POLITICAL LANGUAGES: AN ANALYSIS OF MAHATHIR

MOHAMAD'S POLITICAL SPEECHES ON "MUSLIM IDENTITY"

BY

MR. KAI XIAN LAU

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS

FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS (ASIA PACIFIC STUDIES)

THAMMASAT INSTITUTE OF AREA STUDIES

THAMMASAT UNIVERSITY

ACADEMIC YEAR 2020

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POLITICAL LANGUAGES: AN ANALYSIS OF MAHATHIR MOHAMAD'S POLITICAL SPEECHES ON
"MUSLIM IDENTITY"

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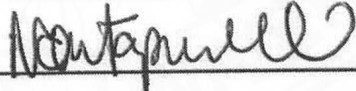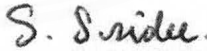the degree of Master of Arts (Asia-Pacific Studies)

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Thesis Title	POLITICAL LANGUAGES: AN ANALYSIS OF MAHATHIR MOHAMAD'S POLITICAL SPEECHES ON "MUSLIM IDENTITY"
Author	Mr. Kai Xian Lau
Degree	Master of Arts (Asia-Pacific Studies)
Major Field/Faculty/University	Master of Arts (Asia-Pacific Studies)
	Thammmasat Institute of Area Studies
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Academic Year	2020

ABSTRACT

Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad, the former Prime Minister of Malaysia is a well-known Muslim leader and was portrayed as the representative of the Muslim world. This paper aims to examine how Mahathir used political languages in his speeches to convey his religious discourse throughout his premierships. This is a content analysis study by adapting Graber's (1981) five functions performed by political languages framework: (i) information dissemination, (ii) agenda-setting, (iii) interpretation and linkage, (iv) projection to future and past, and (v) action stimulation. A total of 144 Mahathir's speeches from 1981-2003 and 2018-2020 focusing on the theme of Muslim identity were analyzed. The result of this study showed Mahathir's religious discourse can be divided into three main issues of Muslims: (i) the misinterpretations of Islam by Muslim had created problems and fragment in Muslim society; (ii) the problems of Muslims in the modern-day, such as backwardness, weak in knowledge and turmoil in the Muslim world; and (iii) to correct the image of Islam and Muslims which had negative prejudice by the non-Muslims. This three information had been analysed based on the characteristics of each political languages. The conclusion of this study argues that Mahathir's discourses on Muslim identity were well structured to address the problems of the Muslim world and to correct the negative image of Islam and Muslims, such as extremists and terrorists, fundamentalists, backwardness and unpeaceful.

Keywords: Islam, Mahathir Mohamad, Muslim Identity, Political Languages, Speech Analysis

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Mr. Kai Xian Lau

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Symbols/Abbreviations	Terms
1MDB	1Malaysia Development Berhad
AMANAH	Parti Amanah Negara
BN	Barisan Nasional
CDA	Critical Discourse Analysis
DAP	Democratic Action Party
GLC	Government Linked-Companies
GLC	Goods and Services Tax
IIUM	International Islamic University Malaysia
ISTAC	Institute of Islamic Thought & Civilization
PAS	Malaysian Islamic Party
PDA	Political Discourse Analysis
PH	Pakatan Harapan
PKR	Parti Keadilan Rakyat
PMO	Prime Minister office
PPBM	Parti Pribumi Bersatu Malaysia
SST	Sales and Services Tax
UMNO	United Malays National Organisation

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This chapter serves the purpose to provide introduction and purposes of the study on Mahathir's political speeches on Muslim identity. First, this chapter aims to discuss the background and problem statement of the study. This part will be discussing the rationale for choosing Mahathir's speeches on Muslim identity as the focus of this study. Next, this chapter will elaborate on the research objectives, scope, limitation, and significance of the study.

1.1 Background of the Study

Speech analysis on political discourses is a popular topic among the field of linguistics studies, political sciences and political communication. The purpose of political speech is to "influence people, using rhetoric to persuade, excite and claim leadership"(Klebanov, Diermeier, & Beigman, 2008). The study on political discourses has in recent years been using various approaches and model. The most popular approach used on discourse analysis is Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) (Degani, 2015; Kayam, 2018; Kazemian & Hashemi, 2014; Lamont, Park, & Ayala‑Hurtado, 2017; O'Connell, Kowal, Sabin, Lamia, & Dannevik, 2010; Rachman & Yunianti, 2017; Sarfo & Krampa, 2012; Sharififar & Rahimi, 2015; Wang, 2010).

However, most of the well developed and established studies on political discourses are concentrating on the Western political leaders, such as Margaret Thatcher, George W. Bush, Hillary Clinton, Donald Trump and Barack H. Obama. This study argued that only limited studies are focusing on the contexts of Asia, particularly leaders in developing countries. In the case of Malaysia, several studies had been done on Mahathir's political speeches in various themes, such as Muslim identity, national unity, business and political party (Ahmad, 2010; Alkhirbash, 2016; Alkhirbash, Paramasivam, Muati, & Ahmad, 2014; David & Dumanig, 2011; Ghazali, 2017; Haque & Khan, 2004; Imani & Habil, 2014; Mengyu & Rahim, 2019;

Shukry, 2013). Hence, this study would like to propose to analyze the use of political languages in Mahathir Mohamad's Muslim identity speeches, during his premiership from 1981-2003 and 2018-2020.

Tun Dr Mahathir bin Mohamad, the former Prime Minister of Malaysia who appointed as prime minister twice in 1981-2003 and 2018-2020. Malaysia's economy and modernization under Mahathir's leadership achieved impressive growth through industrialization. After his retirement in 2003 at the age of 77, he remains influential in the Malays community and Malaysia domestic politics, especially in his formal political party, the United Malays National Organisation (UMNO). He also served as the advisor of a few government-linked companies (GLCs), such as Malaysia's national car manufacturer Proton and petroleum corporation Petronas (Ho, 2006).

In the 2018 general election, Mahathir made a shocking return into politics due to displeasure and frustration toward the former ruling government coalition, the *Barisan Nasional* (BN) and the leadership under Najib Razak. These issues included the 1Malaysia Development Berhad (1MDB) financial scandal, the implementation of Goods and Services Tax (GST) as a replacement for Sale and Service Tax (SST), and removed few other policies implemented during Mahathir's administration. Mahathir decided to quit UMNO in 2016 and form a party (Latiff, 2016). Mahathir together with the other opposition parties and leaders formed a new opposition coalition under, namely the 'Pakatan Harapan' (Alliance of Hope, PH) - the Democratic Action Party (DAP), Parti Keadilan Rakyat (People's Justice Party, PKR), Parti Amanah Negara (National Trust Party, AMANAH) and Mahathir's own Parti Pribumi Bersatu Malaysia (Malaysian United Indigenous Party, PPBM) (Abdullah, 2019). Mahathir was leading the Pakatan Harapan coalition for the 2018 General Election and they successfully overthrew the 61 years ruling coalition, Barisan Nasional (BN) after winning the majority votes in the election. Mahathir was then appointed as the seventh Prime Minister of Malaysia from 2018-2020 and the PH coalition took over the government.

Mahathir is known for his courage and bravery openly critics the Western dominance (Schottmann, 2013), especially his regional view (Asian values) and

rejection of the free market by the West (Beeson, 2008). He has a clear vision and stand, knowing what he should say and speaks directly to big power whenever he feels there is biased treatment. For example, Mahathir remarked on unequal treatment for small countries in the United Nations during the 1999 General Assembly:

> *"… unfortunately, no one should expect any change for as long as the United Nations belongs to the permanent five. The structure of the United Nations will continue to reflect the glorious victory of these nations 50 years ago. For the small countries, yearly speeches and various anniversary speeches will be allowed. Occasionally there will be membership in the Security Council. But despite the fact that at least three of the permanent five are vociferous advocates of democracy, there will be no democracy in the United Nations. The only saving grace is the agencies and their good work …"*

<div align="right">(Mohamad, 1999)</div>

Mahathir's political legacy has been widely investigated by scholars, mainly focusing on his economic nationalism, authoritarianism, anti-Western dominance and socio-economic context. However, the influences of his religious value on his political agenda was relatively understudied and presented in the scholarship (Schottmann, 2011). Mahathir not only presents himself as a good Muslim leader, but he also showed himself as a Muslim icon who willing to defend his religion in the present day (Schottmann, 2013). Even in the eyes of the Western, Mahathir is not an easy deal Muslim leader as he openly criticizing the West and the invasion of Israel in Palestine. (Beng, 2006) said: "Mahathir's ambition to be a front man for the Muslim world is therefore not so much a religious stance as it is a political statement".

Arguably, Mahathir is a person who has a modern Muslim thought. He is not only knowledgeable in Islamic thought and history, but he also emphasized that Muslims should "correctly understand" the religion, and balance the fundamental values of Islamic with the modern world (Schottmann, 2011)c. He criticized the

Muslims around the world are practising outdated religious thought and need to modernize the Islamic thought.

Mahathir sees Malaysia as the most important part of the Islamic world (Beng, 2006). As a result, he initiated several Islamic developments in the country such as the establishment few Islamic institutions (International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM), Institute of Islamic Understanding Malaysia, and Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilization, ISTAC), introducing Islamic banking and insurance system, improving Malays' working ethics and performances, and introducing Islamic Civilization as a subject in Malaysian universities (Ahmad, 2010). Mahathir also openly recognized Malaysia as an Islamic state during his administration. For example: *"... jumlah yang terbesar daripada umat Islam di Malaysia dan juga di seluruh dunia mengiktiraf Malaysia sebagai negara Islam ... walaupun demikian kita boleh tunjuk kepada bukti yang jelas bahawa segala ajaran Islam yang mampu dilaksanakan oleh pemerintahan Malaysia telah dilaksanakan di Malaysia. Demikian orang Islam dan ajaran-ajaran Islam diberi perlindungan oleh Kerajaan Malaysia ..."* (*... a huge number of umat Islam (Muslim) in Malaysia and the whole world recognized Malaysia as an Islamic country ... even so, we can show the evidence that all Islamic thought that was managed to implement by the Malaysian government had been implemented in Malaysia. Thurs, the Muslim and Islamic thought have given the protection to the Malaysian government ...*) (Mohamad, 2002). This draws the attention of the author to further investigate how Mahathir's Islamic view shaped the idea of Muslim identity in his speeches.

1.2 Problem Statement

There are numerous studies on Mahathir's political speeches, however, the existing studies focused more on Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) and linguistic perspective. The existing literature focuses much on Mahathir's ideology, the use of grammar and vocabulary, and the use of metaphors. Besides, speeches that were selected for the past research were mainly speeches presented in the English language, between the late-1990s and until mid-2000s.

The author is unable to identify any past studies that analyse Mahathir's political speeches changed throughout his 22 years of the premiership. Only David and Dumanig (2011) had selected seven Mahathir's speeches between 1982 until 2003 related to national unity. Furthermore, Haque and Khan (2004) and (Schottmann, 2011, 2013) analyzed Mahathir's political speeches on Muslim identity. However, their studies did not provide any clear explanation of how Mahathir constructed his speeches on Muslim and Islamic thought as well as the changes in his speeches from time to time. This paucity of results calls for further investigations.

Thus, this study would like to fill up the gap by analysing Mahathir's political speeches - both English and Malay languages texts - from 1981-2003 and 2018-2020. This study seeks to understand not only Mahathir's Muslims ideas but also to illustrate how he constructed his political messages to accommodate different audience.

1.3 Research Objectives

The purpose of this research is to examine the use of political languages in Mahathir's political speeches on the theme "Muslim identity".

1.4 Scope of the Study

This study is scope down on studying Mahathir's political speeches, specifically on the theme of "Muslim identity" during his premierships in 1981-2003 and 2018-2020. This study will be a textual analysis, focusing on both English language and Malay language speeches, published by the Prime Minister Office (PMO) official website, under the column of "Koleksi Arkib Ucapan Ketua Eksekutif" (Collection of Chief Executive Speech Archive) at http://www.pmo.gov.my/ucapan/.

1.5 Limitation of the Study

Due to limited accessibility to speeches in video formats, this research mainly relied on official transcript texts of Mahathir's speeches published by the Prime Minister Office (PMO) official website. The PMO official website provided complete texts of Mahathir's speeches (both English and Malay languages) during his first (1981-2003) and second premiership (2018-2020). However, there is no collection of speeches by Mahathir from 2004-2017 after his retirement.

1.6 Significance of the Study

Analysis of political speeches has been done across political communication studies; however, the author has not encountered one which writes about Mahathir's speeches from political communication perspectives. There is much verbal praise on Mahathir's persuasion skills and his ability to convey his messages to his audiences. Unfortunately, no articles are showing how he constructed his ideas in political speeches. This study would like to fill up the gap by contributing new ideas in the field. Although the result of this study is not meant to offer any solution, it contributes to the field by providing new insight into the debates. This study tries to offer:

a. A deeper understanding of Mahathir's views towards Muslim identity

b. To benefit politicians, students, and researchers on how to construct influential speeches

c. To illustrate the importance of speeches analysis in political discourse

CHAPTER 2
REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This chapter will discuss the literature for this study on Mahathir's political speeches on Muslim identity. This chapter consists of three parts: (1) overview of political languages, (2) major functions of political languages and (3) Islamic teachings. The first part gives an overview of political languages from political sciences and linguistic perspective. The second part of this chapter is solely dedicated to Graber's (1981) major functions of political languages in which the approach will be the focus of this study. Lastly, this chapter will briefly highlight a few Islamic teachings concepts that are important for understanding Mahathir's Muslim identity discourse.

2.1 Political Languages

Political discourse is about politics, it is about words, it is about how political agenda will be affected by languages (Dylgjeri, 2017). (Graber, 1981) described politics as all about "word games". This is because politicians' daily job involves mostly verbal activities - political languages - when they communicate about political matters and for their political agenda. What turns language into political is not judged by the standard of vocabulary used by the speaker, but rather is the message itself, conveyed in which type of political setting and how the functions of language are performed in the political scene. Graber wrote:

> *"... it is frequently said that facts or ideas are powerful, rather than the words that express them. But facts and especially ideas cannot become powerful until they become known. In most cases, this requires language that is appropriately formulated to convey these facts and ideas so that they appear important in very specific ways to receptive audiences. Without language, facts and ideas are mute, unable to generate thought and communicate meaning ..."*

<p align="right">(Graber, 1981)</p>

Politics and language are interrelated; because political activities cannot occur by itself without the combination of language (David & Dumanig, 2011). Political language is not merely for conveying general messages and information, but the political messages are constructed with ideas and agenda that can influence the audiences' beliefs and behaviors. Besides, political discourse cannot exist if without audiences because political discourse is all about the process of persuasion. A speaker tries to persuade his audiences about something related to his political agenda (Ädel, 2010), explains the problems, and then influences his audiences. Audiences involved in political discourse can be categorized into two groups: ordinary public and political influential. Political leaders' messages will help to shape public opinion and it will direct or indirectly influence public actions. As for political influential, the messages most likely will influence their political thoughts and actions (Graber, 1981). Hence, political languages are not only important in conveying messages, but it also influences the audience's actions like how the speakers expect, only with words.

Political languages can be seen in various political settings. Political speeches are mostly presented in an oratory setting where the speaker delivers a speech in an open event without any interruptions or major interactions with others, and it aims to provide information and persuade the audiences. In this setting, the speakers have full control over the situation, the speech contexts and their political agenda (Graber, 1981). The speaker has to understand his audience's needs, values and expectations to ensure his to obtain their support (Degani, 2015). By using the right language, it can influence a large number of audiences to believe and accept the speaker's ideas, as well as act in the way the speaker expected.

2.2 Major Function Performed by Political Languages

The five major functions of political languages coined by scholar Doris A. Graber in 1981 specifically limited the discussion on the forms of "presentation of verbal symbols". Graber was one of the earliest scholars from political science to develop the political communication field, by combining the knowledge of political

science and communication. Her focus was on news and politics, by combining the broad institutional perspective with individual-level analyses of information processing and citizenship (Bennett, 2018). Graber had contributed more than 100 academic papers in this field, and among her 15 books were used as the foundation to define the field of political communication (Kaid & Holtz-Bacha, 2007). Hence, the author is confident that Graber's functions performed by political languages are relevant and would like to test her ideas in this study.

Graber argued that the performance of the speakers is purely determined by their ability to generate clear messages. Poor verbal presentation by the speakers will cause their messages to receive less attention because speakers' verbal ability often reflects their ability to perform. Graber writes:

> "… poor presentation may spring from deficient encoding - a message sender's inability to present the message clearly enough to the audience so that the intended meaning [is] conveyed … messages may also fail in impact because they are presented at the wrong time, in a wrong place, and to the wrong audience, which is unreceptive to the message's meaning …"

(Graber, 1981)

Graber highlighted five major functions performed by political languages: (i) information dissemination; (ii) agenda-setting; (iii) interpretation and linkage; (iv) projection to future and past; and (v) action simulation. Some political messages contained the mixture of these five functions mentioned above.

2.2.1 Information Dissemination

The first major function of political languages is "information dissemination". The audience most likely is unable to experience and involved in politics directly. They heavily rely on "explicit information" or messages provided by politicians regarding political situations, political problems, and events. This helps to develop the audience's political perceptions and their political actions without experiencing the actual reality.

Aside from purely conveying information, massage may contain connotations words or code words, which are commonly used in political messages. Such messages and words convey "special meanings that define relationship or progress" and "connote desirable meanings". In other words, connotation words and phrases are extended meanings from their dictionary meaning(Graber, 1981). Some researchers argued that connotation research is pointless because different audiences interpret the meaning of the messages differently, but (Graber, 2004) disagreed that connotation is important for the speakers to understand how their audiences interpret messages and, this helps the speakers to tailor-made the messages for specific groups of audience. (David & Dumanig, 2011) argued that "coded meanings" are more effective to reinforce the audience's beliefs and behaviours as well as their actions.

Next, messages can also function as inferences to provide clues and reveal information that is not publicly announced. This allowed the audiences to obtain the hidden messages that are not expressed directly by the speakers. However, words can also be merely 'symbolic', without any meaning or providing information in a message.

2.2.2 Agenda-Setting

The second major function of political languages is agenda-setting. Politicians often select certain topics that align with their political agenda to become the discussion among the public. These topics are used to attract the audience's attention, then become the public discussion and lastly stimulate the audience's action. In most cases, news reports and publicity in the mass media will help to deliver those messages more effectively to the audiences and enhance their political agenda - known as the "halo effect".

With some experience, politicians can manage to "control over the information dissemination" based on their interests, either to include or exclude certain people or issues into their political agenda. Besides, due to limited time, resources and the limitation of the audience to absorb large amounts of political information. Hence, politicians must limit their information to manageable volumes - only messages that are important for their political agenda. They have to carefully

choose the suitable topics that are suitable for the public and avoid choosing topics that will cause negative effects, losing the audience support and promises that are difficult to fulfil.

Traditional agenda-setting theory in mass communication studies is used to analyze media effects on the audience. The traditional theory suggests that the media not only tell us what to think, but they also tell us how to think about it (Mateus, 2020). However, the debates among the literature of agenda-setting theory showed the theory alone is not sufficient enough to explain the effect of the media content exposed to the audience (Mateus, 2020; Moy & Bosch, 2013; Moy, Tewksbury, & Rinke, 2016). Over time, this theory has been tested with two new concepts by communication scholars, namely the *priming effect* and *framing effect* to answer the limitation of the theory.

Priming or known as the *priming model* is a concept borrowed from psychological theory and communication scholarship found that this concept could extend the limitation of the agenda-setting theory. This concept argued that the audience tends to rely on memory-based processing of information (Moy & Bosch, 2013). Priming examines the power of media to effect changes in the standards that people use to make [political] evaluations (Iyengar & Kinder, 1987). Studies showed that priming effect and agenda-setting are categorized as "accessibility-based model" (information can be retrieved from memory). *Accessibility* referred to "how much" (repetition) or "how recently" (recency) an audience has been exposed to certain information over a period (Mateus, 2020).

In contrast, *framing* examine the content of the news such as phrases, metaphors, visual images, keywords, concepts symbols or analogy that is used (by journalists) to communicate the essence of an issue or event to help audiences understand (make sense) the news they are encountering (Entman, 1993; Mateus, 2020; Moy & Bosch, 2013; Moy et al., 2016). The most frequent definition of framing cited by framing effect scholarships was from (Entman, 1993), "*to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation*". In

other words, framing effect influences how people understand certain issues and social phenomena through the highlight in the media messages (Moy & Bosch, 2013). Hence, framing is considered as "*applicability*" or "*applicability-based model*" which suggests that audiences are not influenced by media messages but rather through semantically (languages), how the message is presented and described. It will be possible for different audiences to interpret it differently (Mateus, 2020).

In short, agenda-setting focused on which topics or issues are selected for the news content, priming focused on the audiences use those selected issues to evaluate political performance, and framing focused on ways social problems are presented (Scheufele, 2000). As (Mateus, 2020) suggests that priming could be the extension of agenda-setting as both theories evaluate media messages based on accessibility while framing, in contrast, is not an extension of agenda-setting as framing evaluate media messages based on applicability. However, the characteristic of the framing effect is similar to the next political language functions – interpretation and linkage. Hence, this study will combine the framing effect with interpretation and linkage function.

2.2.3 Interpretation and Linkage

The third major function of political languages is interpretation and linkage. Politicians are good at "reality creation". They try to influence and manipulate certain issues for the public to interpret by linking with some significant events and facts. Some tried to link their contribution or action, either directly or indirectly into their messages to create a positive reality for themselves. However, the same facts could be interpreted with different meanings by the audience and create different kinds of reality. It is depending on how the public themselves interpret it and how well the messages will be accepted. If the politicians choose the wrong example or events to link with their messages, it will create a negative impression.

