalism could also have functioned as a tool for Third World countries to fight media imperialism, pursue cultural and informational autonomy and establish ties with other developing countries (see also Kitley, 2000, p. 178). As Salawu and Owolabi (2018, p. 158) put it, developmental journalism “where it is practised in the right way can help to create a climate for social transformation and development” (p. 158). However, this study argues that developmental journalism as practised in Malaysia does not reflect the key components of developmental journalism outlined by Xiaoge’s (2009, see also section 1.3.1.1.):

Figure 8: Key components of developmental journalism (Xiaoge, 2009, p. 358).



One of the key issues here is that the mainstream editorials and columns during the GE13 campaign were not independent of government as they did not provide any criticism of government, as quantitatively assessed (Chapter 5). The homogeneity of their political stance – as reflected through the total support given to the government as opposed to the opposition – was identified: the BN government was discussed positively while the PR opposition was discussed negatively in mainstream Malay- and English-language editorials and columns. This suggests that the writers took their cue from the government as to what constitutes the greater social good. But instead of working constructively *with* the government (see Figure 8 above, p. 227), the findings indicate that they were working *for* the government, betraying their civic watchdog role as part of a system of checks and balances on the misuse of political power. This can be seen from the representations of the government and opposition in both Malay- and English-language editorials and columns during the GE13 campaign:

Table 15: Summary of positive and negative representations of the government and opposition in the editorials and columns during the GE13 campaign

Representation of the government	Representation of the opposition
Positive	Positive
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reliable • One with a proven track record • Carer • Protector • One who has berjasa (does noble deeds) • United • Agent of change • Multiracial 	None
Negative	Negative
None	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not united • Anti-Malay • Threat to the official religion, Islam • Threat to Malay unity • Weak • Power-obsessed (kemaruk kuasa) • Disunited PR • Proven bad record • Islamic extremists (PAS)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not ready for change • Racist
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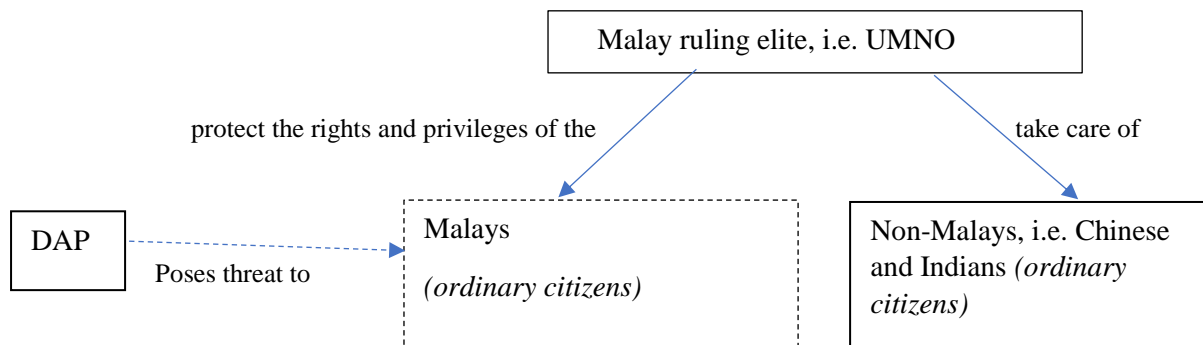
While political arguments in any democratic country, especially in the West, are often assumed to be based on a critical discussion of issues, or at least some kind of intelligent deliberation on the part of voters, it is also understandable that elements of negotiation and bargaining for benefits, as well as a “bear pit” or adversarial type of partisan and advocacy, are also involved in political argumentation, but not at the expense of a wide range of voices. As Table 15 suggests, the case of Malaysia stands in stark contrast to editorials and columns in the West. While op-eds as an opined genre are expected to be partisan (McNair, 2008, p.113), they are also expected to mirror the writer’s personal experiences or opinions, which do not necessarily align with the opinions, values, assumptions of newspaper boards (as discussed at length in Chapter 2).

