MALAYSIAN VS PHILIPPINES NEWS REPORTS: A TRANSITIVITY ANALYSIS OF THE LAHAD DATU INCIDENT

Wan Faizatul Azirah Ismayatim, Sridevi A/p Sriniwass,
Nadiah Thanthawi Jauhari

Academy of Language Studies, Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM), Shah Alam
Faculty of Languages and Linguistics, University of Malaya

Abstract: This paper reports on a study on Experiential meaning particularly the main process types used in the reporting of the air-strike event launched by Malaysian security forces on March 5, 2013 during the intrusion of "Sulu Sultan" followers in Lahad Datu. Data for the study comprised text reports pertinent to the airstrike event published in four different English newspapers which are The News Straits Times (NST), The Star (TS), The Philippine Daily Inquirer (TPDI) and The Philippine Star (TPS). A total of 8 texts were analysed. Various methods have been developed to study newspapers representation and stance of controversial issues which include content analysis, critical discourse analysis, lexical cohesion, the use of metaphors, transitivity and thematic analysis among others. However, the framework of transitivity has not been widely used. Hence, Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), in particular, the System of Transitivity propounded by M.A.K. Halliday (1994) was used to bridge the gap in research and the methodology of text analysis was deployed. The study revealed that NST was the only newspaper which highlighted the sorrow and the grief of Malaysians and its Prime Minister in which this newspaper accounts for the most in employing the Mental Processes, while TS, TPDI and TPS highlighted more on the physical actions and the resoluteness of both countries in handling the Lahad Datu conflict when Material Processes were dominant in these newspapers.

Keywords: Airstrike, Experiential Meaning, Process Types, Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), Transitivity

1. Introduction

1.1 Background of the Study

Dixit (2008) notes that the reporting of news reports entails investigation, explanation and a point of view. In newspapers, reporters are seen as the story tellers who are alert to the drama of conflict and struggle of human experience and infinitely curious about the motives and meanings behind events. When reporting, they use words as symbols to evoke empathy, indignation, pity or anger.

However, Fedler et al. (2005) suggested that if a reporter were to write about a child's funeral, the reporter do not have to comment that the mourners were "sad- faced," the scene "grim" and the parents "grief-stricken." Nor is there reason to report that an author is "famous," a witness "alert" or an accident "tragic". This view has also been shared by Mencher (1997) who claims that unfair and unbalanced journalism might be described as a failure in objectivity. Objectivity means that the news story is free of the reporter's opinion or feelings, that it contains facts and that the account is from an impartial and independent observer. Thus, it appears that the application of adjectives may actually reveal the attitude of a reporter that may also reveal the representation of certain event reported by the reporter.

Meanings delivered by media allow us to understand information about others' opinion and perceptions about things, people and event in around us. The audience of that information has to interpret it based on what has been sent by the media. It is depending on what they supply that may shape audience perceptions and thought about certain things, people and event of the world. McCullagh (2002) notes that it is crucial to understand what exactly is being communicated to audiences and whether or not it meets certain criteria such as being informative and representative. It is through the language that the media portrays in their content that enables clarification of whether they provide merely information, or use certain features of the language that represent certain ideology, feelings and opinions. Thus, media does influence society through what they say and how they say it while readers make sense of what they read in the media. To sum up, media cannot be seen in isolation as language and media are interrelated. The information the media carried is represented through the content while the content is represented through language that the reporters applied in the media texts. It is the media that shapes the text in which may shape the audience's perception.

Nevertheless, the portrayal of certain event cannot be understood by only looking at the content and the choice of words alone, further linguistic investigation need to be carried out such as by considering the roles and the process types used in portraying the event and the participants involved. Thus, for this study, the Transitivity framework with a focus on the various process types employed in the language used in the reporting of airstrike event is seen as an appropriate framework to see the holistic portrayal of the event from the lens of Experiential meaning.

1.2 Statement of the research problem

When reporting, a variety of verbs were used by reporters to describe an event such as 'kill' for the descriptionof physical events, 'shout' for the description of verbal event, 'hope' for the description of feelings and 'cried' for the description of behaviour. In SFL, verbs are described as the Processes experienced by Participants and isregarded as the representation of what 'goings-on' are present in the whole clause (Bloor & Bloor, 2004). Processes represent the Experiential meaning and are idealised through the use of different types of verbs which can be analysed through the use of the Transitivity System of SFL (Halliday, 1994). It is through these Processes that we are able to see the reporter reporting the event as merely a physical event (material), or as an event that occurs in the Participants' mind (mental), or Participants' comments and opinion (verbal), or portraying certain behaviour (behavioural), or the relationship between some concepts of the event (relational), or the existence of certain phenomena or entity (existential).

The linguistic study of the news reports is also significance in providing information and knowledge about theExperiential aspect of language used in the media that may reveal the hidden ideology of newspapers. Eventually, language used in the reporting of the airstrike may shape and persuade readers' mind, but the knowledge

of newspapers' hidden ideology will allow the public to be independent in making decisions about a particular issue without being manipulated by the newspapers' hidden interest. Thus, to understand the ideology of different newspapers from Malaysia and the Philippinesin the reporting of the Lahad Datu airstrike event, a Transitivity analysis was conducted.