According to (Graber, 1981) *"meaning, motives, and evaluations are mental constructs with no counterpart in physical reality"*. This required the politicians need to have the ability to "control over definition". If they can control over the definition of the issues that are important to their agenda, this will give the

advantage for them to verbally define the political situations based on their own beliefs and interests. Most of the audience are incapable (in terms of time and skills) to evaluate political events. The audience could only accept what messages were provided by their politicians. Politicians who can control over definition have the advantage to construct how the public interprets those messages. Some of these defined messages have been constructed for a long time, either it has become a norm or has been accepted within a society. Hence, those who can control the definition are the group of people who will benefit the most, most importantly able to strengthen their power and own images.

Besides, politicians are hugely judged by their political achievements and performances. They often calculate the total achievements that could be achieved and then they understate the number to the public. They manipulate the expectations of their achievements so that during the actual situation, they could show their achievements are higher than expected. On the other hand, political messages are also able to create "nonexistent realities". Politicians will provide false information that does not occur (in reality) for the public to interpret and believe. If they succeed, the public action will be then manipulated like how the politicians expected.

2.2.4 Projection to Future and Past

The fourth major function of political languages is the projection to future and past. Issues and events of the past and future content a large portion in political messages and it is mainly delivered through words. People cannot physically experience the past. Politicians used past evidence to recreate messages through words and projects to the people. Like reality creation, the projection may or may not show the actual truth that happened in the past. The same goes for the projection of the future. It is heavily pictured through verbal predictions; it is all about promises and imagination.

Effective projection of the future and past can be either through formal or informal projections. Informal verbal projection involves mostly foretelling and promises about future political activities. However, it is subjective and biased. It is different from people to people, depending on their goals and on which issues

they are referring to; while formal verbal projection is appropriately presented in a structured form. Politicians will carefully structure their future promises and plan, and it serves as their political guidelines and blueprints. Formal projection allows political leaders to describe their views and the long-term vision that they intend to achieve as their goals. It must also be persuasive and can be positively interpreted by the public. Politicians usually use academic reports as their guidelines for their prediction and political action plans. However, if those future promises are unable to be achieved as proposed, they could just argue that it is due to wrong prediction, rather than breaking their promises.

2.2.5 Action Stimulation

The fifth major function of political languages is action simulation. The goal of the previous four major functions of political languages is to stimulate public action towards their political messages. Whether the messages are in verbal or in written form, it has the "direct appeals" ability to persuade, command, or call on people to react and take action. Most of the major political movements were beginning with verbal expressions, then stimulating political action such as political change, riot, protest, or policy change. Although it is just a verbal reality that does not exist in reality, people are willing to participate and give their commitment. During crisis moments, human emotions are easy to trigger. Words themselves can create certain moods, such as fears, hopes, hates, pride, and so on to influence people's reactions. Politicians often used mood creation in their messages to calm the people during the crisis, provide confidence and assurance, and gain support from the public.

Words also serve as action surrogates. Like mood creation, politicians will emphasize the threat they are facing, reinforce their promises, or in most cases, they put the blame on their opponent. Just by words, it is sufficient to stimulate the public to react as the politicians want. Besides, words serve as a symbol of rewards, by giving promises. When public fears and demands occur, politicians will give their promises and reassurances to the public. Sometimes, politicians will create certain issues by themselves, and then give their reassurances to the public as their tactics. This allowed politicians to reduce the issues and avoid

public demands that are difficult to achieve. However, politicians shall make sure that their promises are not just empty words or given false hope to the public. This will cause the public to react the other way around.

2.3 Islamic Teachings

Islam is a religion of peace, where Islam tries to bring peace into human and their afterlife (Kamal-ud-Din, 2010). Islam is not only a religious belief, but Islam is a way of life that governed all aspect of a Muslim's life with its values and practices in order to seek the blessings and mercy from Allah (Rafiki & Wahab, 2014). All this guidance of human life was received by the Prophet Mohammad and his calls were to spread the word of God to the people. The word of God was then been recorded in the holy book, known as the Al-Quran (Edgar, 2002; Ningsih, 2014). The Quran was the main source for all fundamental teachings of Islam, including Islamic law and religious duties (Edgar, 2002). The fundamental of Islamic teachings or the Quran has Five Pillars, which are *Shahada* (testimony of faith), *Salat* (prayer), *Zakat* (charity), *Sawm* (fasting), and *Hajj* (pilgrimage).

Schumm and Kohler (2006) explain the Five Pillars of Islam as:

Shahada (Testimony of Faith) – in Islam beliefs are clear and straight forwards that there is no deity but only Allah and Muhammad is His Prophet.

Salat (Prayer) – Muslims pray five times a day to remind themselves of the importance of God and religion.

Zakat (Charity) – Muslims are expected to support and help the needy by giving 2.5% of their wealth and this also helps to reduce the ratio between the rich and the poor Muslims.

Sawm (Fasting) – Muslims are expected to fast once a year during the *Ramadan* month from sunrise to sunset.

Hajj (Pilgrimage) – Muslims who can afford and healthy are expected to travel to Makkah for the pilgrimage.

The Five Pillars of Islam are the fundamental principle and teachings of Islam that required all Muslims to follow and practice. These Five Pillars are also

known as the responsibility of a Muslims and it can be categorized into two responsibility in Islam: *fardhu 'ain* and *fardhu kifayah*. *Fardhu 'ain* is the responsibility to Islam religion, such as following the teachings of Islam and performing religion duties to get closer to God; in contrast, *fardhu kifayah* is the responsibility of Muslims to the Muslim community where Muslims are collective and have their commitment to Islam (Ismail, Tekke, Othman, & Al-Hafiz, 2016).

However, the misinterpretations of Islam and its teachings began after the death of Prophet Muhammad in 632 AD. It began from the differences between the Sunni and Shi'ites Islamic sects where both sects disagreements over the succession of the Prophet and the leadership in the Muslim community. Both sects were following the similar sources of Islam, such as the Quran and hadith, but the Sunnis and the Shi'ites interpreted these sources differently (Leaman, 2006). Shi'ite sect interpreters were focusing on the text that can support the religious and political agenda of their sect (Renard, 2015).

2.4 Conclusion

In conclusion, the author sees the relationship between the literature on political languages and literature on Mahathir's political speeches. This study will allow the author to explore another perspective of speech analysis and contribute to the political communication field. The next chapter will be explaining the methodology that the author would like to propose for this study.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter serves the purpose to provide details on the methodology applied in doing this study on Mahathir's speeches on Muslim identity, particularly the process of collecting sources and the procedure of data analysis. This research applied a qualitative method focused on content analysis. This chapter will provide further explanation in the following sub-sections:

3.1 Data Source

3.2 Data Analysis

3.1 Data Source

A total of 144 speeches of Mahathir's speeches on Muslim identity from 1981-2003 and 2018-2020 were selected for this study. The speeches were obtained and downloaded from a reliable source, the Prime Minister Office (PMO) official website, under the column of "Koleksi Arkib Ucapan Ketua Eksekutif" (Collection of Chief Executive Speech Archive) at http://www.pmo.gov.my/ucapan/. The PMO official website provided complete transcript texts of Mahathir's speeches (both English and Malay languages) for both 1981-2003 and 2018-2020. Besides, there is also a published book, "Islam & the Muslim ummah: Selected speeches of Dr Mahathir Mohamad, Prime Minister of Malaysia" which collected 20 most popular and influential speeches of Mahathir from 1990-2003 on Muslim identity (Mohamad, 2000). The collected speeches in the book are the same speeches published on the PMO website. Hence, the speeches in the book will be used as the sample for the pre-analysis process of this study (see 3.2 Data analysis). However, Mahathir's speeches before 1981 and between 2004-2017 were not recorded in the PMO website and there are no other reliable sources. Hence, the study may not be able to cover the timeframe that was mentioned. The following is the list of speeches that analysed in this study:

Table 3.1

Speeches for Hari Raya Aidilfitri (Islamic New Year) from 1981-2003 and 2018-2020

Speech	Date	Title
1	01.08.1982	Perutusan Hari Raya Aidilfitri (Puasa)
2	01.07.1983	Perutusan Hari Raya Aidilfitri
3	15.06.1985	Perutusan Hari Raya Aidilfitri 1405 Hijrah /1985 Masihi
4	02.06.1986	Perutusan Hari Raya Aidilfitri 1406 Hijrah /1986 Masihi
5	29.05.1987	Perutusan Hari Raya Aidilfitri 1407 Hijrah /1987 Masihi
6	15.04.1991	Perutusan Hari Raya Aidilfitri Melalui RTM
7	04.04.1992	Perutusan Hari Raya Aidilfitri 1412 Hijrah /1992 Masihi
8	25.03.1993	Perutusan Hari Raya Aidilfitri
9	13.03.1994	Perutusan Hari Raya Aidilfitri
10	03.03.1995	Perutusan Hari Raya Aidilfitri
11	19.02.1996	Perutusan Hari Raya Aidilfitri
12	09.02.1997	Perutusan Hari Raya Aidilfitri
13	30.01.1998	Perutusan Hari Raya Aidilfitri
14	18.01.1999	Perutusan Hari Raya Aidilfitri
15	27.03.1999	Perutusan Hari Raya Aidiladha 1999 / 1419H
16	26.12.2000	Perutusan Hari Raya Aidilfitri
17	05.03.2001	Perutusan Hari Raya Aidilfitri
18	15.12.2001	Perutusan Hari Raya Aidilfitri
19	05.12.2002	Perutusan Hari Raya Aidilfitri
20	14.06.2018	Perutusan Raya 2018
21	04.06.2019	Perutusan Hari Raya Aidilfitri 2019 Oleh YAB Perdana Menteri

Table 3.2

Speeches for Domestic and International Al-Quran Conferences from 1981-2003 and 2018-2020

Speech	Date	Title
22	28.05.1983	Di Majlis Perasmian Musabaqah Membaca Al-Quran Peringkat Kebangsaan, Tahun 1983/1403
23	15.05.1984	Majlis Pembukaan Musabaqah Membaca Al-Quran Peringkat Kebangsaan
24	05.05.1985	Sempena Perasmian Musabaqah Membaca Al-Quran Peringkat Kebangsaan (Disampaikan oleh Y.A.B. Timb. Perdana Menteri Dato Musa Hitam)
25	13.04.1987	Majlis Pembukaan Musabaqah Membaca Al-Quran Peringkat Kebangsaan
26	19.03.1990	Sempena Perasmian Seminar Al-Quran Antarabangsa
27	02.03.1990	Majlis Penutup Tilawah AL-Quran Peringkat Kebangsaan
28	04.01.1993	Majlis Perasmian Tilawah Al-Quran Peringkat Kebangsaan Ke-35
29	02.02.1994	The Opening of the 4th International Seminar on the Al-Quran
30	01.12.1994	Perasmian Majlis Tilawah Al-Quran Peringkat Kebangsaan Kali Ke-37 Tahun 1415H/1994M
31	08.01.1995	Majlis Perasmian Seminar Al-Quran Antarabangsa Kali Ke-5
32	31.10.1996	Majlis Perasmian Tilawah Al-Quran Peringkat Kebangsaan yang Ke-39
33	27.10.1998	Majlis Perasmian Tilawah Al-Quran Peringkat Kebangsaan yang Ke-41
34	18.09.2000	Majlis Perasmian Majlis Tilawah Al-Quran Peringkat Kebangsaan Kali Ke-43
35	18.07.2003	Majlis Pelancaran Al-Quran Mushaf Malaysia
36	09.09.2003	Perasmian Majlis Perujian Membaca Al-Quran Peringkat Kebangsaan Kali Ke-46 Tahun 1424H/2003M
37	16.02.2020	Ucapan Sempena Majlis Perasmian Tilawah dan Menghafaz Al-Quran Peringkat Kebangsaan Tahun 1441H/2020M

Table 3.3

Speeches for Islamic seminars and conferences from 1981-2003 and 2018-2020

Speech	Date	Title
38	26.07.1984	The Opening of the 3rd International Seminar on Islamic Thoughts
39	05.03.1986	The Opening of the International Islamic Symposium
40	04.10.1991	The Official Opening of the International Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilisation (ISTAC)
41	14.09.1993	Seminar on Muslim and Christian Minds
42	17.06.1994	The Opening of the World Islamic Civilisation Festival
43	12.01.1996	The 10th Session of the Coordination Committee of Joint Islamic Action in the Field of Da'wah
44	16.04.1996	The Oxford Centre for Islamic Studies Oxford
45	25.04.1997	The Oxford Islamic Forum on "The Islamic World and Global Cooperation: Preparing for the 21st Century"
46	10.05.1998	Toleration and Moderation in Islam
47	25.05.1999	The Seminar on "The Role of Islamic Civilization In Fostering Inter-Religious Understanding"
48	30.12.1999	The International Conference of Religious Studies: "Meeting the Millennium"
49	30.06.2000	The International Seminar and Dialogue on 'Enhancing the Understanding of Islam for the Media'
50	11.06.2001	The International Seminar on the Impact of Globalisation on the Islamic World
51	19.07.2002	The International Forum on Islam (KALIF 2002)
52	21.01.2003	Muslim Unity in the Face of Challenges and Threats
53	10.07.2003	The Opening of World Ulama Conference
54	22.09.2003	Islam and the Ummah: Reexamining and Reinventing Ourselves in the Face of New Challenges

Table 3.4

Speeches for Global and Islamic affairs from 1981-2003 and 2018-2020

Speech	Date	Title
55	04.06.1983	The Opening of the Second General Assembly of RISEAP
56	10.10.1984	The 39th Session of the United Nations General Assembly
57	08.11.1986	The RISEAP Fourth General Assembly
58	28.01.1987	The Fifth Islamic Summit
59	13.12.1994	The Seventh Islamic Summit Conference
60	06.09.1996	The RISEAP 9th General Assembly/15th Anniversary Celebration
61	22.03.1997	The Occasion of the Conferment of the King Faisal International Prize for Service to Islam for 1997
62	09.12.1997	The Eighth Islamic Summit Conference
63	24.03.1998	The Opening of the Malaysia-European Union Joint Seminar
64	01.03.1999	The Second Summit Level Meeting of "Co-Operation for Development" (D8)
65	26.06.2000	The Opening Ceremony of the 27th Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers (ICFM)
66	30.09.2000	The Launch of the International Haji Conference
67	12.11.2000	The Ninth Islamic Summit Conference
68	26.04.2001	The Emirates International Forum
69	12.10.2001	The Opening of the 2nd Islamic Conference of Tourism Ministers
70	16.11.2001	The Conference on Terrorism
71	03.02.2002	The Role of Islam in the Modern State
72	01.04.2002	The Extraordinary Session of the Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers on Terrorism
73	07.05.2002	The OIC Conference of the Ministers of Endowments and Islamic Affairs

Table 3.4

Speeches for Global and Islamic affairs from 1981-2003 and 2018-2020 (cont.)

Speech	Date	Title
74	13.12.2002	The Symposium on Islam at the United Nations University
75	24.01.2003	The Interactive Session Entitled "Driver of Conflict 1. Political Islam and Its Discontents" at the World Economic Forum
76	05.03.2003	The Extraordinary Islamic Summit Session of the Organisation of Islam Conference (OIC)
77	16.10.2003	The Opening of the Tenth Session of the Islamic Summit Conference
78	24.09.2018	Government and Governance in the Islamic World
79	28.09.2019	Statement at the General Debate of the 74th Session of the United Nations General Assembly
80	18.12.2019	Welcoming Address at the Welcoming Dinner of KL Summit 2019
81	19.12.2019	Welcoming Address at the Opening of KL Summit 2019
82	19.12.2019	Keynote Address at KL Summit 2019
83	21.12.2019	Closing Remarks at KL Summit 2019

Table 3.5

Speeches for UMNO meeting and general assembly from 1981-2003 and 2018-2020

Speech	Date	Title
85	27-11-1981	Majlis Perasmian Kursus Agama Anuran Biro Agama UMNO Malaysia
86	19.08.1983	Perhimpunan Agung UMNO Yang Ke-34
87	25.05.1984	Perhimpunan Agung UMNO Yang Ke-35
88	18.09.1986	Perhimpunan Agung UMNO Yang Ke-37
89	24.04.1987	Perhimpunan Agung UMNO Yang Ke-38
90	17.11.1989	Perhimpunan Agung UMNO Yang Ke-40
91	02.12.1990	Semasa Menggulung Perbahasan di Perhimpunan Agung UMNO
92	08.11.1991	Perhimpunan Agung UMNO Yang Ke-42
93	06.11.1992	Perhimpunan Agung UMNO Yang Ke-43
94	04.11.1993	Perhimpunan Agung UMNO Yang Ke-44
95	18.11.1994	Perhimpunan Agung UMNO Yang Ke-45
96	24.11.1995	Perhimpunan Agung UMNO Yang Ke-46
97	11.05.1996	Konvensyen Ulang Tahun UMNO Ke-50
98	10.10.1996	Perhimpunan Agung UMNO Yang Ke-47
99	05.09.1997	Perhimpunan Agung UMNO Yang Ke-48
100	19.06.1998	Perhimpunan Agung UMNO Yang Ke-49
101	18.06.1999	Perhimpunan Agung UMNO Yang Ke-50
102	11.05.2000	Perhimpunan Agung UMNO Yang Ke-51
103	21.06.2001	Perhimpunan Agung UMNO Yang Ke-52
104	20.06.2002	Perhimpunan Agung UMNO Yang Ke-53
105	19.06.2003	Perhimpunan Agung UMNO Yang Ke-54

Table 3.6

Speeches for other Islamic related events from 1981-2003 and 2018-2020

Speech	Date	Title
106	12.03.1982	Majlis Penyampaian Hadiah Peraduan Mengarang Berunsur Islam Sempena Perayaan Abad Ke-15 Hijrah
107	01.10.1982	Perutusan Sempena 1 Muharam 1403
108	28.03.1982	Majlis Perasmian Kursus Kadi, Imam dan Pegawai Agama
109	16.04.1983	Pembukaan Muktamar Parti BERJASA
110	02.06.1983	The Opening of the International Conference on Islam and Technology
111	01.07.1983	Majlis Pelancaran Operasi Bank Islam Malaysia Berhad
112	06.10.1983	Sempena Awal Muharam 1404
113	22.10.1983	Majlis Kesyukuran di Ibu Pejabat PERKIM
114	22.05.1984	Perasmian Pembukaan Pameran Tamadun Islam
115	01.08.1985	Majlis Pelancaran Syarikat Takaful Malaysia Sdn. Bhd.
116	20.09.1985	Perasmian Masjib Kementah
117	21.09.1985	Pembukaan Rasmi Seminar Pengajian Islam Peringkat Kebangsaan Sempena Perayaan Jubli Perak
118	04.02.1986	Perasmian Muzakarah Kesedaran Islam Pengawai-Pegawai Kerajaan
119	28.04.1986	Seminar on Developing A System of Islamic Financial Instruments
120	06.04.1987	Perasmian Seminar Pengurusan Islam Anjuran Bersama Bank Pembangunan Islam (IDB) dan Kementerian Pelajaran
121	26.08.1987	Sempena Menyambut Maal Hijrah 1408
122	06.02.1988	Majlis Pelancaran Yayasan Nadwah Akademi Isalm (NADI) Berhad
123	02.08.1988	Perasmian Majlis Perhimpunan Guru-Guru Takmir Masjib Seluruh Malaysia
124	23.02.1991	Majlis Jamuan Makan Malam Tahunan Persatuan Peguam-Peguam Muslim Malaysia
125	08.03.1991	Majlis Pelancaran Operasi Pungutan Zakat Secara Korporat

Table 3.6

Speeches for other Islamic related events from 1981-2003 and 2018-2020 (cont.)

Speech	Date	Title
126	10.12.1992	Sempena Perasmian Kursus Pendakwah Negara di Institut Tadbiran Awam Negara (INTAN)
127	21.01.1993	Sempena Perasmian Persidangan Islam dan Perindustrian
128	03.06.1993	Majlis Perasmian Persidangan Islam dan Keadilan
129	21.10.1993	To the Address of Welcome by the President of Cyprus at the Opening of the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting
130	03.03.1994	Majlis Perjumpaan Bersama Rakyat
	24.03.1994	Majlis Perasmian Bangunan IKIM
131	20.01.1995	Perasmian Kongres Pendidikan Islam Kebangsaan
	23.03.1995	The Dinner in Honour of H.E. Rafic Hariri, Prime Minister of the Republic of Lebanon
132	23.07.1996	The International Seminar on the Administration of Islamic Laws
133	29.11.1996	Majlis Perasmian Pusat Sains Negara
134	22.08.1997	Persidangan Serantau "Menghadapi Abad 21: Reformasi dan Cabaran Umat Islam Serantau"
135	06.07.1998	Majlis Sambutan Maulidur Rasul 1419H/1998M
136	03.10.2000	The Meeting with Muslim Intellectuals and Professionals
137	24.10.2000	The International Seminar on Islamic Law in the Contemporary World
138	11.11.2000	The Meeting with Muslim Intellectuals and Businessmen
139	25.03.2001	Perutusan Sempena Menyambut Ma'al Hijrah 1422
140	25.06.2001	The 20th Al Baraka Symposium for Islamic Economies
141	30.08.2001	Perutusan Sempena Hari Kemerdekaan Negara Yang Ke-44
142	05.12.2001	Majlis Berbuka Puasa dengan Pemimpin Pelajar
143	31.12.2001	Perutusan Perdana Menteri Sempena Tahun Baru 2002
144	07.02.2003	Majlis Pelancaran E-Syariah

3.2 Data Analysis

This study applied a qualitative method focused on content analysis. Hsieh and Shannon (2005) defines qualitative content analysis as a research method for the subjective interpretation of the content of text data through the systematic classification process of coding and identifying themes or patterns. In addition, this study will be a summative approach to qualitative content analysis. According to Hsieh and Shannon (2005), summative content analysis begins with identifying and quantifying the keywords and information in the text to have an overall understanding of the use of the words and contents in the data sources. To explain the data analysis process in more details way, Schreier (2012) listed eight common steps used in all qualitative content analysis:

1. Deciding on the research questions
2. Selecting material
3. Building a coding frame
4. Dividing material into categories of coding
5. Testing the coding frame (pre-analysis)
6. Evaluating and modifying the coding frame
7. Main analysis
8. Interpreting and presenting findings

3.2.1 Deciding the on Research Questions

This study focusing on Mahathir speeches aims to identify the presentation of Muslim identity in Mahathir's political discourses. With the combination of Graber (1981) five major functions performed by political languages, the core question that this study aims to answer is:

How does Mahathir use political languages in his political speeches on Muslim identity?