10.4.2. Racial/ethnic and religious issues

The mainstream op-eds studied promoted dichotomous conceptualisations of social groups in Malaysia in which racial, ethnic and religion-related issues were prominently discussed. In contrast to studies of election campaigns in Western democracies (see, for example, Franklin, 1985; Johns, 2010; Deacon and Wring, 2011, Patterson, 2016), this study also reveals that racial/ethnic and religion are emotive and powerful topics as they played a substantive role in these publications’ argumentation strategies during the GE13. This suggests that politicised references to religion, racial and ethnic difference (Malay/ Chinese/ Indian) have formed the main sub-text for political manoeuvring since independence (as argued in Chapter 3). The bottom line during GE13 is that the Malays (whose religion is Islam) are the numerically and politically dominant race, while economic power lies with the Chinese, who therefore pose a threat to the Malays. Hence, the Malays’ position must be protected. In this study, I have analysed binary oppositions qualitatively using DHA discursive strategies, namely referential and predication in Chapter 6, which focuses on Malay-language op-eds, and in Chapter 8, on English-language op-eds. In Malay-language newspapers, we have seen that the focus revolved around the Malay-Muslim community. Such a focus is largely ignored by the political communication literature in the West due to its neglect of culture. The press seeks to

justify the idea that the Malay/Muslim community is at the centre of national politics and life and (should) therefore operate at the apex of a hierarchy that privileges their needs and views. Alternatively, non-Malays are to be paternalistically ‘looked after’ by the dominant coalition, provided that they accept their place within the said hierarchy. This consists of the Malay-ruling class, i.e. UMNO within the multi-racial BN coalition who hold the levers of political power, and the Malay-citizen class as the ordinary *rakyat* (people) whose rights and privileges need to be protected by the former while UMNO takes care of the non-Malay community who are implicitly represented as outsiders:

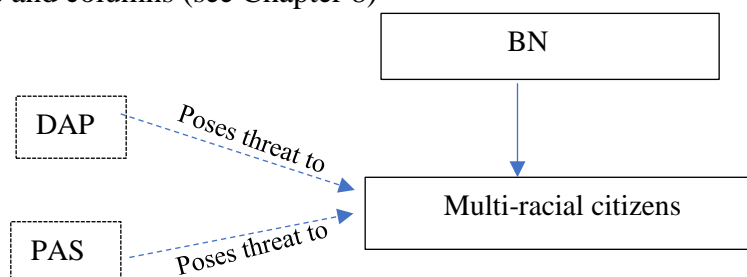
Figure 9: The relationship between the different hierarchical levels of Malays in the representation of the government and the opposition in Malay-language editorials and columns (see Chapter 6)



As discussed in Chapter 3, the basis for such an ideology does exist in the well-established kinship myth that all Malays are indigenes whilst all non-Malays are immigrants. This distinction between *Bumiputra* (sons of the soil) and non-*Bumiputra* gained prominence as a unifying myth in the post-Independence period, when UMNO leaders were trying to frame legislation to institutionalize the ‘special position of Malays’ as enshrined in the Constitution. On the other hand, the opposition, particularly through references to DAP, the mainly Chinese party, was represented as a threat to the rights, privileges, religion and future, as well as progeny, of the Malay-Muslim community. In contrast, aiming at a different readership, which probably explains the newspapers’ approach, the English-language editorials and columns focus on a multi-racial/ethnic Malaysia without explicitly emphasising a single race/ ethnicity. Such findings again challenge work on the role of the media, particularly the press and democracy (see, amongst others, Ross, 2004; ACE Electoral Knowledge Network, 2013, discussed especially in Chapter 1). The BN coalition

was represented as a proven success that has given the multi-racial/ethnic country political stability, racial/ethnic peace, economic growth and prosperity:

Figure 10: The relationship between government and opposition representation in English-language editorials and columns (see Chapter 8)