1.3 Significance of the study

On February 2013, the good relationship between Malaysia and Philippines was challenged by the Lahad Datu conflict and has raised a tense to the two neighboring countries' diplomatic relationship and the spirit conspired in ASEAN. In the time where the ownership of Sabah was being disputed, the representation of the Lahad Datu crisis in both countries' newspapers with the focus on the airstrike launched by the Malaysian security forces was done in order to investigate the newspapers' evaluations towards the diplomatic crisis. The investigation attempted to find out how the newspapers of the two countries have represented the event and also the Participants involved in the event especially the Philippines and Malaysian governments, as well as the Sulu Sultanate army themselves in reaction to the airstrike launched by Malaysia. The portrayal of the breaking news reported in both countries' newspapers will reveal the newspapers' stance and perspective on Sabah territory issues and also the issue about the Lahad Datu intrusion by the Sulu Sultanate followers.

1.4 Aims and Research Questions

The main aim of this study is to find out how the event of the Malaysian airstrike in Lahad Datu incident is portrayed in two local English newspapers from Malaysia and two local English newspapers from Philippines through the lens of Experiential meaning. Particularly, this study aims to find out what are the Transitivity choices specifically the Process Types used in the reporting of the Malaysian airstrike event. In addition to this, the study also aims to find out the themes emerging from the various Process Types employed by the newspapers so that the portrayal of the incident that underlies the stance of the newspapers toward the airstrike event could be seen holistically. In order to lead the study towards its aim, the following research questions are developed:
1. What are the main Process Types used in the reporting of the Malaysian airstrike event?
2. What are the specific themes identified with the various Process Types choices in the reporting of the Malaysian airstrike event?

2. Literature Review

2.1 Multi-functional Components: Experiential, Interpersonal and Textual

From the functional linguistics perspective, language is seen as functional. Bloor and Bloor (2004) observe thatwhen interacting with others, we use a systematic combination of words with specific use, purposes or function. According to Thompson (2014), SFL proposes that the ways human beings use language to create and understand meanings can be classified into three broad categories or Metafunctions known as the Experiential Metafunction, the Interpersonal Metafunction and the Textual Metafunction. Experiential metafunction is the way we use language to talk about the experience that we have about the world including the experience that we have in minds. It involves the language that we use to describe events and states as well as the entities involved in them. Interpersonal metafunction on the other hand describes the language that we used when interacting with others in order to establish and maintain a good relationship together.

Finally, the Textual metafunction is the language that we used in organizing our messages when talking or writing so that they fit in with the other messages in around them and also with the larger context that the messages are related to.

The current study is focusing only on the Experiential aspect of the language used in the airstrike news report. From an SFL point of view, content or ideas is the main focus for the Experiential function where language is utilised to bring together, to comprehend and also to express our viewpoints about the world and of our own realizations. Thompson (2014) notes that during interaction, people use language as a tool to decode experience that they have in the real world regardless whether it is about experience of the external world such as things, events and qualities or their internal world experience such as thoughts, beliefs and feelings. Experiential meanings are those which deal with what is going on in the world and it describes how language is used to talk about the world (Thompson, 2014).

2.2 Framework of Transitivity: Processes, Participant Roles, and Circumstantial Elements

Thompson (2014) concedes that Experiential meanings are those which deal with what is going on in the world and the system network of Transitivity is the part of grammar that realizes this Experiential meaning. It explainshow, we as a writer or speaker uses whatever language resources that we have in mind in telling 'who does what to whom and in what circumstances'. When explaining the system network of Transitivity, Halliday and Matthiessen (2004) suggest that there are three semantic categories which explain how events in the real world are represented: the Process, the Participants involved in the Process, and the Circumstantial Elements that modify the Process. Process is realized by the Verbal Group of a particular clause, but it can also be regarded as the representation of what 'goings-on' are present in the whole clause (Bloor & Bloor, 2004). It is subdivided into six different types which are Material, Mental, Relational, Behavioural, Verbal, and Existential. Each Process consisted of different Participant Roles. Halliday and Matthiessen (2004) notes that "Participants are directly involved in the Process, bringing about its occurrence or being affected by it in some way" (p. 176). Circumstantial Elements on the other hand provide extra information about the Processses and the Participants involved in the Processes. The current study applied the Transitivity framework to investigate the portrayal of the airstrike event in the Lahad Datu incident reported in two different newspapers published in Malaysia. Based on Halliday and Matthiessen (2004) work, Transitivity framework specifically the Process types observes by Thompson (2014) and Bloor and Bloor (2004) was used to identify the Experiential meanings used in the reports.

(a) Types of Processes in Transitivity Framework

Material Processes are those phenomena that involve physical actions such as cooking, kicking, walking, and throwing. An example of a Material Process is given in Figure 2.1.

invaders	killed	six more policemen
	Pr: Material	

Figure 2.1: Material Process (*TS/T2/S5*)

Mental Processes on the other hand refer to those phenomena that go on in the internal world of the mind. Examples of verbs that describe our Mental Process include verbs like thinking, praying, hoping, liking, seeing and so on. An example of Mental Process is given in Figure 2.2.