With that five sub-questions follow: -

a. What information does Mahathir convey in his speeches?

b. How does Mahathir set his agenda in his speeches?

c. How does Mahathir use interpretation and linkage in his speeches?

d. How does Mahathir use the projection of past and future in his speeches?

e. How does Mahathir stimulate the audience's action in his speeches?

3.2.2 Selecting Material

As discussed in 3.1 Data Source, the material or sample are Mahathir's speeches were downloaded from the Prime Minister Office (PMO) official website, under the column of "Koleksi Arkib Ucapan Ketua Eksekutif" (Collection of Chief Executive Speech Archive) at http://www.pmo.gov.my/ucapan/. However, the website provided all speeches given by Mahathir during his premiership. This requires the process of selecting the relating speeches that able to answer the research questions of this study. By using the summative content analysis approach, the data sourcing begins with identifying and quantifying the keywords and information related to Muslim identity. The selection process will be divided into 3 steps.

First, the author identified the possible keywords and information on Muslims identity from the 10 selected speeches in "Islam & the Muslim ummah: Selected speeches of Dr Mahathir Mohamad, Prime Minister of Malaysia" (Mohamad, 2000). The keywords that the author found from the book are Islam, Muslim, Ummah, Islamic teachings, Islamic countries/nations, Palestine and Israel, Bosnia and Herzegovina, peace, Islamic civilization, *Ad-deen* or way of life, extremists, interpretations, Quran, knowledge, oppression and modernization.

Second, by using the keywords identified from the selected speeches, the author began to search the keywords from the speeches between 1981-2003 and 2018-2020 published on the PMO website. Once a speech that content keyword(s) mentioned as above, the speech will be downloaded and save as Microsoft Word document. This step does not involve any close reading on the speeches and a total of 363 speeches were downloaded.

Third, each speech that collected will be pre-analysis by recording the frequency use of keywords in the text. If a speech only has very fewer keywords

and the author found that the content is not much related to Muslim identity, the speeches will not be considered for this study. At the end of this process, a total of 144 speeches were found importance for this study to analysis.

3.2.3 Building a Coding Frame

The speeches consist of many information, might or might not be relevant to the research questions. The next step is to reduce the data by identifying importance information related to Muslim identity and to scale down the information into a manageable quantity. To achieve that, the author used all 20 selected speeches in "Islam & the Muslim ummah: Selected speeches of Dr Mahathir Mohamad, Prime Minister of Malaysia" using the summative approach. The author found 3 main categories of information and each category supported with few sub-categories in Mahathir speeches. Then, the author defined each category and provide the keywords for each category and sub-category. The categories as below:

Table 3.7

The definition of each category and sub-category in the coding frame

Category	Name	Definition
Main category	Interpretations of Islam	Interpretation related to the teachings of Islam, including the Quran, Hadith (religious stories) and beliefs in Islam
Sub-category	The Fundamental Teachings of Islam	The fundamental teachings of Islam, such as Ad-deen, Islamic values, fardhu 'ain, fardhu kifayah, aqraa, peace, Muslim brotherhood and tolerant
Sub-category	Misinterpretations of Islam	The reason for the misinterpretations of Islam
Main category	Problems of Muslims in the Modern Era	The problems facing by the Muslims in the modern-day that caused by the Muslims themselves

Table 3.7

The definition of each category and sub-category in the coding frame (cont.)

Category	Name	Definition
Sub-category	Weakness of Muslims	The weaknesses of Muslims such as weak and backwardness, lack of knowledge, unable to protect themselves and other Muslim brotherhood
Sub-category	Turmoil in Muslim Society	The fragment, wars, conflict and disunited of the Muslims
Main category	**The prejudice of Non-Muslims towards Islam**	**The negative prejudice of the non-Muslims towards Islam that caused the misunderstanding and conflicts between Muslims and non-Muslims**
Sub-category	The Reputation of Islam	The factors that caused damage to the reputation of Islam and Muslims
Sub-category	Western Propaganda	The factors that caused by Western propaganda and action

Besides, this study will draw upon Graber's (1981) major functions of political languages: (i) information dissemination; (ii) agenda-setting; (iii) interpretation and linkage; (iv) projection to future and past; and (v) action simulation as an analytical framework (see chapter 2). The author will first list down the criteria in each function of political languages.

Table 3.8

Functions Performed by Political Languages

Functions of Political languages	Characteristic
Information Dissemination	- Explicit Information - Connotations - Inferences - Symbolic Meaning
Agenda-Setting and Priming	- HALO Effect - Control Over Information Dissemination
Interpretation, Linkage and Framing	- Reality Creation - Control Over Definitions - Manipulation of Expectations
Projection to Future and Past	- Informal Projections of the Past and Future - Formal Projections of the Past and Future
Action Stimulation	- Direct Appeals - Mood Creation - Words as Action Surrogates - Words as Symbolic Rewards

3.2.4 Dividng Material into Units of Coding

Based on the coding frame above, each category, sub-category and criteria of political language functions will be divided into units for coding. The units coding is as below:

Table 3.9

Unit for each category and sub-category of the coding frame

Category	Name	Unit
Main category	**Interpretations of Islam**	**1**
Sub-category	The Fundamental Teachings of Islam	1.1
Sub-category	Misinterpretations of Islam	1.2
Main category	**Problems of Muslims in the Modern Era**	**2**
Sub-category	Weakness of Muslims	2.1
Sub-category	Turmoil in Muslim Society	2.2
Main category	**The prejudice of Non-Muslims towards Islam**	**3**
Sub-category	The Reputation of Islam	3.1
Sub-category	Western Propaganda	3.2

Table 3.10

Unit for analytical framework criteria of the coding frame

Functions of Political languages	Unit
Information Dissemination	ID
- Explicit Information	EI
- Connotations	CON
- Inferences	INFER
- Symbolic Meaning	SM
Agenda-Setting	AGENDA
- Control Over Information Dissemination	CID
- HALO Effect	HALO
Interpretation and Linkage	
- Reality Creation	RC
- Control Over Definitions	CD
- Manipulation of Expectations	ME

Table 3.10

Unit for analytical framework criteria of the coding frame (con.)

Functions of Political languages	Unit
Projection to Future and Past	PFP
- Informal Projections of the Past and Future	IP
- Formal Projections of the Past and Future	FP
Action Stimulation	AS
- Direct Appeals	DA
- Mood Creation	MC
- Words as Action Surrogates	WAS
- Words as Symbolic Rewards	WSR

3.2.5 Testing the Coding Frame (Pre-analysis)

The coding frame after been finalized, it was tested with the 20 selected speeches in "Islam & the Muslim ummah: Selected speeches of Dr Mahathir Mohamad, Prime Minister of Malaysia" and randomly selected speeches from each year, 1981-2003 and 2018-2020. A total of 44 speeches had been tested with the coding frame for the pre-analysis process.

3.2.6 Evaluating and Modifying the Coding Frame (Vadility)

After the pre-analysis process, the author evaluated the findings and interpreted the data based on the research question. This step also required to ensure the validity and trustworthiness of the coding frame and findings. According to Weber (1990), the credibility of the evidence should be consistent with the interpretations of the study. The author had modified and reduced a few units based on a few reasons:

a. Units that are less important and can be combined with other units.

b. Units that are not consistently found in the other texts.

Besides, the author also uses the data source triangular method to validate the findings during the interpreting and presenting findings. According to Carter, Lukosius, DiCenso, Blythe, and Neville (2014), "data source triangulation

involves the collection of data from different types of people, including individuals, groups, families, and communities, to gain multiple perspectives and validation of data". First, the study referred to a different data source to ensure the validity of the data. Second, the study will analyze the consistency of the information in Mahathir speeches from 1981-2003 and 2018-2020 to ensure the information and coding units are valid.

3.2.7 Main Analysis

The study will conduct the main analysis by analysing all 144 speeches using the coding frame built for this study. This step will only identify all the units listed in the coding frame without interpreting the data. There are no new units and information were added into the coding frame throughout the main analysis.

3.2.8 Interpreting and Presenting Findings

This step interpreted and presented the findings collected in the "main analysis". The presentation of findings will combine with the analytical framework to provide a structural explanation.

3.3 Conclusion

This study will be using qualitative content analysis to analysis Mahathir's speeches and will be tested with Graber's (1981) model. A total of 144 speeches were collected for this study and analyzed with the coding frame built with the summative approach. The finding will be organizes based on the five functions performed by political languages suggested by Graber (1981) and expanded with priming effect and framing effect, which will discuss in Chapter 4.

CHAPTER 4
RESULTS

This chapter provides the results and discussion of the data collected from Mahathir's speeches on Muslim identity. The study follows Graber's (1981) five major functions performed by political languages, which are generally discussed in Chapter 2. In applying the theory to Mahathir's speeches, this chapter will start with the first section discussing the information dissemination function in the speeches. This section will be discussing three groups of information that often appeared in his speeches. The second section will discuss the agenda-setting function in his speeches and extended the function with priming effects and framing effects. Next, the third section will discuss how Mahathir used the interpretation and linkage function to strengthen his arguments. The fourth section will discuss how Mahathir used projection to future and past functions to link with the challenges and turmoil in Muslim society. Last, the fifth section will discuss how Mahathir used the action stimulation function to appeal to his Muslim audience to the situation.

This section will mainly present and discuss the results of the finding on Mahathir's speeches from 1981-2003 and 2018-2020. This study will adopt Graber's (1981) five major functions performed by political languages: (i) information dissemination; (ii) agenda-setting; (iii) interpretation and linkage; (iv) projection to future and past; and (v) action simulation. Each function will be further elaborate with a few sub-topics.

4.1 Information Dissemination

The first functions of political languages are information dissemination. This function will illustrate the explicit information, connotation, inferences, and symbolic meaning found in Mahathir's speeches on Muslim identity. Based on the finding, the author identified three main groups of information in his speeches:

4.1.1 Islamic Teachings

4.1.2 Problems of Muslims in the Modern Era

4.1.3 Non-Muslims Prejudice Towards Muslims

4.1.1 Islamic Teachings

The first group of information is Islamic teachings, where Mahathir focuses on the importance of adherence to the teachings of Islam. This group will shows Mahathir's believes, ideas, and knowledge in the teachings of Islam. Hence, the finding results for this group will discuss in two sub-groups:

4.1.1.1 Fundamental Teachings of Islam

4.1.1.2 Misinterpretations of Islam

4.1.1.1 Fundamental teachings of Islam

Fundamental teachings of Islam in Mahathir's perception are (1) *Ad-deen,* (2) *fardhu kifayah* and (3) peace value in Islam. These three fundamental teachings served as explicit information in Mahathir's Muslim identity discourses.

(1) *"Ad-deen"* or A Way of Life

During Mahathir's premiership, Islam is not merely a religious concept, but it served as his political ideology and beliefs as he called Islam -- "a way of life" or *Ad-deen.* A way of life was presented implicitly, for example, "*Islam is a way of life and a way of life cannot be confined to pure worship and rituals only … a way of life must involve everything that we do in our daily life*" (25.5.1999, The Seminar on "The Role Of Islamic Civilization In Fostering Inter-Religious Understanding"). Mahathir argues that Islam is not merely a religion, but its teachings serve as a guide for Muslims in their life; Islam religion and the Muslims could not be separated. A way of life can be commonly found in Mahathir's speeches (various kinds of the occasion) that involved Muslim audience, such as during UMNO meeting, religious events, and *Hari Raya Aidilfitri* speeches (e.g. 08.11.1991, Perhimpunan Agung UMNO; 01.12.1994, Perasmian Majlis Tilawah Al-Quran Peringkat Kebangsaan Kali Ke-37 Tahun 1415H/1994M; and 14.6.2018, Perutusan Raya 2018).

According to Mahathir, Islam served as a fundamental guide to the Muslims, including a guide for their daily activities. It is a complete way of life

that applies to all individuals, families, society, state, and government, and Muslims all around the world. It includes every single movement, action, and behaviours that are all guided by religious values. It is also complete guidance for birth and marriage, activities of daily life and society, laws and government administration, business and finance, as well as for international relations, war and peace. For example, "*Islam adalah Ad-din, iaitu keseluruhan cara hidup -- hidup sebagai seorang individu, hidup berkeluarga, hidup bermasyarakat, hidup bernegara, dan hidup sebagai umat Islam sedunia*" (28.5.1983, Majlis Perasmian Musabaqah Membaca Al-Quran Peringkat Kebangsaan, Tahun 1983/1403).

A way of life was also reflected as an inference – where Mahathir argues that Islam is not entirely about gaining merit in the *akhirat* (afterlife). Mahathir uses a way of life to inference the misbeliefs of the Muslims that "the current world is not for them (Muslims)" and they focus on religious duty to gain merit in the afterlife (08.01.1995, Majlis Perasmian Seminar Al-Quran Antarabangsa Kali Ke-5). Mahathir also uses a way of life by inference Islam is not just about rituals and worship performances (10.5.1998, Toleration and Moderation in Islam). He stresses that Islam is beyond only for performing religious activities; Islam serves as an important guide for the way of life for a Muslim (19.7.2003, Majlis Pelancaran Al-Quran Mushaf Malaysia). This inference is also related to the responsibility of Muslims, which will be further discussed in (2) *fardhu kifayah.*

> *"… Islam came to show the way of life for the whole human race then and in the future. More than any other religion, Islam was not to be just a way of worshipping Allah S.W.T., of prayers and rituals. Islam was meant to reshape the value system of the faithful and the whole human race and to instruct society on how to conduct its affairs, its administration, its laws and its economic and social life … when the followers find themselves lost, i.e., unable to resolve their problems they must refer to the Al-Quran for guidance. [The] guidance does not infer minute and detailed instructions as to exactly what to do. Guidance infers direction, the right approach, the right path. Knowing the direction, the faithful must apply their minds and think and resolve their*

problems according to knowledge, reason and logic. A Muslim may pray for guidance but he must also think and act in order to resolve the problem before him ..."

(Mohamad, 1991)

(2) *"fardhu kifayah"*

Fardhu kifayah is referring to the responsibility of Muslims to the Muslim community. The responsibility of Muslims is seen as implicit information in Mahathir's speeches, especially in speeches during religious events. According to Mahathir, a Muslim has two responsibilities in their life based on the teachings of Islam in the *Quran*: *fardhu kifayah* and *fardhu 'ain* – the responsibility to the religion such as worship and to gain merit in the afterlife (17.04.2001, The Official Opening of the International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM) and The 2nd General Conference of the Federation of Universities in the Muslim World). As he argues, "*the Muslim belongs not just to himself. He belongs to the Muslim community, the ummah. The well- being of the ummah is the responsibility of all the members of the Muslim community. If that well-being is not taken care of by the individuals or collectively by the community, then every Muslim in the community would have sinned. That is what is meant by "fardhu kifayah""* (22.09.2003, Islam and the Ummah: Reexamining and Reinventing Ourselves in the Face of New Challenges).

However, the Muslims ignored the fact that Islam is a collective community and misunderstand the teachings of Islam. Mahathir argues that whenever the Muslims referred to the *Al-Quran*, they only care about issues that related to religious performance or *fardhu 'ain,* such as worship and merit for their afterlife. They give less attention to *fardhu kifayah* which will affect the whole Muslim community. For example, "*Apabila mereka bercakap mengenai Al-Quran, mereka hanya mementingkan soal-soal yang berhubung dengan ibadat khusus atau fardhu 'ain iaitu mengenai sembahyang, puasa, zakat dan haji, tanpa memberi penekanan kepada bidang ibadat umum atau fardhu kifayah yang mempunyai kesan terhadap seluruh masyarakat"* (19.03.1990, Sempena Perasmian Seminar Al-Quran Antarabangsa). Mahathir convinces his audience that even though Islam urges Muslims to prepare for the next work, but they should not forget their duties in the

current world (19.12.19, Keynote Address at KL Summit 2019). In short, Muslims should balance both of their responsibilities to achieve success in their current life and gain merit for *akhirat*.

In Mahathir's speeches, he seldom will directly mention the phrases *"fardhu kifayah"*. Indeed, this study found the explicit information of *"fardhu kifayah"* mostly able identified through connotative meaning and inferences. First, Mahathir uses "duty", "duty to religion" and "well-being of Islam" to connotate *"fardhu kifayah"* in English speeches. For example, *"that is your collective duty to Islam and the ummah"* (10.07.2003, The Opening of World Ulama Conference), *"we would be failing in our duty to our religion"* (17.06.1994, The Opening Ceremony of the World Islamic Civilization Festival) and *"we have a duty to ensure the well-being of Islam and the Muslims"* (08.11.1986, The RISEAP Fourth General Assembly). On the Other hand, Mahathir uses "tanggungjawab" (responsibility or duty) as a connotation for *fardhu kifayah* in Malay speeches. For example, *"memikul tanggungjawab kita sepenuhnya sebagai umat Islam"* (28.05.1983, Di Majlis Perasmian Musabaqah Membaca Al-Quran Peringkat Kebangsaan, Tahun 1983/1403) and *"tanggungjawab kita menolong mereka"* (19.02.1996, Perutusan Hari Raya Aidil Fitri). Hence, it is arguable that "duty", "duty to religion" or "tanggungjawab" are understandable by the Muslim audience as a connotative meaning that Mahathir is referring to *fardhu kifayah* without needed detailed explanation.

Next, *fardhu kifayah* was also reflected as inferences for three information – *akhirat,* knowledge and protecting the Muslim community.

- *Akhirat* or Afterlife

Akhirat is often used by Mahathir as an inference for *fardhu kifayah*. As mentioned in the previous paragraph, the Muslims care much about their religious duties (*fardhu kifayah*) and ignored their contribution to the Muslim community as a whole. For example, *"… but despite being followers of a religion concerned with a way of life, we seem to care only for death and retribution. And so when we interpret the teachings of Islam, we care little for the effect on life of the Muslim society, but whether we gain merit or not when we die …"* (28.04.1986. Developing A System of Islamic Financial Instruments).

-   Knowledge

Mahathir believes that knowledge is an essential responsibility to the Muslim community (will be further discussed in 4.1.2 Problems of Muslims in the Modern Era). He argues that *fardhu 'ain* is purely referring to religious knowledge; while *fardhu kifayah* is to acquire non-religious knowledge and skills. *Fardhu kifayah* included knowledge and skills in every field, such as health, laws and enforcement, security, and basic human needs such as food clothing, and shelter. Unfortunately, Muslims are ignoring the importance of knowledge as their duty in Islam and this is resulting in the Muslims today are weak and backward. Hence, Mahathir uses knowledge or secular knowledge as an inference to his Muslim audience. For example, *"it is now time that Muslims improve their state of well-being and contribute to the well-being of the whole international community by acquiring knowledge and technology and use them for their betterment"* (02.06.1983, The Opening of The International Conference on Islam and Technology).

-   Protecting the Muslims Community

According to Mahathir, one of the problems of Muslims in modern-day is they unable to protect themselves and other Muslim brotherhood (will be further discussed in 4.1.2 Problems of Muslims in the Modern Era). Mahathir believes that protecting the Muslim community and other brotherhood from oppressing by the enemy should be the responsibility of all Muslims and Islamic nations. Hence, this study found that this information is an inference for *fardhu kifayah*. For example, *"they are already weak. Divided they are weaker. Unable to protect themselves from other Muslims and from other enemies they allow themselves to be manipulated against their co-religionists. They become pawns in the games other people play. Truly they have lost self-respect. Truly they are not following the teachings of Islam"* (21.1.2003, Muslim Unity in the Face of Challenges and Threats).

(3) Peace Value in Islam

Peace value in Islam is another important fundamental teachings in Islam that used by Mahathir regularly in his religious discourses and Islamic affairs related speeches. Mahathir explicitly projects "Islam means peace"

and "Islam is a religion of peace" (9.12.1997, The Eighth Islamic Summit Conference; 29.9.2003, Islam and the Ummah: Reexamining and Reinventing Ourselves in the Face of New Challenges; 19.12.2019, Keynote Address at KL Summit 2019). He believes that peace is the way of life of Muslims and it should be an important value that is reflected on every Muslim.

However, Mahathir is concerned that peace as the way of life is misled and ignored by many Muslims. He argues that the ignorant of peace in Islam had caused the fragment between the Muslim sects as well as the physical conflict with other non-Muslims. This ignorant results in the Muslims today live in an unpeaceful situation. The peace value became essential information to address the turmoil of the Muslims for Mahathir. He believes that emphasizing peace in Islam can resolve the turmoil within the Muslim community and regain a positive image of reputation. Mahathir used the peace value to instils unity among the Muslims and reject any violent settlements, such as terrorist acts. For example, *"... Islam is a religion of peace. Muslims greet each other and greet others with a wish for peace. Peace be on you. We wish everyone peace. But nobody today would believe Muslims are peaceful people who wish everyone, Muslims and non-Muslims to have peace ..."* (30.06.2000. The International Seminar and Dialogue on "Enhancing the understanding of Islam for the Media").