The opposition, on the other hand, through references made to DAP, were described as ‘chauvinist’, while references made to PAS were associated with a relatively extreme view of Islam, in which both were seen as a threat to the cultural plurality of Malaysia. This is a long-standing trope since the racial/ethnic riots in 1969, one that was revived during the GE13 campaign, which also emphasised why a discourse-historical approach is needed. It was in an attempt to generate unity behind the BN government through the generation of a siege mentality, in which political support for BN leaders could be engineered by arguing that it was the only way to avoid ‘a return to 13 May 1969’. The spectre of racial conflict was employed repeatedly as an ethnicity-based ideology to promote support for the incumbent political leaders. We could also argue that a more long-term strategy was to articulate a coherent ideology of Malay unity that could rebuild support for UMNO. In addition, this approach also echoes the colonial ideology of the governing class that has allegedly succeeded in bringing progress and prosperity over the years, as discussed in Chapter 3. As evidenced through the analysis, we have seen repeated attempts to remind Malaysians that the incumbent BN and its ethnicity-based parties have served the interests of their respective communal constituencies well and have thereby managed to foster good interethnic relations.

These predications and nominations, identified in the microanalyses in Chapters 6 and 8, are significant elements of the texts’ argumentation structure, as they are linked to and form the basis for the argumentation schemes of the mainstream newspapers’ world view

seen in Chapters 7 and 9. The analyses drawn from the DHA's conception of argumentation follow the theory of Josef Kopperschmidt and rely on pragma-dialectics' ten rules for rational dispute and constructive arguing as their central normative basis. This study therefore sees argumentation strategies employed in the editorials and columns serving as a methodical justification of validity claims reflected linguistically through the use of speech acts. To begin with, I have argued in the chapters that the absence of alternative voices in the Malay- and English language op-eds violated the first rule of the 10 commandments, i.e. the freedom rule which allows a wide range of voices to be heard or cast doubts on standpoints. This violation has left us with *fallacies* instead of *topoi*. In the Malay-language op-eds, they fall under four legitimacy categories: fear of the unknown, reality, future and responsibility. In the English-language op-eds they focus on arguments about DAP and PAS. All these fallacies are ideologically driven. That is, macro-arguments define the mainstream op-eds' argumentative persuasion through a framework of identity politics, rather than modern-day social demands related to the tenets of developmental journalism (see Figure 8, p. 227).

This could also be linked to wider debates around the failed role of the press in the Malaysian public sphere. The fallacies employed evoke fear in the Malay-language op-eds reader community that the Malays' political dominance, rights and privileges were being threatened by the rise of opposition parties, particularly the mainly-Chinese DAP party, and the fear of the English-language reader community of PAS's Islamic supposed extremism. A fear appeal is "a persuasive message that attempts to arouse the emotion of fear by depicting a personally relevant and significant threat and then follows this description of the threat by outlining recommendations presented as effective and feasible in deterring the threat" (Witte, 1994, p. 114), it is a powerful technique of argumentation. This is because a fear appeal is based on the writer's capability to rouse and exploit the sentiments and preconceptions of the target reader (see also Walton, 1992, p. 4). The appeal to religion in a Malay-Muslim sense in Chapters 6 and 7, or in the sense of the multiracial context in Chapters 8 and 9, has made religion an instrument to serve the interests of those in power at their convenience, depending on the readership of the newspapers. This brings us to another key empirical contribution, i.e. Islam and its abuses, in the way that Islam is discussed in the Malay- and English-language mainstream newspapers.

10.4.3. Islam and its abuses

Religion may be a subtle ally in justifying political repression. However, traditional approaches to theorising political communication and elections may overlook this issue. Religion, according to Calvert and Calvert (2001), can be “a mobiliser of masses, a controller of mass action ... an excuse for repression [or] ideological basis for dissent” (p.140). As discussed previously, religion is one of the major symbols of group identity in Malaysia. Suffice to say that religion can be ‘a force which legitimates’ the social order (see Hamilton, 2001, pp. 93–4). Quoting Peter Berger (1973, p. 41):

[R]eligion has been the historically most widespread and effective instrumentality of legitimation. All legitimation maintains socially defined reality. Religion legitimates so effectively because it relates the precarious reality constructions of empirical societies with ultimate reality. The tenuous reality of the social world is grounded in the sacred realissimum, which by definition is beyond the contingencies of human meanings and human activity.