Residents	are afraid	of reprisals by the terrorists…
	Pr: Mental	

Figure 2.2: Mental Process and its Participants (*NST/T1/S20*)

Relational processes are typically realized by the verb be (Bloor & Bloor, 2004). It can also be realized bylinking verbs or verbs that connect subjects to their complements which are known as copular verbs. Examples of copular verbs include appear, become, seen, keep, remain, and sound. Relational Processes can be subdivided into two different types of Processes. The first type is known as the Attributive Relational Process and is used to signal the existence of the relationship between two concepts: The second type is known as the Identifying Relational Process. There are two Participants involved in this Process namely Token and Value. Token is the concept mentioned with specific embodiment while Value is the concept mentioned in general (Thompson, 2014). An example of Attributive Relational Process and Identifying Relational Process are given in Figure 2.3 and Figure 2.4 respectively.

He	's not	a very good painter.
Carrier	**Pr: Rel-Attributive**	**Attribute**

Figure 2.3: Attributive Relational Process and its Participants (*Thompson, 2014*)

Married women	are	the real victims
Token	**Pr: Rel-Identifying**	**Value**

Figure 2.4: Identifying Relational Process and its Participants (*Eggins, 2004*)

The Verbal Processes are realized by verbs of 'saying'. Verbs are intermediate between Mental and Material Processes in which when a speaker says something, it is actually a physical action that reflects mental operations (Thompson, 2014). Examples of Verbal Processes' verbs include highlighted, denied, asked, said, promised, explained and questioned. The following (Figure 2.5) is an example of Verbal Process as cited in Halliday & Matthiessen (2004).

Henry	asked	Whether Mary was there
	Pr: Verbal	

Figure 2.5: Verbal Process with Reported (*Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004*)

Similar to the Verbal Processes, the verbs in Behavioural Processes too are intermediate between Mental and Material Processes. The only difference is that in the Behavioural Process, we can differentiate between the real mental processes with the observable outward physical signs performed by the Behavioural Process (Thompson, 2014). This explains why verbs such as watch, stare and look are considered as Behavioural Processes while the verb see is considered as Mental Process. Similarly, the verb listen is Behavioural while the verb hear is Mental. An example of Behavioural Process is shown in Figure 2.6.

He	smiled	a broad smile
	Pr: Behavioural	

Figure 2.6: Behavioural Process and its Participants (*Eggins, 2004*)

The last type of Process known as Existential Process merely expresses the existence of an entity and is realized by the verb be. The subject of a clause that consists of an Existential Process can be either an empty 'there' or the Existent, (Figure 2.7) which is the only Participant involved in this Process (Bloor & Bloor, 2004).

There	were	ten of us in the party.
/	Pr: Existential	Existent

Figure 2.7: Existential Process with 'there' as Subject (*Bloor & Bloor, 2004*)

A summary on the different types of Process and Participant Roles presented by Thompson (2014) and Bloor and Bloor (2004) together with their examples are shown in Table 2.1.

Table 2.1: Processes and Participant Roles in Transitivity

Process Types	Examples
Material	*cooking, kicking, walking, throwing*
Mental	*thinking, praying, hoping, liking, seeing*
Relational	*appear, become, seen, keep, remain,* and *sound*
Behavioural	*watching, staring, looking*
Verbal	*highlighted, denied, asked, said, promised, explained, questioned.*
Existential	realized by the verb *be.*

Adapted from Thompson (2014) and Bloor & Bloor (2004)

2.1 Studies on News Reports using the System of Transitivity

In terms of investigation into the system network of Transitivity in the genre of news reports, there have been an increasing number of studies investigating the portrayal of events and its participants. In 1996, Iwamoto examined how language for propaganda purposes was used by Japan newspapers during the Second World War. A news report of the fighting on Attu Island in May 1943 taken from one of the most circulated newspapers from Japan, Asahi was used for analysis. The findings showed that with the successive application of Agent and Range, the news reports did not sound as it was the Japanese side that was defeated even though the Japanese Government did admit they lost in the battle. Japanese side was portrayed as the agent and always in control of everything they did or that happened around them, and the Processes that they had experienced in the Transitivity analysis were seen as 'intention' type of action. The study concluded that the newspaper text had successfully shaped a 'false' reality as the Japanese were portrayed as not affected by the enemy's action. Through the combination of Transitivity and Lexical Cohesion approaches, Juan Li (2010) explored how China's newspaper (China Daily) and US newspaper (The New York Times) had represented the NATO bombing of the Chinese Embassy in Yugoslavia in May 1999. The study showed that The New York Times portrayed the protests by the Chinese participants in the subject positions while China Daily portrayed the United States and the attack in the subject positions when analysing the Identifying Relational Process used by both newspapers, and thus presenting different actors who played the active role in the event. The study revealed that both newspapers had successfully create specific ideologies about the event and also appealed to the readers' emotions and sympathies by empowering the words and actions of members of us and attribute the causality of the conflicts to member of them.