The peace value information can be found as an inference message when Mahathir addressing topics related to "unity among Muslims" and "Islam brotherhood". For example, *"Muslims must surely know what is it that they are doing which is wrong. Certainly their disunity, their rejection of Islamic brotherhood is wrong"* (21.01.2003, Muslim Unity in the Face of Challenges and Threats). Besides, the peace values are also reflected as an inference for wars and conflicts in Muslim society. For example, *"Perpecahan umat Islam masih berterusan. Bukan sahaja perbalahan berlaku sesama sendiri, bahkan peperangan saudara dan peperangan antara negara-negara Islam juga berlaku."* (05.05.1985, Sempena Perasmian Musabaqah Membaca Al-Quran Peringkat Kebangsaan). Starting in the mid-1990s, peace value was an inference that terrorism is not the way of Islam and the Islamic teachings reject any violent acts, such as killing innocent people and

destroying properties. For instance, "*terrorising people is not the way of Islam. Certainly killing innocent people is not Islamic*" (01.04.2002, The Extraordinary Session of the Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers on Terrorism) and "it would seem that Islam is the religion of chaos and backwardness, of intolerance and needless violence … violence, fanaticism, and terror bring gain to no one. The massive losses of lives and property would all have been wasted" (23.303.1995, The Dinner in Honour of H.E. Rafic Hariri, Prime Minister of Lebanon).

As a conclusion, this sub-group finding results shows that Mahathir translates his understanding and beliefs in the fundamental teachings of Islam into his speeches. Mahathir believes that Islam is a way of life for the Muslims, and the Muslims should balance their responsibility in both religious and to the community. Besides, Mahathir also subscribed to the peace values in Islam. Became the core value for most of Mahathir's arguments, and it has been used by Mahathir based on different events and time frames. As for the framework for the function of "information dissemination", this study found that Mahathir mainly using fundamental teachings as "explicit information" and "inferences". However, there are not many "connotation" messages in this sub-group and there is no "symbolic meaning" found in this study.

4.1.1.2 Misinterpretations of Islam

The "misinterpretations of Islam" is the information that can be found in Mahathir's speeches from 1981-2003 and 2018-2020. As Mahathir has a strong faith in the fundamental teachings of Islam, for him it is important to interpret the Islamic teachings or the Quran correctly. However, the misinterpretations of Islam had caused many problems faced by the Muslim community today, such as backwardness, lack of knowledge, unable to protect themselves, and division among the Muslim sects (see in 4.1.2 Problems of Muslims in the Modern Era). Mahathir argues that most Muslims do not fully understand Islam and often misinterpreted the *Quran*. Based on Mahathir's speeches, this study identified three major reasons for the misinterpretations: (1) the *Ulamas* or religion teachers; (2) the language of the Quran; and (3) the political Islamists.

(1) The *Ulamas* or Religious Teachers

As discussed, Mahathir believes that the Islam religion cannot be wrong, but the Muslims who interpreted the teachings might be wrong. This indicated that the religious teachers or known as the "Ulamas" are responsible for the interpretations of the Islamic teachings. Mahathir argues that the misinterpretations were partly the mistakes of the Ulamas because the Ulamas are also ordinary human beings who will make mistakes. As a result, the interpretations of different Ulamas had created various understanding and beliefs in Islam. The misinterpretations by the Ulamas was presented "explicitly" in Mahathir's speeches, for instance, *"... while the Quran is never wrong, it is, however, possible for those who study, analyse and interpret the contents of the Quran to be wrong ..."* (02.02.1994, The Opening of the 4th International Seminar on the Al-Quran).

According to Mahathir, those Ulamas who study and interpret the contents of the Quran are based on their understanding and interests. He argues that some of the interpretations do not follow the original teachings brought by the Prophet; some of the Ulamas pick a few sentences of verses from the *Quran* that relevant to their agenda without interpreting the whole Quran's message. Mahathir believes that the values and surrounding situations in Muslim society often influenced the interpretations of the Ulamas. The interpretations will be different from time to time, depending on the interests of the Ulamas and their political agenda. This information also presented "explicitly", for example, *"... the scholars of the past and of today are no doubt learned but they are not prophets and they are not infallible. Some scholars of today have other motivations which are sometimes far from Islamic. I am not questioning my faith and my religion, Islam. I am merely questioning the interpretations of the Quran and the Hadith made by the scholars, past and present ..."* (28.04.1986, Seminar on Developing A System of Islamic Financial Instruments).

Mahathir criticized that many of these incorrect teachings and interpretations by the Ulamas had caused the Muslims to become a weak and backward society in the modern-day. The Ulamas claimed that any non-religion and secular matters are not important in Islam and taught the Muslims should only focus

on their religious duty. In consequence, any secular knowledge, modernization, and developments of the Muslim community had been categorized as not important for the Muslims by the Ulamas. The Ulamas claimed that the current world is not for Muslims. They misinterpreted the Islamic teachings only for gaining merit for *akhirat* and for performing religious duties. This information was presented inference, for example, *"... mereka [ulamas] yang mengajar bahawa bagi umat Islam hidup di dunia hanyalah untuk persediaan bagi akhirat adalah orang yang bersalah besar. Umat Islam dan agama Islam tidak akan dihina jika tidak kerana ajaran seperti ini. Dan apabila kita menyoal mereka ini, jawapan mereka ialah 'Takdir' ..."* (08.11.1991, Perhimpunan Agung UMNO).

As a result, Mahathir argues that not all interpretations of Islam and Islamic teachings can be fully accepted. There are many interpretations were manipulated the original contexts of the *Quran* by adding their own words of the Ulamas. He maintains that if the additional sentences had changed the contents or the meanings were far from the original contexts of the *Quran,* then it is no longer the actual teachings of Islam. Mahathir often justifies through "inferences" - there were almost 600,000 pieces of *hadiths* (stories and news of Islam) were published. However, only 4,000 *hadiths* where been recognized by the Muslim scholars, and the remain 296,000 *hadiths* were rejected". (ex. 24.11.1995, Perhimpunan Agong UMNO; 16.04.1996, The Oxford Centre for Islamic Studies Oxford; and 22.08.1997, Persidangan Serantau "Menghadapi Abad 21: Reformasi dan Cabaran Umat Islam Serantau").

(2) The Language of The Quran

Mahathir justifies that the original *Quran* was written in the Arabic language and the language itself is already difficult for a Muslim to learn. Mahathir argues that even if an individual is fluent in the language, the meanings of the verses in the *Quran* are not easy to be understood. These factors will easily be misunderstood or confused by the Muslims who try to learn the knowledge in the *Quran.* Mahathir acknowledges that those Ulamas were also ordinary human beings who have their limitation and will make mistakes during the interpretation process. The misinterpretation occurred when the Ulamas had limited proficiency in the

language and a narrow understanding of the religion. This information is found "explicitly" in Mahathir's speeches, such as in 03.03.1994, Majlis Perjumpaan Bersama Rakyat; 08.01.1995, Majlis Perasmian Seminar Al-Quran Antarabangsa Kali Ke-5; and 18.07.2003, Majlis Pelancaran Al-Quran Mushaf Malaysia.

In addition, some Ulamas were needed to interpret and translate the *Quran* into their languages for Muslims to understand the teachings. Some translations were added extra sentences to give a clearer meaning and explanation for the contents. The added sentences might change the original meanings of the *Quran* and the interpretations will be different from each *Ulamas*. Mahathir thinks if the additional sentences and interpretations were slightly different from the original contexts will be acceptable. However, many interpretations were far from the original contexts in the *Quran* and do not bring a small meaning after translating into other languages. As for ordinary Muslims who are unable to understand the Arabic language, they can only rely on the interpreted and translated versions of the *Quran*. This information also presented "explicitly" in Mahathir's speeches, for example, *"... kefahaman ini menjadi lebih penting kerana terdapat banyak ajaran dan tafsiran yang tidak tepat yang dibuat oleh orang tertentu. Dengan mengetahui tafsiran dan terjemahan dalam bahasa yang kita faham, dan ditafsirkan mengikut tafsiran yang sebenar maka dapatlah kita kenali dan menolak ajaran-ajaran sesat ..."* (18.09.2000, Majlis Perasmian Majlis Tilawah Al-Quran Peringkat Kebangsaan Kali Ke-43).

(3) Political Islam

Mahathir argues that Islamic teachings have often been politicized by political Islamists. He criticizes that most of the misinterpretations were contributed by those political Islamists who misused the teachings of Islam for their own political interests. They purposely changed the contexts in the Quran according to their political agenda and spread it to their followers. They had created different beliefs in Islam and it had created division among Muslims The followers have strong beliefs in their leaders and often trusted all information and teachings about Islam told by their leaders. The political Islamists often cited the Quran to justify their actions and propaganda. The followers are willing to follow any instructions of their

leaders without any hesitation, even if it involves violence and terror acts towards other Muslims and non-Muslims. Mahathir argues that the fragment among Muslims is not the mistakes in the Islamic teachings, but it is the mistakes of Muslims themselves who misinterpreted the teachings. He criticizes those Muslims who had extreme thinking often misused the name of Islam to justify their violence and terror acts. This information presented explicitly, for example, *"… political Islam is about using Islam for political ends. With the advent of democracy political Islam has become more trenchant. Very frequently political Islam leads to deliberate misinterpretations of Islam to justify and support their political agendas …"* (01.07.2003, The Opening of World Ulama Conference).

4.1.2 Problems of Muslims in the Modern Era

The second group of information is the Problems of Muslims in the Modern Era, where Mahathir highlighted the weaknesses of Muslims according to his opinions. This information can be found in nearly all Mahathir's Muslim identity speeches during religious events, Islamic conferences, and meetings, specifically addressed for his Muslim audience and Muslim leaders. Hence, the finding of this study divided this group into two different sub-groups:

4.1.2.1 Weaknesses of Muslims

4.1.2.2 Turmoil in Muslim Society

4.1.2.1 Weaknesses Of Muslims

The first sub-group that Mahathir speaks on Muslims in the modern era is the challenges of the Muslims. The finding of this study identified three weaknesses of the Muslims in Mahathir's speeches: (1) backwardness, (2) weak in knowledge and skills, and (3) unable to protect themselves and other Muslim brotherhood. All three challenges can be consistently found in his speeches on Muslim identity throughout both his premierships.

(1) Backwardness

Mahathir stresses that Muslims are the most backward society in today's world. He believes that the backwardness of Muslims is due to the Muslims emphasize more on their merit in the *akhirat* (afterlife) and their religious duties or *fardhu 'ain*. Mahathir argues that these were the mistakes of the Ulamas

who misinterpreted the Islamic teachings. As a result, the Muslims believed that suffering in current life is a test from God and Muslims are promised to enjoy in the afterlife. This information presented explicitly, for example, *"… today the Muslims cannot be said to have achieved a gracious and glorious life and civilisation. Everywhere we look we see them oppressed and backward. They are weak and incapable not only of defending themselves but of defending their faith even. Some indeed have become so disillusioned that they have either foresaken Islam or are Muslims in name only …"* (02.02.1994, The Opening of the 4th International Seminar on the Al-Quran).

Mahathir rejects the claim and argues that Islam does not merely mean as *fardhu ain,* but Islam also emphasized on *fardhu kifayah* or the responsibility to the Muslim community, including acquiring knowledge and modernization. Muslims should balance their *fardhu 'ain and fardhu kifayah* in their current life. However, the Muslims ignored the teachings of *fardhu kifayah* in Islam and all kinds of possible developments for themselves and their society. Mahathir maintains that this is the reason caused the Muslims to have a backward mindset who do not believe in developments and modernization is part of the Muslims' duties. As a result, the Muslims became backwards and do nothing to improve their current life lives. Mahathir stresses that the Muslims' backwardness also restricted them from becoming a modernized society and the development of most Islamic nations are far behind the developed non-Muslim. *Fardhu 'ain* and *fardhu kifayah* serves as inference in Mahathir speeches. For example, *"… we should not be too complacent about our place in the `akhirat'. We should really examine whether all that we need to do is to focus on the performance of `Fardu Ain' for ourselves and ignore our other worldly duty. Does Islam teach us to be selfish and perform only those rituals which will gain merit for us alone and ignore our duties to the Muslim community which are equally enjoined by Islam? Can we ignore `Fardu Kifayah' because we have perform `Fardu Ain' for ourselves? …"* (30.09.2000, The Launch of the International Haji Conference).

(2) Lack of Knowledge and Skills

Mahathir implicitly emphasizes the importance of acquiring knowledge. He argues that Muslims reject all kinds of non-religious knowledge and refused to learn any secular. Mahathir argues that this mindset had caused the Muslims are lack of modern knowledge and skills that able to help the developments in their society. He believes that secular knowledge is essential for the Muslim world to develop their nations and strengthen their position in the international arena. For example, *"... We must also banish this idea that the only knowledge that we need acquire is about Islam. Neglect of other knowledge has lead to our lack of industrial capacity, our capacity to invent and produce weapons to instill fear in the enemy and to defend ourselves. We must stop thinking that the acquisition of knowledge other than religious knowledge gives no merit in afterlife ..."* (19.07.2002, The International Forum on Islam, KALIF 2002).

Mahathir justifies that secular knowledge is emphasized in Islam and the Muslims during the glory of Islamic civilization in the 7th century mastered all kinds of knowledge, such as mathematics, science, medicine, astronomy, and other areas of human knowledge. They were the most knowledgeable people and modernized society in the world. In contrast, Western Europe during the 7th century or known as the Dark Ages was the most backward society. The Western Europeans had once depended on the knowledge was developed by Muslim scholars. Mahathir claims that many of the Western knowledge and scholarships today are originated from the scholarship that developed by the past Muslims. This information presented explicitly, for example, *"... once upon a time the Muslim Civilisation was highly respected. Muslims were economically wealthy and very learned in all fields, in the sciences and mathematics, in navigation and astronomy, in engineering and in construction ..."* (06.09.1996, The RISEAP 9th General Assembly/15th Anniversary Celebration).

(3) Unable to protect themselves and other Muslim Brotherhood

Another weaknesses of the Muslims in the modern-day is the Muslims are unable to defend themselves and the Islam religion. According to Mahathir, the Muslims and Islamic nations today are too weak to protect themselves

and easily oppressed by their enemies. He believes that this is the effect of the Muslims' backward mindset and lack of modern knowledge and skills. The Muslims believed that the current world is not for them and they refused to do anything to change their faith and life, to develop their countries, and to protect themselves from their enemy. This information presented as "explicitly information" in Mahathir speeches, for example, *"… surely the present inability of Muslims to protect other Muslims who are being butchered and expelled from their countries is not in keeping with the Muslim way of life. And yet the inability of the Muslim to protect other Muslims in distress is entirely due to their backwardness and their general poverty …"* (25.05.1999, The Seminar on "The Role of Islamic Civilization In Fostering Inter-Religious Understanding").

Mahathir argues that world Muslims consisted of the world's largest population, but the Muslims still unable to protect themselves and needed to depend on non-Muslims for aids and protection. Some Islamic nations had to depend on foreign aids to survive; some Muslim nations lack resources and the ability to rebuild their nations; some are still in wars, restricting the Islamic nations from being developed. Mahathir clarifies that although few Islamic nations are rich and not involved in any conflicts, they are still insufficient to provide aids and protection to their fellow Muslims in the conflicting areas. For example, *"… we cannot deny that we are largely dependent on the non-Muslims for most of our needs. In fact, although the Quran enjoins upon us to be prepared to protect the Ummah, we are unable to do so because for a long time we cannot even equip ourselves with the means to ward off the attacks by others. We depend upon our detractors to supply us …"* (19.12.2019, Keynote Address at KL Summit 2019).

In conclusion, Mahathir argues that all these weaknesses of Muslims had caused a bad reputation to the Muslims and Islam religion. The image of Islam for non-Muslims is now a religion that has the most backward and weak people. The "weaknesses of Muslims" in the modern-day can be found in most of the Muslim identity speeches. This information is crucial in Mahathir's discourses and often presented in a negative way. However, Mahathir did not means to humiliate the Muslim audience. Indeed, his motivation is to pinpoint the problems of the

Muslims and call his Muslim audience to reevaluate their current status and situation in the modern-day.

> *"... because we do not study in depth, Muslims today have to rely on the results and the discoveries of those of other faiths. Today many of us are totally dependent on the results of the non-Muslims` application of their knowledge for our food, transport, defence, clothing and the roof over our heads ..."*

(Mohamad, 1994)

4.1.2.2 Turmoil in Muslim Society

The second sub-group is the turmoil in Muslim society. Aside from the misinterpretations of the *Quran,* the personal interests and political agenda of certain Muslim leaders were the main causes for fracture among the Muslims and Islamic nations. Throughout Mahathir's whole premiership, he blames much on the Muslims themselves should be responsible for the turmoil, division, and conflicts that are happening in their society. Hence, this sub-group will be divided into two parts: (1) the fragment in the Muslim community and (2) political Islam.

(1) The Fragment in the Muslim Community

Mahathir believes that the misinterpretations of Islam, either intentionally or unintentionally, had divided the Muslims and created conflicts in the Islam beliefs. Mahathir argues that there is only one Islam religion, but the Muslims had split themselves into various sects. One example was the split between the Sunni and the Syiah Muslims in Islam. The fragment in Islam (the Sunni and Shia sects) began after the passing away of Prophet Muhammad in 632 AD over the issue of leadership in the Muslim community. Today, the Sunni sect is the majority of the world's Muslim population and the Shia sect has approximately 10-15% of the Muslim population (Khalili, 2016). Among these two sects, the Muslims had further broken into a few more different sects with different interpretations of Islamic teachings by the *Ulamas* over different decades. Mahathir argues that the mistakes of these interpretations of Islam can divide Muslims into sects and will cause the Muslims to accuse each other as enemies and un-Islam. This information was presented explicity, for example, *"... ayat-ayat Al-Quran tidak boleh dipertikaikan,*

diubah atau dimansuhkan. Tetapi kefahaman kita terhadap ayat-ayat ini bergantung kepada pentafsir, yang terdiri daripada manusia biasa yang tentu tidak sunyi daripada kesilapan walaupun amat alim dan arif. Oleh kerana ini terdapat tafsir-tafsir yang berlainan dan kadang-kadang bertentangan berkenaan ayat yang sama. Demikianlah kelainan ini sehingga ia dapat memecah-mecah umat Islam kepada mazhab, tarikat dan kumpulan-kumpulan yang begitu berlainan fahaman akan ajaran Islam sehingga mereka sering tuduh-menuduh antara satu sama lain dan bermusuh pun ...” (09.09.2003, Perasmian Majlis Perujian Membaca Al-Quran Peringkat Kebangsaan Kali Ke-46 Tahun 1424H/2003M).

The fragment in the Muslim community not only created conflicts in the teachings of Islam, but it had further created physical conflict between different Muslim sects. The more extreme Muslim leaders and *Ulamas* considered other Muslims as their enemies and often declared wars against the other sects. They always believe other sects of Muslims are considered as their enemies. However, Mahathir justifies that the *Quran* did not mention that Muslims with different beliefs are the enemies; instead, what the *Quran* did said was that all Muslims should be living together peacefully and treat each other as brothers and sisters. He argues that the fights between Muslim sects will not help the Muslim community, but it will only sacrificing innocent people because of the different beliefs and political views in Islam. This information was presented explicitly, for example, *“... oleh kerana itulah terdapat permusuhan sesama orang Islam yang menyebabkan ramai orang yang tidak ada kena-mengena dengan permusuhan ini dibunuh dengan kejam, termasuk kanak-kanak kecil dan orang tua. Ada juga pelancong asing yang dibunuh semata-mata kerana permusuhan politik antara sesama Islam ...”* (30.01.1998, Perutusan Hari Raya Aidilfitri).

(2) Political Islam

Mahathir justifies that the political Islamists and Muslim extremists used the teachings of Islam to propagate their interests and political agenda. Most of these extremists and political Islamists are often the leaders in their sects. The verses in the *Quran* were changed and interpreted the meaning according to their political interests. Some of their political agenda involved committing

violence and terror acts (19.02.1996, Perutusan Hari Raya Aidilfitri). In addition, Mahathir argues that most of the Muslim followers will trust the words of their leaders without any further questioning of their leaders' decisions. The extremists persuaded their followers that sacrificing their lives in the name of Islam will guarantee their merit in their afterlife. This information can be found inference in Mahathir's speeches, for example, *"... muslims who declare themselves as brothers in Islam often make it their duty to fight and kill other Muslims. They would in the name of Islam condemn these Muslims as infidels in order to justify their enmity towards them. If we go by their criteria for being Muslim then there are probably no Muslims in the world. In any case Islam forbids the frivolous labelling of other Muslims as infidels ..."* (19.07.2002, The International Forum on Islam, KALIF 2002).

Mahathir argues most of the political Islam was not fighting for the freedom of Islam, but their agenda is to weaken their Islamic governments and to grab power. The extremists are using the weaknesses of their followers to achieve their agenda. Most of the Muslims do not clearly know why they are fighting and whom they are fighting. Mahathir claimed that those political Islamists often go against their governments and used the teachings of Islam to point the wrongdoing of the governments. They tried to uses the name of Islam to also justify their agenda, even though their activities were obviously involving violence. This information presented inferences – *"... yang amat malang lagi ialah apabila sahaja pemerintah sesebuah negara Islam cuba membangunkan negara serta ketahanannya dengan mengejar ilmu dan kecekapan dalam bidang-bidang seperti sains dan teknologi maka akan muncullah kumpulan yang menentang percubaan ini kerana kononnya ini adalah bukti yang pemerintahan adalah sekular dan tidak Islam dan perlu dijatuhkan. Mereka ini kerap menggunakan Islam sebagai nama gerakan mereka untuk menghalalkan tindakan ganas mereka. Walaupun mereka menamakan kumpulan mereka Persaudaraan Islam atau Parti Allah atau Parti Islam, mereka tidak segan-segan membelakangkan ajaran Islam dengan mengkafirkan Pemerintahan negara, dan mereka sanggup membunuh kepimpinan Kerajaan Islam dan orang Islam lain dalam usaha untuk menghalang kemajuan yang mereka dakwa sekular itu ..."* (20.06.2002, Perhimpunan Agong UMNO).