Legitimation, according to Turner (2008, p. 496), is a matter of social cohesion. But from a critical perspective, legitimation is a struggle for hegemony. In this sense, religion, as expressed by Berger, is an example of ideology, or ‘meaning in the service of power’; alternative constructions of reality are suppressed by reference to an ultimate, unquestionable source – the sacred. Here, the empirical chapters have shown that, in contrast to the West, Islam was employed as the ideology of different groups in order to maintain/ regain legitimacy during the GE13 campaign, e.g. when writers in Malay-language editorials and columns recontextualize religious terms, among others, *aqidah* (Islamic creed) and *hudud* (Islamic law) and verses in the Quran (i.e. the words of Allah (God)), to tie their arguments to the religious realm (see especially Chapters 6 and 7).

10.4.4. Change and time

The final key issue that forms part of the empirical contribution is an understanding of change and time due to the fact that the ruling party has been in power for so long. The concept of change in both Malay and English op-eds' argumentation during the GE13 campaign was legitimised/ delegitimised and associated with the issue of temporality. While in the English-language op-eds 'change' is considered redundant due to a belief that there is nothing wrong with the incumbent government, in the Malay-language op-eds 'change' is compounded by fear of the unknown as well as the ruling party as the one to generate change. The texts, especially in the Malay-language op-eds, are heavily laden with counterfactual conditional sentences. Stalnaker's (1990, pp. 316–325) views on conditionals can hardly be ignored as although conditionals are problematic, they are also central. And apparently, they are also an ineliminable part of the conceptual resources we use to describe and find our way around in the world. Therefore, when the syntactically common conditional *if-then* is used to present a factual apodosis (the consequent), which implies an accepted state of reality or truth, 'hope' is denied owing to an absence of other possibilities, leaving the reader but one choice, i.e. maintaining the status quo under the ruling incumbent government. I see such rhetoric of temporality in election communication discourse as a type of legitimation device (van Dijk 1998) used in institutional contexts to shore up an institution's call for particular near-term political actions. Like Edelman (1971), I see this process as both rhetorical and political as editors and columnists, as political actors, "create perceived [future] worlds that in turn shape perceptions and interpretations of current events and therefore the behaviour with which people respond to them" (p. 7).

10.5. Limitations of the study and recommendations for future research

This study is limited in its scope, largely because of the availability of data, space and time restrictions. In this study, I have only examined mainstream Malay-and English-language newspapers, without taking into consideration mainstream Chinese and Tamil newspapers. It would be interesting to note how a multi-lingual society impacts on ideas in the public sphere which presume a common framework for talking about politics.

One potential avenue for future research would be to compare GE13 editorials and columns in mainstream newspapers with the alternative press, i.e. the opposition's political party papers. In addition, one could also consider comparing mainstream newspapers with the 'independent' online press that arguably helps the public sphere to become more 'democratic' as it is open to new entrants, more accommodating of diverse (even antagonistic) viewpoints (see Lumsden, 2013), and more voluble between elections through the spread of alternative online news portals. Potential research might benefit from including interviews with journalists. This is in line with Wodak et al. (1993):

[O]ur concept of 'political' is far broader than that in common usage and not only concentrates on the language of the powerful elites, but also includes discursive acts which, according to Paul Chilton and Christina Schaffner, 'involve power, or its inverse, resistance' (1997, p. 212) in many different contexts, including non-official and informal ones.

It would be interesting to see how they discuss (and justify) their output, especially as it relates to issues around democracy, the public good and others.