BiadiMaha (2013) investigated the representation of gender portrayed by two different well-known newspapers in Morocco. The findings revealed that in the women's group headlines analysed, Material Process was used frequently (74.1%) to describe women's criminal action, while in the men's group headlines, the similar Process was found to be less prominent (27,4%) when the men's criminal action was described. It was also found that a higher percentage of Actor roles were assigned to women rather than men. This shows that women were portrayed as active Participants in which their actions will always affect the victim and were seen as guilty in the texts. This study concluded that what has been portrayed by the newspapers about women criminals does not conform to the norm or the stereotypical image in Moroccan society. In the news reports, they were seen as deviant due to the violation of images associated with them such as the notion of motherhood. In the most recent study, Sriwimon and Zilli (2017) examined how the representation of Mrs. Yingluck Shinawatra as Thailand's first female prime minister, are linguisticallyconstructed in the English language press in Thailand and how gender stereotypes in Thai politics are distributed worldwide through media discourse. The Bangkok Post and The Nation newspapers were selected because theyare considered the two leading English-language daily newspapers in Thailand in terms of circulation and also reach both local and international (or worldwide) audiences. Only news reports published during the 2011 election which is when Thailand elected its first female prime minister was chosen to be analysed. The findings revealed that the majority of processes chosen to represent Yingluck Shinawatra included Material, Relational and Verbal processes, followed by Mental processes. Only small numbers of Behavioural and Existential processes were used to present her to the readers. Among the various roles detected through these process types include: readers would get to know her mainly through the roles as Actor (one who acts); Sayer (one who speaks); Carrier (one who is assigned qualities and classifications); Goal (one who is being acted upon); and Token (one who is identified as someone or something). By identifying the process types used to present her, the study found that her representations were paradoxical. The patterns of her representations that emerged in the two newspapers during the campaign phase include 'Yingluck Shinawatra as an ambitious politician', 'Yingluck Shinawatra as a nominee, passive, dependent politician' and 'Yingluck Shinawatra as a successful businesswoman, yet inexperienced and incompetent politician'.

3.0 Research Methodology

3.1 Data Description

This study investigated the news reports published in four different English language newspapers: The New Straits Times (NST), The Star (TS) The Philippine Daily Inquirer (TPDI) and The Philippine Star (TPS). NST and TS are daily newspapers published in Malaysia while TPDI and TPS are two local daily newspapers published in the Philippines. These newspapers are among the most highly read and circulated English language newspapers in Malaysia and Philippines. The online version of the newspapers' archives of TS, NST, TPDI and TPS were used as the main source in collecting the texts. Reports with the key word 'Lahad Datu Airstrike' were searched and only those related to the airstrike were selected as the sample of the study. Text reports that were published on March 5, 2013 (the day of the Malaysian airstrike in Lahad Datu) and March 6, 2013 (a day after the Malaysian airstrike) were selected as the main data for the study because even though news about the incident was reported for the first time on February 13, 2013, the attacks by the Malaysian security force was launched on March 5, 2013 which indicates the date of the climax stage of the Lahad Datu stand-off. Thus, reports that appeared on the day of the attack itself and a day after the strike were seen as a critical period for Malaysia and the analysis of those reports is seen as significant. The initial sample consisted of 31 texts of which 23 texts were excluded from the study because of not complying with the criteria of reporting on the airstrike event. This study focuses only on the reporting of the airstrike event launched my Malaysia on March 5, 2013. Thus, a total of 8 texts were analysed with 2 texts taken from each newspaper.

3.2 Data Codification, Data Analysis and Data Interpretation

In the present study, all sentences for each text were coded for ease of reference such as "NST/T1/S1" for "New-Straits Times, Text 1, Sentence 1", "TS/T1/S1" for "The Star, Text 1, Sentence 1", "TPDI/T1/S1" for "The Philippine Daily Inquirer, Text 1, Sentence 1" and "TPS/T1/S1" for "The Philippine Star, Text 1, Sentence 1". Then, Based on Transitivity framework explained earlier, each sentence of the texts involved in the study were analysed and labelled with their respective identified Process Types such as Material, Mental, Relational, Verbal, Behavioural or Existential Processes. Figure 3.1 shows an example of how the Transitivity Framework was conceptualised to analyse the data of the study.

NST/T1/S5	Some 2,000 security personnel from the armed forces and police	were deployed	yesterday in a 2km area in Kampung Tanduo after airstrikes.
		Pr: Material	

Figure 3.1: Conceptualisation of Transitivity Framework in Data Analysis

After data analysis stage, the realization of different Processes Types and also the themes emerged from the various Process Types employed by the four newspapers in describing the event were compared and discussed in detail. Themes identification plays a vital role in analysing the linguistic expression of the texts being studied. Themes were identified in order to recognize the meanings and the core linguistic consistencies of each newspaper and to find out the similarities or differences in patterns across the four newspapers when reporting the airstrike event. This was done by identifying the idea, the issue or the message carried by each of the Process types of Transitivity elements identified in the texts. For example, in TPDI and TPS, Material processes were used to show the successful arrival of the Sulu intruders on Lahad Datu shores. Instances of Material Processes depicting on Sulu intruders arrival in Sabah are given in the following example.