4.1.3 Non-Muslims Prejudice towards Muslims

The third group of information is the "non- Muslims prejudice towards Muslims", where Mahathir addressed the conflicting issues between Muslims and non-Muslims. Mahathir often brought up the frustrations and mistreatments of the Muslims in his speeches to non-Muslims and international audiencess. The finding of this study shows that Mahathir often argues that the negative prejudice towards Muslims is due to the misunderstanding of non-Muslims and Western propaganda. Hence, the finding results for this group will discuss two different sub-groups:

4.1.3.1 Negative Image of Islam

4.1.3.2 Western Propaganda

4.1.3.1 Negative Image of Islam

(1) Underdeveloped of Islamic nations

According to Mahathir, Islam religion is the most misunderstanding religion today by both Muslims themselves and non-Muslims. The backwardness and weakness of the Muslims and the Islamic nations today, Islam has been associated as a backward and fascinated religion. The Muslims themselves unable to prove the positive side of themselves to the rest of the world, and this has caused the non-Muslims to become more lack of knowledge and understand about Islam and Muslims. Mahathir argues that Muslims should be responsible for creating the confusing and bad reputation of Islam to the outside world. Those Muslims who are fascinated and learned the wrong interpretations of Islamic teaching are most likely to be less tolerant with the non-believers and other religions. This information presented explicitly, for example, *"… but the Muslims are equally to be blamed for their ugly reputation, their poor image and their isolation. However, this has not always been so. The early Muslims were outgoing people who tolerated and associated closely with people of other religions. Islamic teachings did not and does not proscribe such tolerance and association. Islam in fact enjoins upon the Muslim to accept that there are people of different faiths who worship in different ways. They are not asked to force these people to accept Islam. Obviously, they must tolerate and understand these non- believers, not regard them as enemies …"*

(25.05.1999, The Seminar on "The Role of Islamic Civilization In Fostering Inter-Religious Understanding").

The misunderstanding had been further enhanced when the extreme Islamists started to use violent settlements for their problems. Mahathir often referred to those extreme Islamists as frustrated and angry Muslims who fight for their own freedom from their oppressors and enemies. However, Mahathir disagreed with the act of the Muslim extremists as he argues that violence is not the way of Islam. This can be found explicitly in his speeches, for example, *"… frustrated and angry some Muslims have resorted to terrorism. Many believe they have been successful in this. But what have the Muslims really gained by these acts of terror? All that has happened is that the enemies of Islam have found justification for putting more pressure on the Muslims, attacking and killing them, treating them and their religion with contempt …"* (21.01.2003, Muslim Unity in the Face of Challenges and Threats).

(2) Anti-Muslim Propaganda

Mahathir argues that the non-Muslims, especially the western countries, should also be blamed for the misunderstanding. The anti-Muslims by non-Muslims has been around for centuries. He often referred to the European Inquisition as an example to explain the misunderstanding between the Muslims and non-Muslims. Since Western Europe regain their domination in their region, they have negative prejudice towards Muslims and Islam. The prejudice is due to the Muslim kingdom had been occupying some part of Western Europe until the late-15th century. The Muslims during that time was not only dominating in term of military strength, but they also spread Islam religion to the non-Muslims in a peaceful way and influenced the Europeans. However, some non-believers of Islam rejected religion, and they wanted to regain their lands. This information presented explicitly, for example, *"… and so the deliberate whipping up of anti- Muslims feelings has been going on for centuries. Nothing good that Muslims do, in particular in their relations with non-Muslims, is recognised. Thus the fact that Christians and Jews could practise their religions in Muslim Spain was hardly ever mentioned in*

European history books ..." (16.04.1996, The Oxford Centre for Islamic Studies Oxford).

In the late-15th century, the Europeans finally regain their own territories and successfully minimized the influence of Islam religion in their region. However, Mahathir argues that anti-Muslim ideas were not eliminated and still strong in the 20th century. He believes that the non-Muslims had the wrong perception that the Muslims will dominate again and will be a threat to other religions. The non-Muslims also fear that the Muslims will force them to convert to Islam. Mahathir acknowledges that there are some group of extreme Islamists often will force the non-believers to convert into a Muslim. However, he argues that not all Muslims are aggressive, and it is only practicing by some small Muslim sects. For example, The result is that Islam tends to be the most misunderstood religion among non-Muslims. And because they do not understand, they are frequently antagonistic. *"... the result is that Islam tends to be the most misunderstood religion among non-Muslims. And because they do not understand, they are frequently antagonistic. There is unnecessary friction between us and them, whether we are in the minority or majority. They fear us and suspect that we are trying to force-convert them. They fear conversion because Islam is perceived as a series of restrictions on everything that they cherish ..."* (08.11.1986, The RISEAP Fourth General Assembly).

Besides, the non-Muslims also misunderstood Islam fundamentalists. The non-believers misunderstood that all extreme Islamists who committed an act of violence are due to their extreme belief in the religious teachings. Mahathir argues that if Muslims are to be claimed as fundamentalists, then all Muslims are fundamentalists. All true Muslims are practising the fundamental teachings of Islam, and those who are not following the fundamental teachings of Islam should not be called fundamentalists. The fundamental teachings emphasized peace and tolerance with their own brotherhood and non-believers. If a true fundamentalist of Islam, he or she will not commit violent acts against the other because it is against the religious teachings. This information can be found explicitly, for example, *"... fundamentalism is the most abused of words. It is equated with*

extremism. Yet if the teachings of Islam are studied, it would be clear that the best Muslims are the fundamentalists. The fundamentals of Islam are based on peace. Indeed, Islam means peace. The people who are usually described as fundamentalists are far from following the fundamentals of the Islamic religion ..." (16.04.1996, The Oxford Centre for Islamic Studies Oxford).

4.1.3.2 Western Propaganda

(1) Western Ideology

Mahathir believes that the Western has its own interests with the Islamic nations and turned their attention to the Middle East region after the Cold War ended. He argues that the West has further propagated the anti-Muslim sentiment and they intentionally want to weaken the Muslim world. The West was trying to interfere with the Islamic nations' affairs by introducing its democratic systems to adapt by the Islamic governments. The West often argues that most of the Islamic nations were authoritarian system which is not democracy and against the freedom of individual rights. Some Islamic nations accepted the Western democracy system, but some political Islamists who had different political views and agenda rejected Western democracy. The differences in political views had created further friction in the Islamic nations, where the extreme Islamist groups had challenged their Islamic governments. They differ in political views had worsened the turmoil in the Islamic nations, and more wars between the Muslim group have occurred. Mahathir argues that Western propaganda also contributed to the fragment in the Muslim community. Mahathir argues that democracy system does not mean it is a good governing system and it is not suitable for Islamic countries. This information can be found explicitly, for example, *"... hampir semua Kerajaan negara Islam di dunia yang memilih demokrasi menghadapi masalah dan tidak dapat dibangunkan. Sebabnya ialah kerana sistem demokrasi seperti yang diamalkan sekarang bukanlah sistem asal negara Islam. Dalam sejarah Islam sistem pemerintahan yang digunakan ialah sistem feudal dan autokratik. Justeru itu negara Islam dan rakyatnya yang mencuba sistem demokrasi berparti hampir semuanya menjadi tidak stabil dan pembangunan tidak dapat diadakan ..."* (26.12.2000, Perutusan Hari Raya Aidilfitri).

Besides, Mahathir stresses that the Islamic nations were always in wars and conflicts, but some of the wars were supported and encouraged by Western countries. Mahathir argues that the West initiated some wars in the Muslim community for their own interests and propaganda. The West often supports those wars by claiming that they were fighting for democracy and human rights in the Middle East. Mahathir argues that the West was only encouraging Muslims to fight, and it will not solve their conflicts. The wars also will not help to stop those Muslim extremists, but it will spark more anger and frustration of the extremists. In the end, the turmoil will only be weakening the Islamic governments and people in the Islamic nations will continue to be killed, torture, oppressed, and poor.

(2) Injustice of Western

Mahathir says that the Western often treat the Muslim world injustice. The West often used their democracy, human rights, and freedom of speech to pressure the Islamic nations. Whenever the Islamic governments made any decision that was not respecting the people's voice or against human rights, the West will always be criticizing the Islamic governments and put pressure on them. The West also allowed their non-government organization (NGOs) to interfere the Islamic affairs, especially those related to human rights. Mahathir argues that the West is trying to convert the Islamic nation's system into the Western political system so that the West can easily control the Muslims. Even if the Muslim leaders tried to express their concern and justification, the West often would be ignored and rejected all the ideas from the Muslims. This information can be found as an inference, when Mahathir tries to give examples of the situations faced by Muslims, such as Muslims in Palestine and Bosnia. for example, *"... kita tidak boleh lupa bahawa Israel didirikan di atas wilayah Arab Palestin oleh kuasa-kuasa Barat. Kerana ingin menebus dosa mereka membunuh enam juta orang Yahudi di Eropah, orang Arab diusir dari wilayah mereka supaya sebuah negara Yahudi dapat didirikan di Palestin. Inilah bangsa-bangsa yang sering bercakap berkenaan keadilan ..."* (15.12.2001, Perutusan Hari Raya Aidilfitri).

Mahathir believes that Western democracy and Western values are a democracy and justice all the time. He argues that the West often

abused their power and value to oppress the weak nations and used those accuses to achieve their own interests. Mahathir criticizes that the West often claimed that their interference in the Middle East was based on democracy and human rights values. However, when an Islamic nation was intervened by other countries or Muslims been killed by non-Muslims, the West often kept silent and did not do anything to stop those injustice acts. He uses Western human rights and democracy to defend the position of Palestine and the Muslims in Bosnia. Mahathir argues that clearly the Palestinians were killed and torture by Israel, but the West did not do anything to help the Palestinians. Instead, the West claimed that the acts of Israel were just self-defend from the Muslim extremists. The same goes for the Bosnia-Herzegovina ethnic cleansing. The West did not stop the Serbs from the massacre of the Muslims in Bosnia. Most of the Islamic nations who were the members of the United Nations had called for action from the international community. However, none of the big powers from the West takes any action to help the Palestinians and Muslims in Bosnia. For example, *"… today we are seeing the same thing happening to Democracy. It has become an excuse for applying sanctions, denying food and medicine, and finally to war against innocent people, killing and maiming them, invading and occupying their countries. The wishes of the majority are negated by the veto of one, even as it talks about promoting democratic processes. And we can expect more changes to the application of democracy until a dictatorship of democracy eventually destroys the great ideals …"* (22.09.2003, Islam and the Ummah: Reexamining and Reinventing Ourselves in the Face of New Challenges).

Western propaganda was further developed with the Western media's influences. The misunderstanding of Islam by the non-Muslims was even reinforced by western media reporting. The Western media also used their news reporting to create pressure on the Islamic nation governments on the issues against the Western values. With the western prejudices, stereotypes, and anti-Muslim propaganda, Mahathir argues that the western media reporting was portraying the Muslims and Middle East countries negatively. What the westerners might know about the Muslims in the Middle East region were always in wars and conflicts, people that commit terrorism activities, poor and backward. This information was

presented explicitly, for example, *"… today, world media is hugely Western dominated. They are not controlled by the Governments of the West of course, at least not overtly, but their views reflect Western bias, Western policies. Quite often Western views are anti-Muslims. And the media willingly propagate this anti-Muslim views …"* (30.06.2000, The International Seminar and Dialogue on 'Enhancing the Understanding of Islam for the Media').

4.2 Agenda-Setting

The second functions of political languages are agenda-setting. This section will examine Mahathir's speeches by using agenda-setting and expanded with priming effects, which had been discussed in Chapter 2. The discussion of this section will focus on how Mahathir set the agenda specifically on Muslim identity. Each topic will first discuss how Mahathir set and control over the information dissemination for the Muslim identity (agenda-setting), and then the will examine how Mahathir primed his agenda based on repetition and frequency of the information (priming effects). Based on the finding in the 4.2.1 Information Dissemination, this study found three agenda-setting topics in Mahathir's speeches

> 4.2.1 Correct Interpretations of Islam
>
> 4.2.2 Peace in Islam
>
> 4.2.3 Correcting the Image of Islam and Muslims

4.2.1 Correct Interpretations of Islam

The first topic in agenda-setting is the "misinterpretations of Islam" by Muslim themselves. In Mahathir's speeches, he highlights the misinterpretations of Islam is the main causes of Muslims' problems in the modern era and this topic often projected negatively, such as the Muslims were weak, poor, backward, oppress, unable to protect themselves, lack of knowledge and always depending on non-Muslims for aids. This information can be found in most of Mahathir's speeches for his agenda-setting, specifically in speeches that addressed during religion events and

Islamic conferences. This agenda-setting information can consistently found in his whole premiership from 1981-2003 and 2018-2020.

Mahathir argues that Islamic teachings are not the reason that caused the Muslims today weak and backward, but is the Muslims who misinterpreted the meanings and messages the teachings of Islam. He believes that the *Quran* is perfect for all times and will never be wrong. He argues that history had proven that Islamic teachings had successfully transformed the backward Jahilliah Arabs into the most powerful and highly respected society in the 7th century. Mahathir often used the story of the Arabs to justify that Islamic teachings are not merely about religious duties, but it is a complete way of life for the Muslims. The *Quran* says that a Muslim must always balance his religious duties and contribute to society; this including to acquire secular knowledge, modernise their society and always prepared to defend themselves and religion from their enemies. Mahathir controls the information that Islam was the factors that brought the Arabs to become highly civilised society and once dominated parts of Western Europe for almost 700 years. He believes that Islam not only brought positive religious values to the Muslims, but Islam also convinced past the Muslims emphasised on development and modernisation of their society. Islam religion and its teachings had allowed the Muslims between the 7th century and 15th century became a modernized and the most successful civil society in history.

However, the glory of Islamic civilisation slowly declined due to the misinterpretations of Islamic teachings. Mahathir argues that misinterpretations of Islam were the fault of the Ulamas interpreted the teachings wrongly, either intentionally or unintentionally. The Ulamas afraid of the secular knowledge and modernisation will threaten their influential in Islam, especially when more Muslims were educated and intelligent. The Ulamas saw that as a threat to them when more Muslims were knowledgeable and critical thinking. As a result, the Ulamas misinterpreted the contents in the *Quran* to achieve their agenda by making their followers believe that Islam is only emphasising on religious duties. The Ulamas categorised secular knowledge and modernisation as prohibited in Islam and against their religious teachings. Mahathir claims that those Ulamas with self-interests were

the one who purposely misinterpreted the *Quran* and caused the Muslims today are weak and backward. He argues that the Muslims ignored the importance of *fardhu kifayah* in Islamic teachings, where the Muslims are responsible for acquiring secular knowledge and modernising their society.

Besides, the declined of Islamic civilisation was also due to the different interpretations of the *Quran*. Mahathir argues that the various interpretations had caused the fracture in Muslim society and divided the Muslims into different sects. He criticises those Muslim leaders who have political motivation often misused the teachings to gain supports from the Muslims. Mahathir referred them as the political Islamists. The political Islamists often fight for their own interests and powers. They understand that Islam religion is influential in the Muslim society, and Islamic teachings had become the political tools for them to gain supports. They intentionally misinterpreted the Islamic teachings based on their agenda and used it to influence those Muslims who had less knowledge in Islam. This political interests had divided the Muslims into various sects with different interpretations of Islam. Some interpretations were exceedingly far away from the original contexts in the *Quran* with radical beliefs. Mahathir often clarifies that there is only one Islam religion, some might be right, some might be wrong, or both might be wrong. Even there are differs in the interpretations, the contexts should not be far different if the interpretations were quoted from the same *Quran*.

As a result, in most of Mahathir's discourses, he often highlights the importance of reinterpreting the teachings correctly and not only focusing on religious duties. Although Mahathir often addressed the weaknesses and problems of the world Muslims negatively, his primary agenda is not to demotivate or criticise people or religion. In fact, his agenda is to correct the current mistakes and mindset of the Muslims who believed in the wrong teachings, as well as to restore the reputation and dignity of the Muslims and Islam. Mahathir believes that correct interpretations of Islam is the only way for Muslims to overcome their weaknesses and balance their responsibilities to religion and society. This study further examines this topic and found out Mahathir's argument of all times was mainly priming three groups of information:

4.2.1.1 Islam Will Never Be Wrong

4.2.1.2 fardhu kifayah

4.2.1.1 Islam Will Never Be Wrong

Mahathir frequently primes that Islam will never be wrong. He argues that the wrong interpretations of Islamic teachings by the Ulamas and political Islamic had caused the Muslims today weak and backward. The Muslims misunderstood that the Islamic teachings were only focusing on performing religious duties such as worship, fasting, and *zakat*. Mahathir justified that Islam is not merely for religious worship, but it is a way of life – *Ad-deen*. A way of life should also include the responsibility of Muslims to Muslim society during their current life. Mahathir repeatedly says that the actual Islamic teachings did not ask the Muslims to merely care about merit in their *akhirat* (afterlife), but the *Quran* emphasized a Muslim must balance his responsibility for *akhirat* and current life. Mahathir believes that this mistake is caused by those who intentionally interpret the teachings according to their interests and political agenda. For example, *"… but then came those who preached exclusive dedication to akhirat. They even condemned this world as being created by Allah only for the infidels who they said would enjoy life in this world but will be damned in the hereafter. As this teaching spread Muslims began to lose interest in learning other than those subjects designated as religious …"* (06.09.1996, The RISEAP 9th General Assembly/15th Anniversary Celebration).

to the weakness of Muslims themselves in interpreting the *Quran* and also

Besides, Mahathir primes that the original Islamic teachings are also difficult to fully interpret because of the Arabic language written in the *Quran* was hard for ordinary people to understand. If a Muslim has narrow religious knowledge, then he will have difficulty to understand the contents and meaning of the *Quran*. Hence, most of the Muslims are merely relying on the interpretations and translations of the Ulamas to understand the *Quran*. Mahathir argues if the interpretations of the Ulamas were wrong, then the Islamic teachings that been spread to other Muslim believers will not be the same as the original message in the *Quran*. In addition, most believers were also too afraid to question the trustworthy of

the interpretations and they choose to believe the words of their religious teachers. Mahathir often urged his Muslim audience should not always fully believes in all interpretations of the Ulamas, but they should always examine and rethink the contents of every interpretation. He stresses that if there is confusion or misunderstanding on the interpretation, the Muslims should always return to the *Quran* and seek answers. For example, *"… Al-Quran tidak silap. Tetapi pentafsir, sebagai manusia biasa, walaupun terpelajar dalam bidang agama dengan mendalam masih boleh membuat tafsiran yang salah …"* (18.07.2003, Majlis Pelancaran Al-Quran Mushaf Malaysia).

4.2.1.2 fardhu kifayah

Second, Mahathir often primed the information of *fardhu kifayah* or the responsibility of Muslims to the Muslim society. Mahathir seldom mentions the phrase *"fardhu kifayah"* directly in his speeches; however, his arguments often touched on to the responsibility of Muslims to the Muslim society. Mahathir primes that Muslims were ignoring their responsibility to the community (*fardhu kifayah*), and they only care about their religious duties and merit in the afterlife (*fardhu 'ain*). He argues that both responsibilities are equally important for Muslims, and they should balance their responsibility in both the current life and *akhirat*. In his view, he believes that a Muslim is belonging to himself only but is to the Muslim community as a whole. For example, *"… the Muslim belongs not just to himself. He belongs to the Muslim community, the ummah. The well- being of the ummah is the responsibility of all the members of the Muslim community. If that well-being is not taken care of by the individuals or collectively by the community, then every Muslim in the community would have sinned. That is what is meant by "fardhu kifayah" …"* (22.09,2003, Islam and the Ummah: Reexamining and Reinventing Ourselves in the Face of New Challenges).

There are different kinds of responsibilities in *fardhu kifayah*; however, in Mahathir's speeches, he often emphasized the responsibility for the Muslims to acquire knowledge, to defend the Muslims and Islam religion, and to modernise their society. He believes that secular knowledge will help to develop their community, nations, and allowed Muslims to develop their own modern

technology. He primes that Muslims in the modern day is lack of modern technology and knowledge that will improve the well-being of world Muslims such as producing foods and produces. He argues that advance technologies are also essential for the Islamic nations to develop their own warfare technology so that they can to protect and defend themselves from their enemies.

Besides, Mahathir also primes that the Muslims (in the late 20th century) were weak in knowledge and skills, the Muslims are too weak to defend and protect themselves and other Muslim brotherhood from their enemies, and most of the Islamic nations are under-developed. Hence, *Fardhu kifayah* is important information in Mahathir's discourses because he used it to remind his Muslim audience that the misinterpretations of Islamic teachings had weakness the Muslims for a long time. The study found that *fardhu kifayah is* significant for Mahathir to prime his ideas. He believes that the world Muslims and Islamic nations have the potential to regain their status in the modern world and to protect the reputation of Islam if the Muslims can interpret the teachings correctly and fulfil their responsibility to Muslim society. For example, *"... the fact that a third of the world's population is Muslims and they inhabit the less developed parts of the world today shows how much Muslims are dependent on the others for their well-being. The image of the Muslims today compared to the period of excellence during and immediately after the time of the Prophet (s.a.w.) is most distressing. This is far from what Islam promises and expects of us, and today Muslims are a deprived group, generally lacking in resources and capability. Their image is not the image of a people who are strong in faith, progressive, united, tolerant and knowledgeable. No doubt the orientalists have to some extent painted a wrong picture of Islam dan Muslims, but Muslim themselves, in their orientation and conduct, have not done much to erase this tarnished image ..."* (02.06.1983. The Opening of the International Conference on Islam and Technology).