10.6. Overall conclusion

This study has examined argumentative discourse in editorials and columns published during the GE13 campaign in Malaysia. The findings echo the complexity of the politics of race/ ethnicity in Malaysia, not just because the ruling elite's interests are expressed in ethnic forms but, as illustrated earlier, they are so expressed in two distinct but intertwined ways. They are persistently articulated as a racio-/ethno-class consciousness of racially clustered class fractions, and also as ethnic ideologies of the dominant class through the concept of *Ketuanan Melayu* (Malay supremacy) and *bumiputera*, which seeks to unify class-divided Malays by asserting and institutionalizing Malay-Chinese rivalry. In this case, if we accept race as the taken-for-granted reality in Malaysia, the findings enable us to understand how the mainstream newspapers- through the production of racio-/ethno-religious discourse- is enmeshed within a politics of race that positions racialised experiences as the accepted norm. As the empirical chapters suggest, these norms between Bumiputera (Malay)/Immigrant have been constructed, arranged, reinterpreted, absorbed

and internalised in the editorials and columns during the GE13. This suggests that the mainstream newspapers discourse during the GE13 campaign is not only a product but also producer of Malaysia's racialised society.

Williams (1962) points out that, one way for a democracy to thrive is to ensure that the press is free to write without fear or favour, and to foster an environment where citizens are free to reply and criticise (see also discussion in especially Chapter 1). But, the empirical findings are the manifestation of a compromised democracy in Malaysia, the mainstream newspapers do not see their role as expanding democracy, given that the right of the people to unobstructed quality information is wilfully or unintentionally obstructed. The Malaysian media, particularly the press, have been seen to serve the governors rather than the governed. By propagating information supporting and furthering the BN/UMNO government's political interests, Malaysian mainstream editorials and columns have a fundamentally different purpose as we have discussed in the previous chapters (see especially Chapter 2). *Utusan Malaysia* for example, played a historic role in the intellectual development of the Malay nationalist movement, helping to radically alter the political consciousness of the Malay community as the first Malay-language newspaper (see especially Chapter 4). But, as the findings suggest, arguably this strand of critical thinking has dissipated.

Perhaps, there is nothing new with this. Since the Mahathir Mohamad¹¹⁶ era, 1981–2003, a free press has been seen as non-essential to democracy (Means, 1991, p.138; Shome, 2002, p.157), as for him press freedom is a myth and unsuitable for Malaysia (Mohd Azizzudin, 2009, p.x). This shows another important difference from the West, where governments invoke the importance of a free press even if they interfere with its operation. Mahathir opines that Malaysians must learn to live with less freedom because freedom leads to instability (Hazlan Zakaria, 2013; Md Izwan, 2013). Likewise, his successor, Abdullah Ahmad Badawi,¹¹⁷ claims that there is no such thing as absolute freedom and that the media should not be ashamed of “self-censorship” to respect cultural norms (Mustafa, 2006, p. 97), saying:

¹¹⁶ Mahathir Mohamad was the fourth Prime Minister of Malaysia and held the post for 22 years (1981 to 2003).

¹¹⁷ Abdullah Ahmad Badawi was the fifth Prime Minister of Malaysia and held the post from 2003 to 2009.

[D]ifferent societies hold different values ... In a globalized world where news travels in ‘the blink of an idea’ and becomes accessible to all, cultural insensitivities and arrogance can lead cultures to clash and nations to collide. (The Star, 2008, p. 4)

Mustafa (2000) provides a rather dark and dismal picture of democracy and the press:

[T]he press gives scant aid to the democratization of a country. It has other priorities – Such as entertaining the people and making money... Every country must develop in its own and provide a political system that best reflects the realities of its own culture. If it contains many elements of citizen participation, so be it. If it doesn’t, so be it. A country should be left to bask in its own success or stew in its own failures... We shouldn’t assume that a free press—or any kind of press—can democratize a country or solve social problems. It is quite likely that a free press will lead to social instability, disharmony, and disorder... (p. 199).