The main group of Filipinos... some bearing rifles and grenade launchers, who _slipped past_ naval patrols last month, _landed_ at a remote coastal village in Sabah's Lahad Datu district... [TPDI/T1/S5]
The crisis began when   Kiram's followers _sailed_ _from_ Tawi-Tawi to Lahad Datu in Sabah [TPS/T2/S14]

Figure 3.1: Examples of Material Process

In the above example, it is clear that TPDI and TPS newspapers used Material Processes to describe the physicalactions of the Lahad Datu intruders to land and arrive safely in Sabah shore. Thus, the theme 'Successful arrivalin Sabah' was discovered through the Material Process employed by these newspapers.

In the current study, the overall theme is the portrayal of the Lahad Datu airstrike. For example, the themes 'Sulu intruders successful arrival' and 'Violating Malaysia sovereignty' are the themes that described how the Sulu intruders are represented in the data. It is important to relate these themes to the various analyses carried out in the study in order that the study is not merely a structural one, but a discoursal one, in line with SFLwork. In SFL, meaning is always related to context. Hence, in the current study, the themes show the various contexts in which the discourse took place. When the analysis is related to the various themes, a clearer picture emerges about the various linguistic choices in terms of Transitivity analysis.

4.0 Findings

4.1 Quantitative Findings of the Process Types used across newspapers.

Based on the findings of the different Process Types employed in the study, it was found that all newspapers used the Material, Mental, Attributive Relational, Identifying Relational, Verbal, and Existential Processes in the reporting of the airstrike event. However, only TS and TPDI were found to employ Behavioural Processes when reporting. Corresponding to this, NST employed a total of 105 Process Types, TS (n=58), TPDI (n=103) and TPS (n=198). The finding also showed that Material Processes dominated the news reports in TS (39.66%), TPDI (38.83%) and TPS (40.91%). In NST on the other hand, Verbal Processes (28.57%) were found to be the most employed Process Types when reporting on the airstrike event. These findings thus answered the first research question of the study. Table 4.1 presents the breakdown and also the percentage of the various Process Types used in each newspaper pertaining to the airstrike event.

Table 4.1: The Breakdown of Process Types used in NST, TS, TPDI and TPS

Processes	NST		TS		TPDI		TPS	
	(n)	(%)	(n)	(%)	(n)	(%)	(n)	(%)
Material	28	26.67	23	39.66	40	38.83	81	40.91
Mental	20	19.05	9	15.52	12	11.65	18	9.14
Attributive Relational	11	10.48	5	8.62	10	9.71	14	7.11
Identifying Relational	11	10.48	3	5.17	3	2.91	7	3.55
Verbal	30	28.57	15	25.86	35	33.98	74	37.56
Behavioural	2	1.90	0	0.00	2	1.94	0	0.00
Existential	3	2.86	3	5.17	1	0.97	4	2.03
Total	105	100	58	100	103	100	198	100

Note: Percentage (%) = Frequency of use of the specific Process Type (n) x 100 / Total number of Process Type in the text

Based on Table 4.1, TPS, TS and TPDI used Material Process as their main Process Types as these newspapers focus on physical actions of Participants involved pertaining to the event. Although NST used Material Process the least but this newspaper accounts for the most in employing the Mental Process (19.05%), Attributive Relational Process (10.48%) and the Identifying Relational Process (10.48%). This is mainly because NST captured most about Malaysian and their Prime Minister's feelings towards the loss of some Malaysian security forces, Lahad Datu residents' fear towards more possible attacks by the Sulu intruders, the difficulty faced by the Prime Minister in deciding the attack and Malaysia's safety concerns. The Verbal Process was the most frequently used in both TPS (37.37%) and TPDI (33.98%) which highlighted not only information pertaining to the airstrike delivered by Malaysian Prime Minister, but also the Sulu intruders claim over Sabah and their current status after the launched of the airstrike. Nevertheless, the Behavioral Process was only found in NST (1.90%) and TPDI (1.94%) which illustrated the physical outward signs of behaviour. In contrast, the Existential Process could be found by all text, but was more widely used in TS (5.17%) which expressed the inexistence of casualties during the airstrike.

4.2 The Findings of Themes Emerging from Process Types Found in All Newspapers

To answer the second research question, the recurring themes emerging from various Process Types found in all texts were identified and grouped systematically. These themes describe the various aspects of the attack derived from the variety of Processes involved in the texts. A total of 35 themes associated with different Process Types were identified. The Transitivity analysis found that Material Processes used in all newspapers described the physical actions of the Participants involved during the event such as the Malaysian security forces, the Sulu intruders, Malaysian Prime Minister, the president of The Philippines, The Sulu Sultan, the Malaysians, as well as the governments of Malaysia and Philippines. Material Processes function as a tool to report, describe and represent the experience of observing and witnessing the airstrike event involving these participants. The study also found that Mental Processes function as a tool to describe the perceptions and the feelings representing the inner world of consciousness of different Participants pertaining to the Lahad Datu incident. The Participants involved include the Lahad Datu residents, the Malaysians, the Malaysian Prime Minister and the Sulu intruders. Next, Attributive Relational Process employed in the study depicted the characteristics of the Participants involved in the incident. It signals the existence of the relationship between the Participants and the Attribute they carry. In addition, some themes were seen to emerge from findings related to Identifying Relational Processes such as Malaysians' support towards the attack. Verbal Processes on the other hand always depict the action of saying performed by Participants. Behavioural Processes depicted the observable outward physical signs performed by Participants involved. Only NST and TPDI employed Behavioural Processes when reporting about the airstrike. Finally, Existential Processes merely expresses the existence of an entity. Only one theme was seen to emerge from findings related to the Existential Process found in the four newspapers. Table 4.2 presents a summary of the themes associated with the Process Types used in NST, TS, TPDI and TPS and their frequencies of occurrences.