4.2.2 Peace in Islam

The second topic for agenda-setting is peace in Islam. Mahathir regularly discusses the turmoil and unpeaceful situation within the Muslim community and Islamic countries. He often argues that the Muslims were dividing

themselves into a few different groups, often fights with each other, and most of the Islamic nations are not united. The turmoil had been happening in the Muslim world for a few decades, many Muslims were killed in their civil wars and infrastructures were destroyed. The Islamic governments spend much of their resource into the wars and invested less in their national and human resources developments. As a result, most of the Islamic nations today are weak, poor, backward, underdevelop, and need to rely on foreign aids and donations. Mahathir controls of the information that the turmoil in Muslim society is another biggest problems facing by the world Muslim. He believes that the turmoil required a mutual understanding and resolution between the Muslims community and Muslims leaders to maintain peace in Islam.

Mahathir argues that the fundamental teachings of Islam emphasized peace and tolerance. Muslims must always seek a peaceful resolution with their Muslim brothers and non-believers, except if they are required to defend themselves from their enemies' attacks. However, this message had been ignored by many Muslims and Muslim leaders. Their fights had divided the Muslims into different sects with different interpretations of Islamic teachings. This division between Muslims sects caused them unable to compromise with other sects' beliefs and interpretations of Islam. Every sect claimed that their beliefs are the original interpretations of Islam that brought by the Prophet during the pre-Islam era. Mahathir often justifies that there is only one Islam religion and one version of the *Quran* during the Prophet's time. However, the Muslims interpreted the teachings differently based on their own interests and interpretations. Some of the Muslims or Ulamas had a narrow understanding of Islam interpreted the teachings are merely for religious duties; some political Islamists or extremists misused the teachings to justify their political actions and violent acts.

Mahathir stresses that Islam never will wrong, but misinterpretations had caused the turmoil in the Muslim community for a few decades and affected the peace in Islam. In most cases, the mistake in the interpretations had motivated the Muslims to choose chaotic ways to solve their problems by fighting with their Muslim brotherhood who have different beliefs in Islam. Mahathir controls over the information that the "peace" value in Islam has

been manipulated into different interpretations by the Ulamas and political Islamists. They argue that any beliefs that are different from their sect are un-Islam. They interpreted the "peace" value means the Muslims are allowed to fight with other Muslim sects to maintain the actual teachings and bring peace in Islam. As a result, the Muslims today are confused with the Islam religion and often fight just because they had different beliefs in Islam. They refused to accept each other beliefs even though they are all Muslims who believed in the same Islam religion. With that, Mahathir controls over the information that the turmoil in Islam was the mistakes caused by the Ulamas and political Islamists who misinterpreted the Islamic teachings for their political agenda and personal interests.

Mahathir believes that the turmoil had damaged the reputation of Islam, and non-Muslims had misunderstood Islam as an extreme religion. Mahathir argues that the Muslim world is often synonymous with the most backward never in peace, Islamic nations often in wars, people were killed, tortured, raped, forced to leave their own land, and often seek for asylum in non-Muslim countries. However, none of the Muslims or Islamic nations was willing to resolve and end the turmoil in the Muslim world. Muslim leaders and politicians are more interested in fighting for their benefits and powers. Mahathir often criticizes those Islamic nations' leaders who focus much on their political agenda, and less effort was made in resolving their problems and developments in their countries.

In the 1990s, Mahathir controls over the information that terrorism and violent resolution is not the way of Islam and it is against the fundamental teachings of Islam. This is because terrorism became more frequently committed by extreme Muslims and non-Muslims marked the Muslims as terrorists. Those terrorist attacks not only happened in Islamic countries, but the terrorists also extended their attacks to other non-Muslims nations in the name of Islam. Mahathir argues that the acts of terror had further worsened the turmoil in the Muslim community and bring more damages to the image of Islam. Islam and terrorism are often interrelated in the Western perspective, and the Western often framed all terrorist's attacks were made by the Muslim terrorists. The Western and its media had often labelled the Muslims as "Muslim terrorists" or "Muslim extremists". These labels were no longer

used only to refer those Muslims who committed terror acts, but it had become a generalized term for whole Muslim society.

Besides, the non-Muslims also misunderstood the "Islam fundamentalist" is extreme ideologies and believe that all Muslims are extremists. Mahathir always argues that only small groups of Muslims who are not following the real Islamic teaching had polluted the entire Islam religion and other Muslims around the world. This had motivated Mahathir began to prime the Muslim extremists and terrorism were not the real Muslims who following the fundamental teachings of Islam. He tries to separate the extreme Islamists from the entire Muslim world and justified that only a small group of Muslims were involved in terrorism activities. He repeatedly claims that most of the Muslims around the globe are trying to maintain peace in their region. Only small groups of Muslims who choose to used violence settlements for their problem. He frequently labels those Muslim terrorists as the enemy of Islam, and their actions are un-Islam. For example, *"… the Muslim community suffers from a different malady. Weak and oppressed, suffering all kinds of psychological ailments, many seek solace and escape in esoteric religious practices. In so doing, they interpret Islam in unIslamic ways. Because of this, Islam and the Muslim have acquired a bad name. It is regarded as a millstone around the neck of the followers, retarding their development. It has become associated with unprincipled practices such as terrorism and injustices to their co-religionists and the followers of other religions. It has split them into warring factions, causing untold misery and carnage among them. And it has brought this great humanising religion to disrepute. Muslims are no longer in control of their destiny. They are being manipulated and made the tools and proxies for the conflicts of others. And they suffer this willingly, blaming others and blaming fate …"* (14.09.1993, Seminar on Muslim and Christian Minds).

This study argues that Mahathir's objectives on this agenda-setting topic are to urge the Muslims to end their fight for personal, unite the world Muslims and focus on developing their society. He often draws attention to these issues in the international Islamic conferences and meeting that the turmoil in Islam needed immediate actions in order to achieve peace in the Muslim world. In Mahathir's

speeches, he believes that political Islam and lack of unity among the Muslims as the leading causes for the turmoil in Muslim society today. Thus, the following section will be discussing how Mahathir uses the information of "political Islam" and "unity" as the priming effects in his speeches on Muslim identity.

4.2.2.1 Political Islam

First, Mahathir primes that "political Islam" is the factor that caused the turmoil in Muslims. According to Mahathir, political Islam is about using Islam for political agenda and purposes. He states that political Islam in history happened after the death of the Prophet. The Muslims split themselves into different groups with different interpretations of Islam. The fragments in Islam become intense when the political Islamists intend to gain powers in politics. Mahathir justifies that the political Islamists are often also the Ulamas who knowledgable in Islamic teachings; however, not all of them were able to interpret the contexts of the *Quran* correctly. Some of them purposely misused the teachings in Islam for their political agendas. They understand that Islam religion is the easiest tool for them to gain loyalty from their followers. Hence, the political Islamists often mislead their Muslim followers with their interpretations frequently used the Islamic teachings to justify their actions that involved violence.

Mahathir believes that the political in Islam had divided the Muslims and created various interpretations of the *Quran's* contents. The political Islamists often misused Islam and its teachings to justify and support their political agenda. They also frequently frighten their followers that whoever refused to support their political parties are not the real Muslims and will go to hell in their afterlife. Any Muslims who against them are considered un-Islam and the enemy of Islam. Usually, those Muslim followers who lack of knowledge in Islam will easily get frightened those claims. The followers are willing to accept whatever the political Islamists had informed them without any further questioning. As a result, the followers are willing to fight and sometimes commit violent attacks on other Muslims who rejected their beliefs.

Mahathir argues that this phenomenon was still happening in the 20th century, and the turmoil has been more serious. Political Islam is still a

major problem in some Muslims countries. It had also become an advantage for the extreme political Islamists to influence the Muslim world. They used the weaknesses of the Muslim world to weaken their Islamic government administration in order for them to grab powers. Some claimed themselves as the saver of Islam sent by God to save the Muslims world. Mahathir rejects those self-claimed *Ulamas* or political Islamists and argues that all those claims were proven to be false. Mahathir believes that their irresponsible actions had further weakened the Muslims and more Muslims had a backward mindset. Mahathir often reminds the Muslim world do not politicize Islam religion for personal interests. In his speeches for international Islamic events, he always primes that the Muslims should not let their interests and political agenda or ideology to create any further conflicts between the Muslims. Instead, Mahathir urges the leaders should put their focus more on the developments of Islamic nations and to strengthen the Muslim community. For example, *"… it is clearly important that we do not accept everyone who claims to be an ulama as genuine. Many self- declared ulamas are pretenders with their own self- interest on their agenda. These pretenders have confused the Muslims so much that frequently their practices can hardly be regarded as Islamic. And many Muslim splinter groups were formed because of these false ulamas …"* (10.07.2003. The Opening of World Ulama Conference).

Besides, the Muslim world is always in conflict either with other Muslims or non-Muslims. Mahathir argues that most of the Muslim leaders in the Islamic nations were not fighting for the well-being of their people and Islam religion, but they were fighting for their own interests and grabbing power; they spent much of their resources to purchase weapons and fight against other Muslims who have different beliefs. Mahathir stresses that the conflicts and bad governing in most Islamic nations are weakening their nations' developments, as well as their economy and people's welfare. He always reminded his audience that almost all Muslims in those conflicting countries are now poor, starving, killed, oppressed, and forced to migrate. For example, *"… it is sad that anarchy or at least bad Government prevails today in most Muslim countries. We are quite unstable. Unseemly struggles for power take place everywhere, resulting in millions being killed or forced to migrate,*

properties being destroyed, anarchy prevailing, food being so short that death from starvation becomes almost a regular feature of some Muslim countries. Still the fighting and the conflicts go on simply because one person or one group wants to grab power. It is to our utter shame that the faithful have to appeal to the non-believers to help bring about peace or to feed the starving ..." (17.06.1994. The Opening Ceremony of the World Islamic Civilisation Festival).

4.2.2.2 Peace Values

Second, Mahathir often primes the important of "peace values" in the Muslim world. He argues that Islam always emphasized peace; peace means that all Muslims are brothers, and brother should not fight with others; peace also indicated that the Muslims should always be united. Mahathir often uses the history the Jahilliah Arabs were always warred against each other before the Prophet spread Islam religion to them. After Islam was widely spread and more Arabs turn their faith into Islam, they ended their wars because they believed that Islam rejects war as a solution for conflicts between people. Mahathir stresses that it is Islam that brought peace to the Arabs and united them.

Mahathir believes that Islam is a peaceful religion because it emphasized brotherhood and unity among Muslims. Unfortunately, the message of brotherhood and unity was not interpreted correctly and ignored by the Muslims. They refused to acknowledge that Muslims who have different beliefs in Islam are as their brother. Mahathir always argues there is only one Islam religion, but there are various interpretations of Islam that caused the Muslims today to split into different beliefs and sects. Islam clearly did not divide the Muslims, but it is the Muslims themselves who try to divide among themselves. The Muslims today did not follow the actual teachings in Islam and still fight against each other. They knew that their turmoil would only weaken them, but they still refused to unite and live peacefully together because of different beliefs. For example, *"... "Peace" is the very word that is uttered by Muslims all over the world, from all walks of life, as it is the form of greeting of Muslims. It is therefore incumbent upon all Muslims to promote peace as a way of life in order to achieve development. Finding reasons for fighting each*

other and with others is not Islamic ..." (12.11.2000, The Ninth Islamic Summit Conference).

4.2.2.3 Unity Among Muslims

Mahathir often stresses that Muslims should be aware of outside threats who have bad intention towards the Islamic nations. Mahathir was referring to the non-Muslim countries who intended to weaken the Muslim world for the past few centuries. He argues that the turmoil of the Muslim community will only open up more opportunity for the outside powers to interfere in their Islamic affairs. He explains that most of the Islamic government administrations are weak and their turmoil will cause them incapable of protecting themselves. Besides, the Islamic nations today are mostly undeveloped. Some Islamic nations are rich with natural resources, but the Muslims are unable to utilize their resources, use it to defend Islam and the Muslim countries. The Muslims are mostly poor, unskilled, uneducated, and incapable of contributing to their well-being and countries. Most of the talented Muslims are all migrate out and contributes to other countries.

Hence, Mahathir primes that unity is the best way to overcome the turmoil in Muslim society. He often says that Muslims should not be their own enemy, but they should be united and defend the faith of Islam and their Muslim brotherhood. Mahathir believes that only through unity, the Muslims will gain back their respects and improve the reputation of Besides, Mahathir also believes that unity will ensure more peace and developments in the Islamic nations, especially those underdeveloped countries. He argues that Islamic organization such as the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) plays an important role in promoting unity and cooperation among the member's states. All the Islamic nations should come with shared interests and goals, too ensure that the powers of Islamic nations will be strengthened and united. For example, *"... to begin with, the Governments of all the Muslim countries can close ranks and have a common stand if not on all issues, at least on some major ones, such as on Palestine. We are all Muslims. We are all oppressed. We are all being humiliated. But we who have been raised by Allah above our fellow Muslims to rule our countries have never really tried to act in concerts in order to exhibit at our level the brotherhood and unity that Islam*

enjoins upon us ..." (16.10.2003, The Opening of the Tenth Session of the Islamic Summit Conference).

4.2.3 Correcting the Image of Islam and Muslims

The third topic for agenda-setting is "correcting the image of Islam and Muslims". As discussed frequently in this study, Mahathir argues that Islam is the most misunderstood religion in the world by the Muslims themselves and the non-Muslims. The weaknesses and turmoil of Muslims had caused a negative reputation for Islam. The non-Muslims often prejudice the Muslims are poor and backward people. The negative prejudice towards Muslims became even serious when terrorism becoming more frequently committed by the Muslim extremists in the 1990s. Mahathir controls over the information that the non-Muslims disrespect the Muslim world is mainly the fault of Muslims because the Muslim world failed to show the real values of Islam to the non-believers. The Muslim world today is interpreted by the non-Muslims as weak, backward, poor in everything, always in wars, extremists, terrorists and migrants.

However, Mahathir also argues that the non-Muslims at the same refused to understand the problems facing by the Muslims. Mahathir believes that the non-Muslims prejudice and stereotypes towards Muslims had further narrowed their understanding of Islam. The propaganda of the West on anti-Muslims sentiment are the factors that caused the negative prejudice towards Muslims. Mahathir controls over the information that the negative prejudice was also contributed by non-Muslims due to their own misunderstood of Islam religion and Muslims. In addition, the rapid growth of the information technology industry in the 1990s allowed the western media even further damage the reputation of Islam. Mahathir criticises the Western media only framing the negative side of the Muslim world and refused to provide a fair reporting on the situation of the Muslim world. For example, *"... I hold very strongly to my religion and I regret the perceptions about it both by non-Muslims and Muslims which have lead to Islam and Muslims being vilified, being associated with unsavoury activities and even made fun of. All these perception and vilification are due not to Islam itself but to the interpretations given to it by Muslims and non-Muslims with vested interest, wanting to justify the wrongs that*

they have done or intend to do. Our religion is perfect but we are not perfect ..."
(10.05.1998. Toleration and Moderation in Islam).

In the early period of Mahathir's premiership, the "prejudice of non-Muslims towards Muslims" was not the main focus in his discourses. However, this study found that Mahathir had regularly touched on this topic in the 1990s when the Muslim extremists learnt how to commit terrorist's attacks. In responding to terrorism acts, Mahathir began regularly talks about understanding Islam and Islamic teachings to both Muslims and non-Muslims. After the 9-11 incident, terrorism and Islam had become critical information in his discourses between 2001 and 2003. The study identified that several international events Mahathir allocate most of his speeches to redefine terrorism, Islam religion and Muslims. This evidence shows that the non-Muslims prejudice towards Muslims had become more frequent uses by Mahathir for his agenda-setting function in the 1990s. Hence, this study had identified two primary information that Mahathir used for his priming effects for this agenda: Muslim extremism and western propaganda.

4.2.3.1 Muslim Extremists

First, Mahathir primes that the Muslim extremism had enhanced the negative prejudice of non-Muslims. He believes that the misunderstanding of Islam by the non-Muslims are primary the fault of the Muslims and their extremism mindset on the religion. He argues that Muslims are the one who damaged their own reputation and misunderstood the . The Muslims today care about their responsibility to the religious duties and their afterlife. They pay less attention to their surrounding and ignored the fact that the development of Muslim society is far from other modernize society. They often isolate themselves from the outside world and only focus on Islamic affairs such as their dresses, Islamic laws, the role of the women and other issues. Mahathir argues that the misunderstanding of the Muslims is the results of the misinterpretations of the *Ulamas* and Muslim extremist. The Muslims are no longer able to compete with others non-Muslims. As a result, the non-Muslims had misunderstood that Islam religion is for those weak, poor, backward and radical religious people. For example, *"... sedikit sebanyak sikap `bias` dan prejudis bukan Islam terhadap Islam adalah disebabkan oleh umat Islam*

sendiri.Tindak-tanduk yang radikal dan ekstrim oleh sebilangan kecil umat Islam telah menyebabkan dunia bukan Islam beranggapan bahawa itulah `way of life` atau cara hidup Islam yang dilaungkan ..." (04.11.1993, Perhimpunan Agung UMNO).

Besides, some Muslims are also rejecting other non-Muslims and religions. Mahathir argues that Muslims have built a wall between themselves and other non-believers. This barrier has eventually stopped the outside world to understand the Muslim society and Islam religion. Some interpretations by the *Ulamas* had resulted in the Muslims believed that other non-believers are their enemies. Mahathir often says in his speeches, specifically for the Muslim audience that the *Quran* clearly stated that other non-believers of Islam are not their enemies. Islam does not force any non-believers to convert into a Muslim and practices the Islamic customs. The teaching in Islam often reminds that the Muslims should always be peaceful and tolerant with other Muslims and non-Muslims. However, the teachings of Islam did not understand by the Muslims, and they refused to accept other non-believers and other sects of Muslims. Mahathir believes that the misunderstanding between the Muslims and non-Muslims can be minimized if the Muslim extremism can resolve in the Muslim society. For example, *"... there is a misunderstanding among Muslims regarding the teachings of Islam on relations with non-Muslims is even more obvious. The Quran clearly stated that the Christians are the friends of the Muslims. Indeed, when the first few converts to Islam were persecuted by the Quraish idol- worshippers, they were advised by the Prophet to seek refuge in Christian Abyssinia. The Christian King of Abyssinia protected the Muslim refugees so well that attempts by the Quraish to extradite them failed. If the Sunnis believe in the Traditions, surely being friendly with Christians should be one of their beliefs. But we know that Muslims do not accept this. The `ulamas` explain that the present- day Christians are not the Christians referred to in the Quran. And, therefore, they are justified in regarding all Christians as enemies ..."* (16.04.1996. The Oxford Centre for Islamic Studies Oxford).

4.1.3.2 Western Propaganda

(1) Western Injustice

Mahathir primes that non-Muslims propagate negative ideas about Islam and Muslims. Western propaganda has become the crucial information in Mahathir's speeches when he tries to highlight the intention of the West to weaken Muslim society. He always used Western Europe's anti-Muslims propaganda as an example for his argument. According to Mahathir, the anti-Muslims propaganda started since the Islamic Kingdom conquered some part of Western European region during the Middle Ages. The Europeans during the Middle Ages were weak and backward. On the other hand, the Muslims during that period was at the glorious Islamic civilization that having the most advance knowledge people and their domination finally expanded to Western European. The Europeans during that time were amazed at the Muslims, and they tried to learn the knowledge from the Islamic world. However, there were some of the Europeans intended reclaiming their land.

A few centuries later, the Islamic civilization was slowing declined due to the turmoil in the Muslim world. In contrast, Western Europeans became more advance and knowledgeable people. The Western Europeans ended up becoming more advance in knowledge, military and technology, whereas the Muslims were becoming backwards and weak because of the *Ulamas* and extreme Islamists' influences. As a result, the Western Europeans who against the Muslim's ruling were finally regained their own strength and recaptured their territories from the Muslims Kingdom at the end 15th century. Although the Europeans had reclaimed their land and the Muslims were no longer a threat to them, but the anti-Muslims sentiment was still kept alive until the present day. They fear that if the Muslims regain their strength and the history of the Muslim kingdom domination will be repeated. Hence, they still continue to oppress the Muslims, and the situation lasted for more than 400 years. The Muslims remain weak today, they believe the current life is not for them, and they accepted their fate to be poor, weak and oppressed by their enemies.

Mahathir argues that the misunderstanding by the West has been there since many centuries ago. Even the Muslims and Islamic nations are weak and poor, but the oppression by the West will not end, and they still regarding the Muslims as their enemies. Whenever the Muslims tries to fight back and defend

themselves and Islam religion, the West has negative prejudice towards the Muslims' actions and the fear against the domination of Islam. They also fear that the Muslims have the intention to force convert the non-Muslims into Islam. The west considered every single action of the Muslims were associated with Islam religion. Every mistake or fight back by the Muslims see to be the propaganda under Islam. In fact, Mahathir argues that the Muslims were just trying to protect and free themselves from the oppression of their enemies. However, the Western's prejudice and biases towards Islam had stopped them from understanding the problems of the Muslims. Instead, it just reinforces their anti-Muslims propaganda. For example *"… fear of the Muslims has plagued the Europeans, ever since Islam began to spread in the 7th and 8th centuries. They had mounted Crusades against the Muslims through the centuries. Today it is safe to say that Europeans whether Christians of free thinkers still think of Islam as a threat. It is this thinking, that has poisoned the relations between Europeans and Arabs, whether they are Muslims or not. Not only have Arab territories been seized but whenever there is an excuse they are oppressed …"* (13.12.2002, The Symposium on Islam at the United Nations University).