However, this thesis begs to differ. The press should give a *massive* aid to the democratization of any country. This is because, as long as freedom of speech is absent and democratic citizens are conditioned to think with a ‘second-hand’ reality, democracy in the country via conventional reasoning is nonsensical. This is the current crisis of modern democracy, as while it may be easy to detect such political manoeuvres in totalitarian regimes, some people in democratic societies may not be even aware that they are actually fed with information by their representatives, using disguised and underhand tactics, to cement their hegemony. While an ideal democratic practice in Malaysia may sound ambitious, it could start with liberalization, pluralisation and deregulation of the media. And for this to be successful, Malaysians must play their part. This is because “[d]emocracy, if it develops at all, develops from the roots of a society, and when the people are ready for greater political participation, it will come” (Mustafa, 2000, p. 199).

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Appendices

Appendix 1 *Categories for actual coding*

Technical data:

Case Number

Paper:

1= *Utusan Malaysia* ; 2= *Mingguan Malaysia*; 3= *Berita Harian*; 4= *Berita Harian Ahad*; 5= *New Straits Times*; 6= *New Sunday Times*; 7= *The Star*; 8= *Sunday Star*; 9= *Free Malaysia Today (FMT)*; 10= *The Malaysian Insider (TMI)*; 11= *The Nut Graph*

Date:

Given in full

Location: [the location of the start of the article on the page]:

1= *top left quarter*; 2= *top right quarter*; 3= *bottom left quarter*; 4= *bottom right quarter*; 5= *online*; 6= *centre-top*; 7= *centre-bottom*; 8= *centre-middle*; 9= *whole page*; 10= *left/right half-page (vertical)*; 11= *top half-page (horizontal)*; 12= *bottom half-page*

Format:

1= *editorial*; 2= *column*

Page: 1= *front page [1-15]*; 2= *middle page [16-30]*; 3= *back page [31-50]*

Column/Article size: online articles in words, print: 1= *short [350 words]*; 2= *medium [750 words]*; 3= *long [1500]*

Themes in the opinion pages:

What is the main focus of the article?

1= *policy*; 2= *personality*; 3= *election in general*

Geographic focus: 1= *Kuala Lumpur*; 2= *Labuan*; 3= *Putrajaya*; 4= *Johor*; 5= *Kedah*; 6= *Kelantan*; 7= *Melaka*; 8= *Negeri Sembilan*; 9= *Pahang*; 10= *Perak*; 11= *Perlis*; 12= *Pulau Pinang*; 13= *Sabah*; 14= *Sarawak*; 15= *Selangor*; 16= *Terengganu*; 99= *Not mentioned*; 101= *Malaysia in general*; 102= *Felda settlements*; 103= *overseas*

PRIMARY & SECONDARY POLITICAL ACTORS: same codes, as below:

0= *electoral candidates*

Barisan Nasional, BN (National Front (0-4): 1= *general*; 2= *United Malays National Organisation (UMNO)*; 3= *Malaysian Chinese Association (MCA)*; 4= *Malaysian Indian Congress (MIC)*; 5= *specific MP (if applicable)? [string available]*

Pakatan Rakyat (20-24): 20= *general*; 21= *Parti Keadilan Rakyat, PKR (People's Justice Party)*; 22= *Democratic Action Party, DAP*; 23= *Parti Islam Se-Malaysia, PAS (Pan-Malaysian Islamic Party)*, 24= *specific MP (if applicable) [string available]*

Independent (30-33): 30= *general*; 31= *former BN 's member*; 32= *former PR's member* ; 33= *others*

Positive comments about:

government coalition (or parties in the coalition) (61):

opposition coalition (or parties in the coalition) (62):

Independent party (88):

Negative comments about:

government coalition (or parties in the coalition) (63):

opposition coalition (or parties in the coalition) (64):

Independent party (89)

Comments about:

Najib Razak: Positive (65)/ negative (80):

Mahathir Mohamad: Positive: (66)/ negative (81):

Anwar Ibrahim : Positive (67)/ negative (82)

Lim Kit Siang: Positive (68)/ negative (83)

Hadi Awang: Positive (84)/ negative (85)

Muhyiddin Yassin: Positive (86)/ negative (87)

Others: (string available) Positive (2)/ negative (0).