Table 4.2 Themes Associated with the Process Types used by both newspapers and their Frequencies

Process	Themes	NST	TS	TPDI	TPS
Material Processes	The Launch of Attack by the Malaysian Security Forces	3	5	4	9
	Sulu intruders' Successful Arrival			2	4
	Violating Malaysia's Sovereignty by Sulu Intruders	1			
	The Killing of Malaysian Security Forces by Sulu Intruders	4	2	1	1
	Malaysia's Efforts to Solve the Conflict	4	3	3	8
	The Philippines' Efforts to Solve the Conflict			1	3
	Escaping the War by the Lahad Datu Residents				5
Mental Processes	Lahad Datu Residents' Fearful Emotions		1	1	1
	Malaysians' Anger	1			1
	Datuk Seri Najib Razak's Sad Emotions	2			
	Datuk Seri Najib Razak's Difficult Decision of the Attack	2			1
	Sulu intruders Refusal to Leave Sabah	2	1	1	1
	Actual Scene of the Attack	1	1	1	2
Relational Attributive Processes	Malaysia's Determination	1			
	Lahad Datu Residents' Fearful Emotions	1			
	Datuk Seri Najib Razak's Sad Emotions	3			
	Sulu Intruders' Current Status		2	2	
	The Characteristics of the Location of the Attack			2	
	Insecure Condition in Lahad Datu				2
Relational Identifying Processes	Malaysia's Safety Concerns	1	2		
	Datuk Seri Najib Razak's Difficult Decision of the Attack	1			
	Malaysians' Support towards the Attack	2			
	Datuk Seri Najib Razak's Sad Emotions	2			
	The Illustration on the sequence of the War Experience				4
Verbal Processes	Malaysia's Resoluteness	1	1	2	3
	Information on the Stand-off and the Attack	5	9	10	28
	Safety Assurance	1	2		
	Sulu Intruders' Claim over Sabah			3	1
	Sulu Intruders' Current Status			7	1
	Sharing of feelings by Datuk Seri Najib Razak	5			
Behavioural Processes	Malaysians' Reactions on the Airstrike Launched	2			
	Sulu Intruders as Unaffected by the Airstrike			2	
Existential Processes	Inexistence of Casualties	1	1	1	1

5. Discussion

5.1 The realisation of the themes emerged from the Process Types employed by All Newspapers

Based on the Material Process employed, it can be seen that all newspapers mainly portrayed the chronology of the events that lead to the airstrike launched by Malaysia, which are the actions of killing some Malaysian security forces by the Sulu intruders and the actions taken by the Malaysian government as efforts to solve the conflict through both negotiations and the air attack, before Malaysia finally decided to launch the airstrike through the actions of attacking the Sulu intruders performed by Malaysian security forces. However, it was found that only TPDI and TPS portrayed the Philippines government's actions in the efforts to solve the Lahad Datu conflict peacefully. The reporting of the Philippines efforts to end the conflict in Lahad Datu are not the interest of NST and TS, and thus telling the readers that the two newspapers from Malaysia are focusing more on Malaysia's struggle rather than the Philippines. This finding is parallel to the finding carried out by Vo (n.d.) to investigate the ideological representation portrayed by the language used in two different newspapers, which found that both the Vietnamese and the Australian Government were depicted as playing mainly the role of the Actor in their own newspapers. The Vietnamese Government for example, was portrayed as more active and dynamic than the other with the role of an Actor being the exclusive role used to represent them in the Vietnamese news reports.

Although the struggle of the Malaysian government in solving the conflict through negotiations were prominentin all newspapers, it was found that TS and the two newspapers from Philippines portrayed the failure of Malaysia in negotiations with the Sulu intruders. This representation of event was absent in NST which on the contrary highlighted on the Malaysian Prime Minister's physical actions in response to the death of some Malaysian security forces. The Malaysian Prime Minister was portrayed as someone who is concerned and caring about the fallen heroes' next of kin when he visited them after knowing their family members were killed during the Lahad Datu incident. Based on this finding, it can be seen that NST was not interested in informing its readers about the incapability of Malaysia in handling the Sulu intruders, instead it shifted the focus to the Prime Minister's kindness and concern about the fallen heroes' family members. By portraying this, NST is able to attract its readers' sympathy towards the killed Malaysian security forces's family members and trigger the readers' emotions, and thus shape the readers mind to agree on the attack. This finding is related to the finding of the research carried out by Willems (2005) on the representation of an event in two different Zimbabwean newspapers namely The Herald and The Daily News, in which it was found that the two newspapers decided to highlight two contradicting issues. The Herald reported about the government's goals and achievement whereas The Daily News reported about the government's failure. In the current study, NST focused on the efforts and the active role of Najib as the Prime Minister of the Malaysian government, while the other three newspapers highlighted the failure or the incapability of the Malaysian government in relation to the Lahad Datu conflict.