Besides, Mahathir also primes that Western media often reported the Islamic issues negatively. Mahathir criticises that the West failed to understand the frustration of the extremists and continue pressuring them. Indeed, the Western media further enlarged the frustration acts of the extremists. When the extremists became more aggressive, and terror methods were more frequently used to fight against the West, the West labelled any Muslim groups who were fighting for their freedom and Islamic identity as "Muslim Terrorism". Mahathir argues that even those Muslims who tried to protect themselves and fight for their freedom were also labelled as Muslim terrorists. However, those enemies such as Israel attacked Palestine in a terror way, and the West does not consider Israel attacks were terrorism. The anti-Muslim propaganda and the misinterpretations of the international media had created biased views against the Muslim world. It is not only affecting the extremist groups but also the entire Muslims society and Islamic nations. As a result, the non-Muslims today often made their own prejudice and stereotypes towards the Muslims. Mahathir often primed the western's anti-Muslims propaganda in the 1990s

has damaged the reputation of Islam in the international arena. He often argues that the challenges of the Muslim world today are partly due to the prejudice of the Western world. The negative Muslim stereotype is clear can be seen in Western media after the post-9/11 and it had become accepted in the foreign culture in the West (Sani & Azizuddin, 2013).

(2) Muslim Terrorism

Mahathir primes that the extreme Islamists were frustrated and angry about the oppression of the West. In the 1990s, more of the extremists began to learn violence and terror method to fight against their enemies. Their act of terror not only raised international concerns, but it also worried the Islamic nations. The extremists not only attacking and killing their enemies, but they also killed other Muslims who supported the West and against their beliefs. Since the growth of terrorism in the Middle East, the West was getting more involved with the wars in the Middle East by sending their troops and building military bases. They interfered with the reason of fighting for democracy and human rights for the Islamic nations. The West also pressured the Islamic governments to act more aggressively to those extremists, and some of the governments were forced to accept the Western wishes and instructions.

Mahathir argues that the interference of the West will further anger the extremists and motivate them to go against their Islamic governments. The extremists will use more violence to ensure they successfully grab power from the governments and form their own Islamic way of governs. This will only increase the terrorism acts by those angry extremists. After the 9-11 tragedy, the West had even aggressive pressuring the Muslim world. The West had attacked Afghanistan because they believe that the terrorists were hiding in the countries. The West no longer see the terrorists only involve a small group of Muslims, but they see the whole Muslim world as terrorists and their enemies. They attacked those Islamic nations where they believe that those terrorists were responsible for the 9-11 tragedy. They attacked, bombed and killed many innocent Muslims who were weak and had nothing to do with the tragedy. Mahathir often rejects the attacks of Afghanistan and other Islamic nations as a solution for the act of terror in the Middle East. Instead, Mahathir

believes that the West was directly declaring wars and encouraging more conflicts in the Middle East. He argues that the help from the West did not solve the Muslim world problems, but it even worsens the situation between the Muslims. For example, *"… attacking Afghanistan is not going to result in the killing or capture of the terrorists. Wiping out the Afghans, reducing their country to dust will not wipe out the terrorists. Some may be killed but many others living outside Afghanistan or who have slipped out of Afghanistan would escape unscathed. Safe and alive they can still carry out acts of terror … but certainly the vast majority of the Muslims in whichever country are going to get very angry. And of the many millions of angry Muslims there would be quite a few who would join the ranks of the terrorists and be willing to die to avenge what is to them a gross injustice and cruelty. And so the bombings and rocketing of Afghanistan, far from progressing the war to eliminate terrorists would actually result in the spawning of more terrorists. The world is going to be saddled with the terrorists problem forever. And we don`t know what new villainy they would think of …"* (30.12.2001, The International Conference of Religious Studies: "Meeting the Millennium").

Mahathir himself was against the Muslims who used terrorism to express their frustration and anger towards their enemy. He argues that terrorism is not the way of Islam. However, he also disagreed with the interpretations by the west that terrorist and violence acts committed by some of the Muslims should be linked with their religion. He often questions that why is other terrorist acts committed by other religion believers were not associated with their religion; in fact, if a Muslim committed terrorist' attacks were linked to the Islam religions and labelled him as 'Muslim Terrorists'. For example, *"… but Western historians invariably attributed the spread of Islam to the sword. If we look into the history of Christianity we would find many incidences of violence, torture and burnings at the stake as means to spread the gospel. Muslim historians have never spoken of these instances of violence as being a common feature in the spread of Christianity. Clearly the Europeans tend to forget or ignore their own propensity for violence when they glibly talk of "Muslim Terrorists". They ignore the fact that more Muslims are killed by non-Muslims as in Bosnia Herzegovina then non-Muslims being killed by*

Muslim terrorists. They never ever talk of Christian terrorists or Buddhist terrorists or Hindu terrorists. But they never miss to link the religion of the terrorist if he happens to be Muslim. Such is the extent of their misunderstanding …" (30.12.1999. The International Conference of Religious Studies: Meeting the Millennium).

This label is unfair to the Muslims because the terrorism committed by some Muslim extremists was not the wish of the whole Muslim society. Mahathir argues that the *Quran* emphasised "peace" and those Muslim extremists were not adhering the real Islamic teaching. Hence, Mahathir defended that the extremists' acts should not associate with Islam religions and their acts were mainly due to their own wrong interpretations of the *Quran*. In addition, Mahathir also argues that not all people who fight for their freedom were terrorists. In history, there were many big names such as Jomo Kenyatta, Robert Mugabe, Nelson Mandela and Sam Nujoma that were once a freedom fighter were claimed to be terrorists by their oppressors. However, it is proven that their fight was against the injustice of their oppressors, and they were well respected by the international community today. Mahathir believes that not all Muslim freedom fighters are terrorists, but they just want to free themselves from their oppressors and regain their own independent. For example, *"… we already know that it is entirely possible for freedom fighters struggling against oppression to be mistaken for and to be deliberately labeled as terrorists by their oppressors. Thus Jomo Kenyatta, Robert Mugabe, Nelson Mandela, Sam Nujoma were all labeled as terrorists, were hunted and faced jail sentences if they were captured. But we know that today they are accepted as respected leaders of their countries. Clearly today`s terrorists may be re-designated freedom fighters tomorrow and today`s freedom fighters may become terrorists the next day depending on circumstances. If we hunt everyone whom some people refer to as terrorists we may be doing a great deal of injustice …"* (01.04.2002, The Extraordinary Session of the Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers on Terrorism).

4.3 Interpretation and Linkage

The third functions of political languages are interpretation and linkage. This function will examine how Mahathir frames his information with other events or situations. This section will also be adding framing effects, which had been discussed in Chapter 2, to analyze the interpretation and linkage function further. This section will be divided into three topics based on the finding in 4.2.2 agenda-setting:

4.3.1 Correct Interpretations of Islam

4.3.2 Peace in Islam

4.3.3 Correcting the Image of Islam and Muslims

4.3.1 Correct Interpretations of Islam

The first interpretation and linkage functions are the misinterpretations of Islam by Muslims. Mahathir often links the misinterpretations of Islam with the problems of Muslims in the modern-day. Throughout both of Mahathir premierships, he uses the same keywords, information, stories and arguments to frames the effects of misinterpretations of Islamic teachings on the Muslims. The study identified two important interpretation and linkage found in Mahathir's discourses:

4.3.1.1 The Ulamas

4.3.1.2 Secular knowledge

4.3.1.1 The Ulamas

Mahathir regularly links the interpretations of Islam with the Ulamas of the religious teachers. He argues that the backwardness of Muslims in the modern-day is due to the mistake and narrow understanding of Islam by the Ulamas. The "misinterpretations of Islam" and the "Ulamas" were often served as a "reality creation" in his arguments. He creates the reality that the Ulamas are the one who responsible for the confusion and misinterpretations in the Islamic teachings. Mahathir believes that the different understanding in Islam had become the major reason for the fragment between Muslims. For example, *"... tidak akan wujud fahaman yang berbeza-beza yang memecah-belah dan mengasingkan orang Islam*

jika tidak kerana ajaran oleh mereka [ulama] yang menyalahtafsirkan ajaran Islam secara sedar atau sengaja ..." (08.11.1991, Perhimpunan Agung UMNO).

Mahathir's argument shows the element of "control over the definition", where he frames the Ulamas interpreted the Islamic teachings based on their interests. He argues that those extreme Ulamas (and also the political Islamists) interpret the Islamic teachings according to their political agenda or to gain supports from their supporters. As a result, they interpreted the teachings of Islamic merely as the responsibility for the religion (*fardhu 'ain*) and to gain merit for the Muslims' afterlife. This argument can be found when Mahathir tries to define and contrast the actual Islamic teachings and the misinterpretations of the Ulamas. For example, *"... many self-declared Ulamas are pretenders with their self-interest on their agenda. These pretenders have confused the Muslims so much that frequently their practices can hardly be regarded as Islamic. And many Muslim splinter groups were formed because of these false ulamas ..."* (10.07.2003, The Opening of World Ulama Conference).

In addition, Mahathir often framed that the *Quran* is the perfect guide in every aspect of a Muslim's life. He argues that the *Quran* will never be wrong, but the Muslims who interpret the teachings will make mistakes. The *Quran* is still the same as the time of the Prophet, but the Muslims today are different from the Muslims in the early years of Islam. This "control over definition" element can be found in religious speeches (08.01.1995, Majlis Perasmian Seminar Al-Quran Antarabangsa Kali Ke-5; 18.07.2003, Majlis Pelancaran Al-Quran Mushaf Malaysia) and also international events (08.11.1986, The RISEAP Fourth General Assembly; 10.05.1998, Toleration and Moderation in Islam; 16.10.2003, The Opening of the Tenth Session of the Islamic Summit Conference). Mahathir believes that if the current generation of Muslims follows the actual teachings of Islam, they will not be backward and oppressed people in the world. The misinterpretations made the Muslims believe that the current life is not for them and they do nothing to change their faith. They accepted to be weak, backward and oppressed in their current life. Mahathir in his speeches frequently argues that the Muslims should help themselves by changing their current faith, rather than just praying to God for him to save the

Muslims. For example, "… *we rely merely on praying to Allah for help when Allah has said in the Quran that we have to help ourselves first before he will help us. Allah has said in the Quran that we have to help ourselves first before he will help us*" (22.09.2003, Islam and the Ummah: Reexamining and Reinventing Ourselves in the Face of New Challenges).

> "… *God has given us the faculty to think and over and over again in the Quran He has exhorted us to think, that is to use our faculty to reason. Even when we refer to the Quran and the Hadith for guidance reason has to be used. If sometimes we differ in our interpretations, it does not follow that one is right and the other is wrong. It may well be that both are right or both are wrong. The important thing is that we study, we analyse and we [interpret] with [sincerity], without prejudice or self-interest …*"

(Mohamad, 1986)[1]

4.3.1.2 Secular knowledge

Mahathir links "knowledge" (secular and religious) with the correct interpretations of Islam. According to Mahathir, knowledge for the Muslims today is only associated with religious knowledge and rejects other non-religion. The misinterpretations of the Ulamas [and the political Islamists], either directly or indirectly, divided knowledge into religious knowledge and secular knowledge. Knowledge was reflected as "control over the definition" where Mahathir justifies that knowledge in Islam means bother secular and religious. In other words, knowledge in Islam does not limit only to religion, but also the knowledge that able to develop the Muslim society, such as sciences and technology, medicine, administrations, laws, defence, etc. For instance, "… *Islam yang menyentuh segala bidang dunia dan akhirat, tetapi juga ilmu- ilmu sains, perubatan, pentadbiran, undang-undang, pertahanan, pelayaran dan berbagai-bagai lagi dikaji dan diterokai*

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[1] Speech 63: 05.03.1986. THE OPENING CEREMONY OF THE INTERNATIONAL ISLAMIC SYMPOSIUM.

sehingga orang Islam mendahului orang lain di dunia ...” (16.11.1992, Perhimpunan Agung UMNO).

To encounter the misunderstanding of knowledge, Mahathir frames knowledge as one of the important messages in Islam - *Iqraa* or to read. He argues that acquiring knowledge is the duty of all Muslims and it is mentioned in the *Quran.* This information shows the element of "control over the definition" when Mahathir defines "*Iqraa*" does not mean only reading the *Quran,* but it meant to read and study about knowledge other than religion (15.05.1984, Majlis Pembukaan Musabaqah Membaca Al-Quran Peringkat Kebangsaan). Mahathir also uses this information to frame that secular knowledge allowed the Jahiiliah Arabs to shift from the most backward communities into the greatest civilization of all times. After Islam was spread to the Arabs, they became people who achieved in all fields of knowledge such as arts, sciences, medicine, astronomy and others.

Another "control over the definition" example found in Mahathir's speeches is the "preparation horses and swords for defending", where he quoted from the *Quran*. He interprets this message as a reminder for the Muslims must always be prepared to defend themselves and the Islam religion from their enemies' attacks. He argues that "horses and swords" are no longer applicable in modern-day warfare, however, "horses and swords" should be interpreted into modern warfare weapons such as jets, cannons, rockets, warships, and others. He defines that these modern weapons are required secular knowledge such as science, mathematic and arts. This information can be found in speeches, such as 01.12.1994, Perasmian Majlis Tilawah Al-Quran Peringkat Kebangsaan Kali Ke-37 Tahun 1415H/1994M; 21.01.2003, Muslim Unity in the Face of Challenges and Threats; and 19.12.2019, Keynote Address at KL Summit 2019.

This information is also used in his speeches as "reality creation" to create the reality that secular knowledge is important for modernizing the Muslim community. For example, *"... We know that following upon the spread of Islam among the backward Arabs, they became a great people who mastered all kinds of knowledge and skills which enabled them to go forth and spread the teachings to almost the whole of the known world then. A glorious and powerful*

ummah emerged which enhanced the influence and power of Islam. Muslims lived a gracious life, honoured and respected by everyone and master of all the skills and knowledge known to men then ..." (02.02.1991, The Opening of the 4th International Seminar on the Al-Quran).

Next, the element of "manipulate of expectation" is also found when Mahathir frames knowledge will contribute to the modernization and development of Muslim society. Mahathir believes that the misinterpretations of Islam resulting in the Muslim world today ignored acquiring knowledge and they are weak in everything such as developments, technologies and economics. Most of the time, the Muslims needed to rely on the knowledge of the non-Muslims for their food, transportation, security, medicine and even religious duties. Mahathir creates the non-existing reality in his speeches where he argues that modernization and industrialization able to improve their life. He frames that modern technology will benefit the Muslims' welfare and performing their religious duties such as printing the *Quran*, transportations to travel to Mecca, infrastructures for building mosques and others. This information can be interpreted through his interpretations of the Islamic teachings, for example, "*... similarly we are enjoined by Islam to seek knowledge. A well-known hadith states that we must seek knowledge even from China. At the time of the Prophet what was the knowledge available in China? Certainly not about Islam. China had at that time already developed a good system of Government, great scientific knowledge, a high level of agriculture. They had produced paper and ink and explosives and a variety of scientific instruments ...*" (19.07.2002, The International Forum on Islam, KALIF 2002).

4.3.2 Peace in Islam

The second interpretation and linkage function are the peace in Islam. The study found that Mahathir's linkage in this section is related to unity and peace among the Muslim society. This section will discuss how Mahathir links the turmoil in Muslim society with the following issues:

4.3.2.1 Fragment of Muslims

4.3.2.2 Islam in Malaysia

4.3.2.1 Fragment of Muslims

Mahathir links the fragment of Muslim with the peace in Islam. Mahathir argues that the fragment in the Muslim world had caused the Muslims are weak, divided and easy to oppress by non-Muslims. The Muslims had split themselves into different sects and often disagreed with each other. Mahathir argues the fragment of Muslims are causing the Muslim community and Islamic nations are in an unpeaceful situation. This information was presented as "reality creation" where Mahathir frames the unpeaceful in the Muslim world had caused many innocent Muslims who not involved in the wars or conflicts where been killed, tortured, and wounded. For example, "... *We must atone now for our sins. We must stop the drive towards fragmenting the Ummah. We must stop the semantics and the polemics. A religion without adherents is no religious. Already millions of Muslims have been lost. Some die of starvation even as other Muslims waste food. Some are killed in fratricidal wars. Some forsake Islam because Muslims forsake them in their hour of need. Some have lost their land to the enemies of Islam. For these people Islam no longer exists. For many it is the faith of a people who have disappeared from this earth ...*" (05.03.1986, The Opening Ceremony of the International Islamic Symposium).

The fragment in the Muslim world also caused the Muslims to become weak and Islamic nations were mostly less-developed. Mahathir believes that the unpeaceful situation will not help the Islamic nations to pursue developments because they spent much time and resources to fight with each other. This information is also presented as "reality creation" to show the Muslims today are weak, oppressed, and Islamic nations are not developed, backward and poor (ex. 31.10.1996, Majlis Perasmian Tilawah Al-Quran Peringkat Kebangsaan yang Ke-39; and 05.03.2001, Perutusan Hari Raya Aidilfitri). Besides, Mahathir also regularly uses the past Jahilliah Arabs fragments and conflicts to interpret the current Muslim situation. He argues that Islam brought peace, Muslim brotherhood and united the Arabs. In contrast, if the Muslims follow the actual teachings of Islam, they will not fight against other Muslims. For example *"... we know that the Jahilliah Arabs were given to feuding, to killing each other simply because they were from different tribes.*

The Prophet preached the brotherhood of Islam to them and they were able to overcome their hatred for each other, become united and helped towards the establishment of the great Muslim civilisation. Can we say that what the Jahilliah (the ignorant) could do we, the modern Muslims cannot do? If not all at least some of us can do. If not the renaissance of our great civilisation, at least ensuring the security of the ummah…" (16.10.2003, The Opening of the Tenth Session of the Islamic Summit Conference).

4.3.2.2 Islam in Malaysia

Mahathir links the peace in Islam with Islam in Malaysia. This study found that the way Mahathir frames Malaysia is different from the international audience and the domestic audience. For the international audience, Mahathir frames Malaysia as a peaceful Islamic nation and Muslims in Malaysia were following the fundamental teachings of Islam and emphasized peace and unity with other Muslims and non-Muslims. Mahathir argues that Malaysia had proven that if the Muslims follow the fundamental teachings of Islam and interpret the *Quran* correctly, the Muslim world will be able to maintain peace and civilize. Islam in Malaysia presented as "reality creation", for example, *"… yet today Malaysia, still under a Muslim dominated Government, is peaceful, stable and prosperous, growing at 8 percent per annum for almost 10 years. The Muslims of Malaysia are apparently not terrorists. Indeed, they have proven themselves capable of living and working with non- Muslims to create a united and progressive nation. There are no feuds in Malaysia; not between Muslims nor between Muslims and non-Muslims. The official religion of Malaysia is Islam but Buddhist, Hindu, and Taoist temples and Christian churches are to be seen everywhere …"* (16.04.1996, The Oxford Centre for Islamic Studies Oxford).

On the other hand, for the Malaysia audience, Mahathir uses the example of turmoil in some Islamic nations to frames the importance of unity among the Muslims and non-Muslims in Malaysia. He frames the conflicts in the other Islamic nations to contrast with the peaceful situation in Malaysia. He uses words, such as other Muslims were killed, tortured, oppressed, etc. to link with the conflicts in other Islamic nations (ex. 25.03.1993, Perutusan Hari Raya Aidilfitri). This

information is presented in "reality creations, for example, *"... umat Islam di Malaysia seharusnya bersyukur kerana dengan izin Allah Subhanahu wa Ta'ala kita semua dapat hidup dalam keadaan aman damai. Keadaan ini membolehkan kita bukan sahaja membuat amal ibadat kita dengan sempurna, tetapi juga dapat mengadakan majlis-majlis agama tanpa gangguan dan sekatan. Keadaan ini berbeza sekali dengan nasib yang menimpa saudara-saudara Islam kita di kebanyakan tempat di dunia ini, di mana mereka dibunuh, diseksa, tidak bebas mengamalkan ibadat dan menghadapi berbagai-bagai kesulitan seperti kebuluran dan pengusiran dari wilayah mereka ..."* (04.01.1993, Majlis Perasmian Tilawah Al-Quran Peringkat Kebangsaan Ke-35).

4.3.3 Correcting the Image of Islam and Muslims

The third interpretation and linkage functions are the non-Muslims' prejudice towards Muslims. The study found that most of Mahathir's linkage of the negatives prejudice towards Muslims is the fault of the Muslim extremists and the Western. The following section will be further discussing how Mahathir links the non-Muslims prejudice towards Muslims in his discourses:

> 4.3.3.1 Western Propaganda and Injustice
>
> 4.3.3.2 Western Media
>
> 4.3.3.3 Labelling of Muslim Terrorism

4.3.3.1 Western Propaganda and Injustice

Mahathir often links the negative image of Islam is largely due to Western propaganda and injustice towards the Muslim world. He argues the West intended to weaken Muslims and Islamic nations with their Western ideologies. Mahathir believes that the West also trying to encourage conflicts in Islam so that the Muslims will weaken themselves and their countries. One example that Mahathir uses for Western propaganda and injustice is the Arabs-Turks war. Mahathir argues that the Arabs were supported by the West to fight against the Turks Muslims. However, after the war ended, most of the Turks occupied land were colonial by the West and the Arabs lose some of their territories and occupied by the West. Mahathir uses this event to warn the Islamic leaders to beware of the intention of the West. The Arab-Turks war was presented as "reality creation" in Mahathir's speeches (ex.

25.05.1999, The Seminar on "The Role of Islamic Civilization In Fostering Inter-Religious Understanding" and 10.07.2003, The Opening of World Ulama Conference).

The Western propaganda and injustice were also links with the Israel-Palestine issue and Bosnia- Herzegovina issue. Mahathir argues that the West often talks about human rights and democracy; however, when Muslims around the world were oppressed by their enemy, the West did not help the Muslims who were in suffering. For example, "... *some of us even went so far as to say that where human rights violations are concerned we have a right to intervene even in the internal affairs of a country. Yet in Bosnia-Herzegovina, where ethnic cleansing involves blatant murders and rapes of Bosnian Muslims by Bosnian Serbs aided by the Serbian Government of rump Yugoslavia, the righteousness that some of us display over minor infringements of human rights, is remarkably absent. Instead the Serbs are to be rewarded with territories they have ethnically cleansed. Can we in the Commonwealth who had appealed for outside cooperation to help some of our members in need, ignore the Bosnian tragedy and elect to be silent simply because this is not a Commonwealth affair? ...*"* (21.10.1993, To the Address of Welcome by the President of Cyprus at the Opening of the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting). This example shows Mahathir uses Western propaganda and injustice to links with the oppression of the Muslims. This linkage is presented as "reality creation" where Mahathir argues that the West was biased against the Muslims and it is not the Muslims who always choose to be poor and weak. It was the Muslims who received unequal treatment from the international community.