PRIMARY & SECONDARY POLICIES: same codes, as below:

Economy (0-10): 1= *general*; 2= *Employment*; 3= *Inflation / Cost of living*; 4= *Lower fuel prices*; 5= *Income support*; 6= *Budget deficit*; 7= *Tax reforms*; 8= *Minimum Wage*; 9= *Foreign workers*; 10= *Competition policy*

Development (20-26): 20= *general*; 21= *Poverty*; 22= *Rural infrastructure*; 23= *Regional development*; 24= *Utilities- access water/ electricity*; 25= *Agriculture & food security*; 26= *Felda settlers' welfare*

Quality of Life (40- 45): 40= *general*; 41= *Housing*; 42= *Healthcare facilities*; 43= *Healthcare financing*; 44= *Public transportation*; 45= *Gender*; 46= *Childcare*; 47= *Utilities-affordable water/electricity*; 48= *highway rehabilitation and improvement*; 49= *car*

Education (60-65): 60= *general*; 61= *Free education*; 62= *National schools*; 63= *Scholarships / PTPTN* ; 64= *University autonomy*; 65= *Innovation, R&D*

Public safety (80-83): 80= *general*; 81= *Crime rate*; 82= *Illegal immigrations*; 83= *Police force reforms*;

Public Sector (100-): 100= *general*; 101= *public service quality*; 102= *Public service remuneration (salary, COLA)*; 103= *Revisit privatization projects*; 104= *GLCs (Proton)*

Governance (120-127): 120= *general*; 121= *corruption*; 122= *public procurement*; 123= *independent judiciary*; 124= *electoral process reforms*; 125= *ISA, OSA, UUCA*; 126= *Local elections*; 127= *Media policy reforms*; 128= *freedom of speech*; 129= *academic freedom*; 130= *hudud*; 131= *freedom of information*

Social Unity & Equity (140- 146): 140= *general*; 141= *Foreign policy*; 142= *Environment* ; 143= *Natural resource / Petronas*; 144= *Petroleum royalty*; 145= *Bumiputra business*; 146= *Orang Asli (the aborigines)*; 147= *single mothers/women*; 203= *children*

Policy(ies) in manifesto (200- 202): 200= *both (general)*; 201 = *A promise of hope (BN manifesto)*; 202= *Manifesto Rakyat*

PRIMARY & SECONDARY TOPICS: same codes, as below:

PRU13/GE13 (0-16): 1= *general*; 2= *democracy*; 3= *electoral fraud*; 4= *A promise of hope (BN manifesto)*; 5= *Pakatan Harapan Rakyat (PR manifesto)*; 6= *Suruhanjaya Pilihanraya Malaysia, SPRM (Election Commission of Malaysia)*; 7= *transformation vs reformation*; 9= *1999/2008 political Tsunami*; 10= *undecided voters*; 11= *new media campaign*; 12= *manifestos (general)*; 13= *overseas voters*; 14= *the transfer of power*; 200= *campaigning*; 201= *the media*; 206= *celebrity turns politician*; 255= *indifferent voters*; 355= *Malaysian, vote!*

Politics : 15= *general*; 16= *politics and literature*

Political parties (19- x); 18= *charismatic party's member*; 19= *loyalty to the party/coalition*; 20= *arguments about voters' wants*; 21= *politician and desperation for power*; 22= *electorate candidates*; 23= *BN's candidate(s)*; 24= *PR's candidate(s)*; 25= *people's power*; 26= *past leader's commemoratin*; 27= *party's sacrifice/contributions*; 28= *internal conflict*; 29= *traitor*

Scandals (30-37): 30= *general*; 31= *phantom voters*; 32= *(un)indelible ink*; 33= *'Malaysia prophecy from Jerusalem' video*; 34= *DAP's mission*; 35= *DAP's logo*; 36= *sex scandal*; 37= *National Feedlot Corporation scandal*; 38= *Altantuyta Shaariibuu murder*; 39= *DAP and Registrar of Societies (ROS)*; 41= *the 'crocodile' tears*