Material Processes identified found that only newspapers from the Philippines portrayed the success of the Suluintruders to successfully land on Lahad Datu without any problems, and thus portrayed to the readers of the twonewspapers about the weaknesses of Malaysia in protecting its borders in Sabah. The two newspapers from the Philippines also portrayed the Sulu intruders as having a high determination as they were illustrated experiencing Material Process which depicted them as not willing to surrender even after they were attacked by the Malaysian security forces. Both the portrayal of the success and the high determination of the Sulu intruders also highlighted the strength of the Sulu Sultan followers and tell the readers that the struggle of Malaysia in the efforts to force them to leave Sabah would be difficult.

Verbal Processes were also employed when reporting, which illustrated the words actually spoken by prominent leaders and authorities. This resulted in the increase of the objectivity of their news reports and also increase the validity of the information provided in the newspapers. This study found that Verbal Processes employed by all the four newspapers mainly portrayed the action of saying by the Malaysian Prime Minister as concerned with telling the public about Malaysia's resoluteness in handling the stand-off as well as in delivering the information about the stand-off event and the attack launched by the Malaysian security forces. This showed that the action of the Prime Minister in giving information is important to all newspapers when reporting. In addition, all newspapers except NST portrayed the Malaysian police as also being responsible in delivering the information in relation to the airstrike launched by the Malaysian security forces. This was achieved through the reporting of the words actually spoken by Malaysian Police in their newspapers, which then resulted in the increase of the validity of the reports.

Furthermore, there were some similarity detected on the portrayal of events through the Verbal Processes found in both TPDI and TPS. Firstly, unlike newspapers from Malaysia, the Philippines newspapers were found to give attention to the action of saying by the Sulu intruders who insisted that Sabah belonged to them and thus portrayed to their readers of the Sulu intruders' demand for Lahad Datu. Secondly, these newspapers also highlighted the conversation between the spokesmen for the Sulu Sultan, about the Sulu followers' current situation in Sabah. The fact that Verbal Processes were employed to illustrate the transmitting of information about the Sulu intruders' status in Lahad Datu by the Sulu spokesmen has made the reports about the Sulu intruders' condition and status in Sabah became more convincing and reliable. Thirdly, the Verbal Process of informing about the current situation in Sabah by the local media in Malaysia was also prominent in the Philippines Newspapers, which assured that the situation in Sabah are calm and safe as confirmed by the local media in Malaysia.

The usage of Mental Processes was also prominent in all newspapers. Mental Processes found in all newspapers portrayed and shared with the audience the actual high determination feelings of the Sulu intruders towards their claim over Sabah. Moreover, Mental Processes found in all newspapers except NST portrayed the Lahad Datu residents' actual feelings in response to the airstrike attack. However, when employing Mental Processes, only NST portrayed the sad feelings of the Malaysian Prime Minister in response to the death of some Malaysian security forces and when meeting the killed security forces' family members, and thus symbolised Malaysia's sadness towards the fallen heroes' family members. In addition, besides portraying the Prime Minister's sad feelings, the study disclosed that NST also focused on Malaysians' anger towards the Sulu intruders in Lahad Datu, and thus tells its readers that besides the feeling of sadness, Malaysians had also run out of compassion towards the Sulu intruders who had killed some of the Malaysian security forces. Thus, based on the dominant Process Types employed, it can be seen that unlike TS, TPDI and TPS newspapers, NST decided to kept silent on the failure of Malaysia in the negotiations with the Sulu intruders, but instead chose to emphasize more on Malaysians and its Prime Minister's feelings in response to the death of some Malaysian security forces, and also the action of the Prime Minister in visiting the fallen heroes next of kin to show his concern towards them, which in turn was able to stir the emotions of the readers to also share and feel the feeling of Malaysians in relation to the Lahad Datu incident.

5.2 The Representation of Event across Newspapers

Based on the study conducted, it is concluded that NST mainly portrayed the struggle of the Malaysian Prime Minister to solve the Lahad Datu conflict. This was accomplished through the Material Processes assigned to the Prime Minister's actions in the efforts to solve the conflict. NST also focused on the Prime Minister's unhappiness in reaction to the death of some Malaysian security forces in handling the death of some Malaysian security forces

and also through the emotional attributes carried by the Prime Minister such as 'disappointed', 'sombre', and 'sad'. Besides the struggle and the grief of the Prime Minister, NST also portrayed a variety of emotions, feelings and desires of participants in relation to the conflict. While the Sulu intruders were portrayed as refusing to surrender, the Malaysians were portrayed as those who felt angry towards the intruders. At the same time, Sabah residents were portrayed carrying the attribute 'afraid' of the other possible attacks by the Sulu intruders. These depictions of event have made the reports sounds more emotional as compared to the other three newspapers.

While NST stressed on the Prime Minister's roles and emotions, TS on the other hand reported on the variety of aspects related to the airstrike event. TS mainly portrayed the chronology of events that lead to the administration of the airstrike. It also focused on the struggle of Malaysia and its Prime Minister in facing the conflict. This was depicted through the sharing of information related to the stand-off, air attack and Malaysia's resoluteness in protecting the country by the Prime Minister himself which also resulted in the increase of the validity and objectivity of the reports. This representation of events also portrayed the good behaviour of Malaysia and its Prime Minister, in which both were portrayed as being serious, determined and resolute in solving the Lahad Datu conflict. However, in response to the attack, TS portrayed the Lahad Datu residents' emotions rather than the emotions of the target of the attack, in which the status of the Sulu intruders were kept silent in TS but highlighted the residents of Lahad Datu as being affected by the airstrike when they were portrayed as feeling insecure due to the attack launched. Unexpectedly, the study found that the portrayal of thePrime Minister's sad emotions and Malaysians' anger towards the Sulu intruders as well as the difficult situation faced by the Prime Minister in deciding the attack were absent in TS. This shows that the stance of TS is merely reporting about the event which focused on the chronology of events, the determination of the Malaysian Prime Minister and the affected participants in relation to the airstrike. The stance of TS is neutral in the reporting of the airstrike event when it did not overstress the role of the Prime Minister in handling the Lahad Datu conflict.

Similar to TS, TPDI also portrayed the chronology of events that lead to the administration of the airstrike, and highlighted the determination of Malaysia and its Prime Minister in solving the Lahad Datu conflict. TPDI also portrayed the Philippines determination and resoluteness in the efforts to resolve the conflict. Moreover, when describing the attack, unlike newspapers from Malaysia, TPDI focused on the Military assets used by Malaysian security forces during the airstrike by assigning the Actor role that experienced Material Process to the assets used, which indirectly also portrayed the capability of Malaysian security forces to defeat the Sulu intruders. However, unlike newspapers from Malaysia, instead of paying attention to the Malaysian security forces that launched the attack, TPDI paid much attention to the Sulu intruders who were the main target in the attack. The Sulu intruders' high determination and capability were prominent in this newspaper when their demand and resoluteness in taking over Sabah, their capability to land safely in the shores of Sabah and their unaffected condition despite of the airstrike were highlighted by TPDI. The illustrations of these events has indirectly revealed to the readers about Malaysia's incapability to protect its boundaries in Sabah and its incapability to beat its target during the attack and thus marked Malaysia's failure in the attack launched.

Similar to TPDI, TPS portrayed the chronology of events which lead to the administration of the airstrike, the determination of Malaysia and its Prime Minister as well as the Philippines government's struggle in solving the Lahad Datu conflict. In addition, similar to TPDI, TPS also paid most attention on the Sulu intruders' role rather than the other important participants, in which the Sulu intruders demand and resoluteness in taking over Sabah their capability to successfully land on Lahad Datu shores and the unaffected condition despite the airstrike were highlighted.

The portrayal of the success, the strength and high determination of the Sulu intruders tell the readers that Malaysia's struggle in the efforts to force them to leave Sabah would be difficult. This representation of events also highlighted the failure and incapability of Malaysia in protecting its boundaries in Sabah and in the attack launched towards the Sulu intruders.

Other findings showed that although TPS illustrated the Malaysian local media as reporting that the Sulu Sultan followers had been totally defeated by Malaysia's combined military and police forces, it was however contradictory with what has been portrayed by TPS in its reports. TPS portrayed Malaysia's failure in the attack when depicting that none of the Sulu intruders were injured or affected by the attack launched. Moreover, unlike the other newspapers, TPS portrayed the violence and the war setting of the airstrike when illustrating the places and villages in Lahad Datu as the Goal of the airstrike which were attacked by war equipment and tools that played the role of Actor in the airstrike. The warlike scene was also portrayed through the real environment or situation that can be seen during the airstrike by telling from which part the Malaysian forces had attacked the Lahad Datu as well as by telling the areas or the spaces in which the fighter jets, military truck and soldiers could be seen during the strike. Finally, TPS also highlighted the reasons of why some Sabahans were reported as being worried and why some of them left Sabah during the Lahad Datu intrusion. TPS illustrated the rising conflict in the intrusion area as the main reason for them to leave Sabah, and thus portrayed to the readers the insecure situation in Sabah.

6. Conclusion

The current study has attempted to demonstrate the ways Experiential meaning was expressed by newspapers through the foregrounding of different Process Types in shaping and persuading the audience's minds. A detailed analysis of the language use when reporting a controversial issue enables the public to understand the role of newspapers and their hidden meanings.

Generally, both newspapers from Malaysia portrayed a systematically different pattern when reporting about the airstrike event and thus showed that both newspapers have different stances, views and perspectives towards the event. This is proven when NST focused on the role and emotions of the Prime Minister and represented the Sulu intruders as bad and had violated Malaysia's sovereignty, while TS focused on variety of aspects involving variety of active Actors of Material Processes without negatively represented any participants in its reports. The study showed the reporting of the airstrike in TS is a success in terms of objectivity, while NST has successfully created specific ideologies about the event and also appeal to the readers' emotions and sympathies.

However, the two newspapers from the Philippines portrayed a systematically similar pattern when reporting about the airstrike and this showed that both newspapers share similar stances, views and perspectives towards the event. This is proven when both newspapers from Philippines focused on variety of active participants related to the airstrike and stressing on the Sulu intruders' roles, capability and determination in their efforts to take over Sabah.

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