Religions [Islam, Christianity, Buddhism, Hindu] (50-63): 50= *general*; 51= *manipulation*; 52= *hudud*; 53= *Malaysia as an Islamic state*; 54= *kalimah 'Allah' issue*; 55= *threat of Christianity*; 56= *conflicting religious beliefs*; 57= *politicization of religion*; 59= *compromising religion for power*; 60= *Malay-Muslim and LGBT*; 61= *religious pluralism*; 62= *dignifying Islam*; 63= *liberalism*; 64= *Hindu Rights Action Force (hindraf)*; 65= *protecting the Malays and 'Islam'*. 66= *PAS version of Islam*; 67= *threat to Islam*; 68= *Islam and democracy*; 69= *DAP/PAS relations*; 70= *apostatizing UMNO/BN members*; 180= *wrath of God if BN lose power*;

Racial issues (80-85) = 81= *general*; 82= *13 May*; 83= *threat and violence unrest erupting (if the BN lose their power)*; 84= *DAP/PAS relations*; 85= *Indian voters*; 86= *Malay in general* ; 87= *(protecting) the Malays/Malay supremacy (bumiputera privileges)*; 88= *Bahasa Melayu (Malay Language)*, 89= *Malay-Muslim and LGBT*, 90= *DAP/Malay relations*; 91= *challenging the Malay kings*; 92= *Perkasa(Persatuan Pribumi Perkasa)* ; 93= *Chinese voters*; 94 = *racist candidates*; 95= *racial discrimination*; 858= *1 Malaysia*; 900= *politics with race and religion card*

Youth (120-122): 120= *general*; 121= *gratitude*; 122= *youths and politics*
Women: 124= *general*; 125= *women in politics*

Violence (140-147): 140= *demonstrations*; 141= *provocations*; 142= *defamation*; 143= *sabotage*; 144= *chaos*; 145= *'Arab Spring' politics*; 146= *violence erupting (if BN lose power)*; 147= *extremism*; 148= *politics of hatred*; 149= *general*; 150= *politics of violence*; 151= *Lahad Datu and Sulu Terrorist*; 152= *voters and violence*

Discourse:

Use of the word 'Malay' in: 1= *headline/leader*; 2= *first sentence*; 3= *first paragraph*; 4= *second paragraph*; 5= *upper half of report*; 6= *text*

Use of the word 'Bumiputera' in: 1= *headline/leader*; 2= *first sentence*; 3= *first paragraph*; 4= *second paragraph*; 5= *upper half of report*; 6= *text*

Use of the phrase 'bangsa, agama dan negara' (race, religion and country) in : 1= *headline/leader*; 2= *first sentence*; 3= *first paragraph*; 4= *second paragraph*; 5= *upper half of report*; 6= *text*

Appendix 2

Coding sheet for content analysis of opinion pages on mainstream newspapers during Malaysia GE13 election campaign (20-4-2013 to 4-5-2013)

Technical data:

Case Number	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	Paper/portal	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	Date:	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Page:	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	Location:	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	Format:	<input type="text"/>	Articles size:	<input type="text"/>

Themes in the opinion pages:

Content focus:	<input type="text"/>	Geographic focus:	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
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PRIMARY & SECONDARY POLITICAL ACTORS:

Primary:	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	Secondary:	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	Others: _____
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Coalition/party

Positive comments:	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	Negative comments:	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
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Positive or negative comments about political leader:

Najib Razak	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	Mahathir Mohamad	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	Hadi Awang	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Anwar Ibrahim	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	Lim Kit Siang	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	Muhyiddin Yassin	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

Others (string available): _____

PRIMARY & SECONDARY POLICIES:

Primary	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	Secondary	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
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PRIMARY & SECONDARY TOPICS:

Primary	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	Secondary	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
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