Besides, Mahathir also argues that Islam has a bad reputation is partly due to the misunderstand and prejudice of the non-Muslims since 1492 after the last Muslim kingdom was fallen in Spain. The Muslims have once conquered Spain for several hundreds of years and live peacefully with the non-believers. However, after Ferdinand and Isabella conquered back Spain in 1492, the Muslims and other non-Muslims were oppressed, forced to convert to Catholic, migrate, killed, torture and other mistreated. This information was presented as "reality creation", for example, *"... actually Europe`s perception of the Islamic World has not changed very much since Islam first became known to the Europeans and the*

establishment of the first contact between them and the Muslims. In the first hundred years of Islam the extent of the physical contact reached the maximum level. Byzantium and Spain confronted the Islamic ummah across battlefields in Eastern and Western Europe. The contact was painful for Europe for much territory was lost to Muslim forces. For centuries after that Europeans lived in fear of Muslim attacks and more losses of territory ... for a very long time they actually refused to believe that Islam was a monotheistic religion like Christianity. They called the Muslims `Muhammadans` and regard the Muslims as the worshippers of Muhammad along with two other Greek gods ..." (24.03.1998, The Opening of the Malaysia-European Union Joint Seminar).

4.3.3.3 Western Media

The linkage between the bias's news reporting by the Western media and correcting the image of Islam was more frequently used by Mahathir. The Western media were dominating the international news in the 1990s, and reporting news based on their interests and propaganda. Mahathir argues that the Western media often enlarged the turmoil and mistakes of the Muslims in their news. The Muslim world often appeared in the international news were negative. The Western media often reporting the turmoil in the Islamic nations, the Muslims are weak and backward, and terrorism in the Middle East. All these negative projections had further enhanced the non-Muslims' prejudice that Islam religion and the Muslims are weak, poor and backward. This linkage is projected as "reality creation", for example, *"... there are many other instances of the media being unfair to Islam, being discriminatory against Islam. And so Islam became not only a religion that is misunderstood but is a religion that is reviled by non- Muslims for no very good reason ..."* (30.06.2000, The International Seminar and Dialogue on 'Enhancing the Understanding of Islam for the Media').

In addition, the media also enlarged the terrorism by the Muslim extremists had created the fears and prejudice that all Muslims were dangerous. Mahathir believes the misunderstanding of Islam had been reinforced by the Western media with an obvious purpose to weaken the Muslim world and Islamic nations. The Western media failed to show the suffering and chaos created

by the non-Muslims in the Islamic nations. For example, *"... unfortunately, the attention given to the Muslim world especially by the western media is far too often biased, presenting a picture of the efforts of Muslims to inculcate proper Islamic values and practise the teachings of Islam as something to be feared. The efforts of Muslims to make the principles and ideals of their faith play a more meaningful role in the development of a just and prosperous society is portrayed as the work of a strange group of people they refer to as the 'fundamentalists' ..."* (04.06.1983, The Opening of the Second General Assembly of RISEAP).

Besides, the Western media tried to influence domestic affairs in the Islamic nations. The media reported that the Islamic government's administration was violated many human rights issues in their domestic politics and argued that Islamic nations were not democracies. During the mid-1990s, the Western media accused Mahathir, and his government acts were against human rights and un-democracy. He argues that the Western media was using their media influences to support opposition political parties and certain extreme Islamists in Malaysia to go against his administration. The interference of the media in Malaysia's politics had created tension between Mahathir and the Western media. This argument was also presented as "reality creation" that the Western media were interpreted as "intention to create conflict in Islamic nations" in Mahathir's speeches. For example, *"... sementara rakyat Malaysia umumnya menyokong tindakan Kerajaan, media Barat mengecam Kerajaan kerana kononnya tidak demokratik dan takut dikalahkan oleh Al-Arqam dalam pilihan raya. Media Barat tahu tentang huru hara yang berlaku di negara-negara Islam yang mempunyai gerakan fanatik. Tetapi mereka sengaja menyokong gerakan fanatisme ini. Apakah sokongan mereka kerana demokrasi atau untuk melihat satu lagi negara yang diperintah oleh orang Islam runtuh? ..."* (03.03.1995, Perutusan Hari Raya Aidilfitri).

4.3.3.4 Labelling of Muslim Terrorism

Mahathir tries to redefine the labelling of "Muslim terrorism" which is commonly used by non-Muslims and international media. He admitted certain small Muslim groups committed some of the terrorist attacks, but the word "terrorism" had been misused against the whole Muslim community and interpreted

the act of terrorism as the fundamentalists in Islam. The fears of terrorism by the non-Muslims are now on the Muslims and Islam religion. Mahathir believes that the world had a negative prejudice that most Muslims are terrorists. When a terrorists attack occur, the Muslims will be the first to be blamed for any terror attacks. "Terrorism" was presented as "reality creation" where Mahathir argues that the term was unfair used to label only Muslim and other religious followers who committed terrorism act were not considered as terrorists. For example, *"... apabila seorang Yahudi rakyat Israel menembak mati 50 orang Muslim yang sedang bersembahyang dan mencedera berpuluh-puluh lagi, Pertubuhan Bangsa-Bangsa Bersatu tidak mengecam perbuatan ini sebagai `terrorism`. Hanya orang Islam sahaja boleh dicap sebagai `terrorist`. Orang lain yang membunuh orang Islam bukan `terrorist` ..."* (24.03.1994, Majlis Perasmian Bangunan IKIM).

Mahathir tries to "control over the definition" of "terrorism" in his speeches. He argues that other religious extremist groups had also committed many terrorist events, but their acts will never be associated with their religion. They will just be considered as people who fight for their interests, but the Muslims will be linked with Islam religion. Mahathir also argues that there are many Muslims who were oppressed, killed, torture by their oppressors, but those oppressors were not considered terrorists. This interpretation can be found in 09.12.1997, The Eighth Islamic Summit Conference: *"... but acts of terrorism or even simple self-defence by Muslims in Palestine are invariably described as Muslim terrorism. The terrorists, if they are terrorists and in many instances they are not, are labelled Muslim terrorists. Terrorism by others, by ethnic Europeans, by intolerant Christians and Jews, by Buddhists are never linked to their religions. There are no Christian terrorists, or Jewish terrorists or Buddhist terrorists or Orthodox Christian terrorists which the Serbs no doubt are. That more Muslims have been terrorised by Christians and Jews has never been mentioned. Terrorism is made out to be a Muslim monopoly and others are just terrorists unconnected with their ethnic group or culture or religion. There can be no doubt that today the most oppressed people in the world are the Muslims. Their independence and their rights as members of the*

human race have been ignored and violated over and over again. Their countries have been subjected to sanctions, to bombings, to all kinds of humiliation …".

Mahathir acknowledges that terrorism is a major issue that had triggered world peace and caused innocent people where been killed and live under fear. He urges the international community should see terrorism as their common threat, and they should work together to maintain international peace instead of only see Muslims as terrorists. Terrorism should only be condemned to the individual or group that committed the acts of terror, but not the entire country, race, or religion. This information again presented as "control over the definition", for example, *"… according to this definition of terrorism, the attack on the World Trade Center on September 11, the human bomb attacks by Palestinians and the Tamil Tigers, the attacks against civilians by Israeli forces, the killings of Bosnian Muslims and others must be considered as acts of terror and the perpetrators must be condemned as terrorists. And anyone supporting them must be considered as terrorists. Where states are behind the acts of terrorism, the whole Government must stand condemned. But no race or religion should be condemned or discriminated against simply because people of the same race or their co-religionists have been involved in terrorist activities …"* (01.04.2002, The Extraordinary Session of the Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers on Terrorism).

In conclusion, this study identified that the interpretation and linkage function is used in all groups of information in Mahathir speeches. However, this function is mainly used as "reality creation" and "control over the definition" by Mahathir. "Manipulate of the expectation" and "defining relationship" were not found in this study.

4.4 Projection To Future And Past

The forth functions of political languages are projection to future and past. This section will discuss how Mahathir projects past events and future ambitions to link with overall arguments. This study found that Mahathir merely using informal projection for both the future and the past. He does not use any formal projection by providing a structural plan or policy to solve the Muslims' problems. Mahathir often uses the informal projection to the past, mainly projecting the glory period of Islamic civilization and the fallen of the Islamic kingdom. He often uses these two periods of Islamic histories to reflect on the Muslims' weaknesses and turmoil. Besides, he also uses informal projection to the future to show the importance of modernizing the Muslim society. Hence, this section will be discussed in two parts:

4.4.1 Informal Projection to Past Islamic Civilization

4.4.2 Informal Projection to Future Muslim Society

4.4.1 Informal Projection To Past Islamic Civilization

Mahathir often projects the Muslims between the 7th century until the late-15th century as the gloriest era of the Islamic civilization. The Muslims during that period was the most modernised society and knowledgeable people. They had the most advanced defend technology and troops that allowed them to defend themselves from their enemy. Their Muslim kingdom was also dominated others none Islamic nations and spreading Islam religion to other non-believers around the world. However, the Islamic civilisation began to decline and the Muslims become backward people when the turmoil in the Muslim society began to occur. The last Muslim kingdom was fallen in the late-15 century, and the Islamic territories been colonised by the non-Muslims. Since then, the Muslims were oppressed, weak and backward until they were unable to protect themselves and Islam religion. Mahathir often projects the past glory of Islamic civilisation to reflect the weakness and backwardness of the Muslims in the 20th century. Hence, in Mahathir's speeches, three major projection to the past had been identified in this study:

4.4.1.1 Islam Bring Peace and United the Jahilliah Arabs

4.4.1.2 Muslims Mastered All Kinds of Knowledge

4.4.1.3 Fallen of Islamic Civilization

4.4.1.1 Islam Bring Peace and United the Jahilliah Arabs

First, Mahathir projects the past Jahilliah Arabs were one of the most backwards and cruel people in the world before the Prophet spread Islam religion to the Arabs. The Arabs were given to feuding, to killing each other because of different tribes, lack of knowledge, human sacrifices for worship and extreme cruelty to slaves and women. The Arabs world was never in peace until the Prophet brought the messages of Islam to restore peace and unite the Arabs. After the Arabs convert into Islam religion, they become peaceful people and stop fighting with each other. The Arabs were united and started to master all kinds of knowledge and skills, which turn them into a well-respected society. With their success and achievement, they able to spread the teachings of Islam and its religion to other parts of the world peacefully. Mahathir often uses this projection to argues that Islam religion is a peaceful religion and brought modernization to the past Muslims. This projection can be found in various speeches, for example, religious event (04.10.1991, The Official Opening of the International Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilisation (ISTAC)), Islamic conference (16.10.2003, The Opening of the Tenth Session of the Islamic Summit Conference) and *Hari Raya Aidilfitri* speeches (26.12.2000, Perutusan Hari Raya Aidilfitri).

Besides, Mahathir will also project the first Islamic state established by the Prophet in Madinah based on the teachings in the *Quran.* Under the leadership of the Prophet, the non-believers were given the freedom to practice their own religious, religious laws and cultural system in the Islamic state (05.03.1986, The Opening Ceremony of the International Islamic Symposium). Islam religion was spread peacefully to the non-Muslims and never force convert any non-believers into Islam. The non-believers did not have the fears against Islam because Islam came to them in a peaceful and justice way. This factor allowed the Muslims to expand Islam to other parts of the world and influenced throughout Arabia, Central Asia, North Africa and Southern Europe (14.09.1993, Seminar on Muslim and Christian

Minds). Mahathir uses historical facts to justify that Islam meant peace and against any kinds of killing and wars. Islam only says that the Muslims must preparation to defend themselves, but never allowed the Muslims to start a war. However, Muslims today misinterpreted the messages of Islam and ignore the fundamental teachings of Islam. He argues that Muslims should learn from the past and be tolerant with each other and other non-believers.

Next, Mahthir projects the Muslims in the past were united because Islam emphasised Muslims brotherhood. Mahathir often says that the Jahilliah Arabs were disunited before the messages of Islam were spread to them. The Arabs were able to get over their hatred for each and become united after the Prophet preached the brotherhood of Islam to them. The unity among the Arabs not only solved their feud and conflicts, but it also helped them to become a better society and achieved the glory of Islamic civilisation. The Muslim countries were united under one alliance, and quickly they became one powerful bloc. The Muslims had the most advance and powerful troops that allowed them to protect themselves and dominate other countries. Their unity allowed them to modernise their society and was once well-respected by other non-believers. Mahathir believes that unity in Islam is one of the key factors that contributed to the past glory of Islamic civilization. This projection can be found in speeches, for example, 05.05.1985, Sempena Perasmian Musabaqah Membaca Al-Quran Peringkat Kebangsaan (Disampaikan oleh Y.A.B. Timb. Perdana Menteri Dato Musa Hitam), 30.12.1999, The International Conference of Religious Studies: "Meeting the Millennium" and 16.04.1996, The Oxford Centre for Islamic Studies Oxford.

4.4.1.2 Muslims Mastered All Kinds of Knowledge

Mahathir's speeches very frequently touched on the importance of acquiring knowledge by Muslims. He uses the example of the past Muslims were great people who mastered all kinds of knowledge and skills. He projects the past Muslims were knowledgeable in all fields, such as sciences, mathematics, arts, astronomy, engineering and construction. All these knowledge and skills allowed the Muslims became great in trading, sailing across the oceans with their knowledge in astronomy and navigation, and developing modern weapons to

defend themselves. For example, "... the Muslims also became great traders, skillfully sailing across vast oceans using their knowledge of astronomy. Their trade with far away places also resulted in the spread of Islam in the countries they traded with ..." (10.07.2003, The Opening of World Ulama Conference). Mahathir tries to project the past Muslims did not only learnt religious knowledge but also learnt knowledge that able to improve their well-being in this world. The Muslim civilisation was far more modernised compared to Western Europe in the Middle Ages, where the Europeans were still superstitious and backwards. The Europeans and the Jews were admired with the development of the Muslims. They also studied the Arabic language so that they able to learn the works of the Islamic scholarships (13.09.1990, Sempena Perasmian Seminar Al-Quran Antarabangsa)

However, the great Islamic civilisation did not last long, and the Muslims society begins to become backwards because of the misinterpretations of the Islamic teachings by the *Ulamas.* The *Ulamas* interpreted Islam is only taught the Muslims to acquire knowledge within the religion only and separate secular from religion (08.01.1995, Majlis Perasmian Seminar Al-Quran Antarabangsa Kali Ke-5). Knowledge other than religion knowledge such as science, medicine, arts and mathematics were discouraged and considered as un-Islam. Mahathir argues that the turmoil and confusion of the Muslim world today is the result of those misinterpretations of the *Ulamas.* He believes that the *Ulamas* were fear that the Muslims who acquire knowledge will become intellectual people and will become a treat to the *Ulamas'* powers (14.09.1993, Seminar on Muslim and Christian Minds).

4.4.1.3 Fallen of Islamic Civilization

When the Islamic civilisation reached the highest peak around the 14th century, it became to have different interpretations of the *Quran*. The Muslims began to form a different group with their own interpretations in Islam. Mahathir believes that the misinterpretations of Islam, mainly by the Ulamas had divided the Muslims into different tribes. They began to accuse each other of being un-Islam and reject the beliefs of other Muslim sects. Mahathir argues that Muslims had forgotten the fundamental teachings of Islam that emphasised on Muslim brotherhood. He projects the Muslims had repeated the backwards Jahilliah Arabs

during the pre-Islamic era. For example, *"… In a way we can say that many Muslims have reverted to the pre-Islamic days of ignorance, the age of the Jahiliah, when Arab tribes hold their tribe as the sole object of their loyalty. They would side with their tribe even if what their tribe did was wrong. Today it is their nation or even their political parties that they fanatically uphold and fight for and kill other Muslims …"* (30.09.2000, The Launch of the International Haji Conference).

Another example that Mahathir uses was the fallen of Turks Empire. The Turks were dominating most of the Arabs territories. However, the *Ulamas* at that time only care about Islamic laws and religious teachings and rejects all kinds of secular knowledge. The Turks focused more on their dressing and ignored the preparation for defence against their enemy. In contrast, the Western Europeans had already modernised and had more advance weapons than the Turks. The Turks had no modern weapons as the Western Europeans and they were weak in their defence capacity. Mahathir argues that the misinterpretations of the *Ulamas* had caused the Muslims to ignored the secular knowledge and caused the Muslims became the most backwards and weak society who no longer able to protect themselves and their faith in Islam. This projection can be found in various speeches, for instance, *"… the same fate later befell the Turkish Empire. At the height of their glory they were assailed by doubts about the quality of their Islam. While the Europeans modernised and were discovering new ways of defending themselves against the redoubtable Turkish forces, the Turks were concerned over trivialities such as whether tight trousers and peak caps were Islamic or not. Whereas the earlier Turkish forces were well-equipped with the best weapons of their time, their knowledge and their industry did not keep up with the knowledge, industrial skills and manufacturing capabilities which were rapidly making the Europeans superior in all fields. The Turkish religious leaders were only concerned about ensuring that their narrow interpretations of Islam were adhered to strictly by the state and the people. They were not concerned over the weakening of the Turkish state and its defence capability …"* (25.05.1999, The Seminar on "The Role Of Islamic Civilization In Fostering Inter-Religious Understanding").

4.4.2 Informal Projection to the Future Islamic Civilization

This study found that projection to the future was not that often used by Mahathir in his speeches. In some speeches, Mahathir only mentioned the possibility for the Muslims to restore the past glory of Islamic civilisation in the future. He argues that Muslims today can only be admiring the past glory, but none of them does anything to revive the glory day of Islam. He believes that Islamic teachings are the main factors allowing past Muslims to dominate for nearly 700 years in Western Europe. Hence, Mahathir stresses that the only way to restore the glory of Islam is to interpret Islam and its teachings correctly. For example, *"… but the glory of Islam can be restored. There can be a resurgence of Islam if we return to the true teachings of Islam. This can only come about if there is ijtihad in the true meaning of the word. Learned Muslims from all disciplines must give their thoughts to the correct interpretations of Islam. The reality of life in the twentieth century must be given due consideration. We must be prepared to admit that we may have been wrong in our present interpretation and to correct them. Then an then only can a true Islamic resurgence take place and Islam's glory restored …"* (08.11.1986, The RISEAP Fourth General Assembly).

4.5 Action Stimulation

The fifth functions of political languages are action stimulation. This function will be discussing how Mahathir uses his language to stimulate the action of the audience on the issues that he raised. This section will analyze with four criteria: direct appeals, mood creation, words as action surrogates, and words as symbolic rewards. Based on the finding, this section will be divided into three sub-topics:

4.5.1 Modernization of Muslim Society

4.5.2 Unity in Muslim Society

4.5.3 Correcting the Image of Islam and Muslims

"… the Muslims will never be able to bring back the honour and the respect for Islam and the Muslims unless they become capable again of

defending themselves. To be capable there are many things that they have to do. I have already mentioned them. We can restore the glory of the Islamic civilisation if we orientate Muslims towards the need to have all the skills and knowledge to make the Islamic way of life - Addin - admired, respected and held in awe by others ..."

(Mohamad, 2003)

4.5.1 Modernization of Muslim Society

Although Mahathir's speeches were often highlighting the problems and challenges of Muslims in modern-day, however, he aims to draw the importance of modernizing the Muslim society. He believes that modernization is the only way for the current Muslims to develop the Muslim world and regain its reputation in the international arena. Hence, this study found that Mahathir used the action stimulation function for two information on this topic:

4.5.1.1 Acquire Knowledge

4.4.1.2 Prepare Globalisation

4.5.1.1 Acquire Knowledge

Mahathir believes that acquiring non-religious or secular knowledge is the only way to modernize Muslim society. He argues that acquire non-religious knowledge is important for Muslims and he rejects the idea of "secularism". In addition, the *Quran* also emphasizes the importance for the Muslims to acquire non-religious knowledge from other fields. Acquire knowledge becomes direct appeal information where Mahathir persuade his Muslim audience should not divide religious and secular knowledge, but Muslims should use both knowledge to develop themselves (26.07.1984, The Opening of the Third International Seminar on Islamic Thoughts).

Mahathir confidence that only through acquiring knowledge can help to develop the Muslim community and Islamic nations. This had proven in the past Islamic civilization where the combination of secular and religious knowledge allowed Muslims in the past to transform into modern civil society (04.10.1991, The Official Opening of the International Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilisation (ISTAC)). In addition, Mahathir also uses acquire knowledge as a "mood

creation" in his speeches. For instance, "*unless and until we stop dividing knowledge into the religious and the secular, unless we regard all knowledge as faith enhancing and therefore not only permissible but vital to the Muslims and their faith, we are never ever going to rebuild Islamic civilisation. Worst still, we are going to remain in the modern equivalent of the Dark Ages*" (17.06.1994, The Opening Ceremony of the World Islamic Civilisation Festival). Mahathir strong believes in acquiring knowledge can change the fate of Muslims, Mahathir established the first Islamic university that combined religious and modern knowledge for Muslims from all over the world to study in Malaysia.

Mahathir uses to acquire knowledge as the "words as symbolic rewards" to show that knowledge as the solution for the Muslim community to protect themselves through developing modern technology. He believes that the Muslims should develop knowledge in every field in order for them to become strong in economically, industrially and technologically advanced (16.10.2003, The Opening of the Tenth Session of the Islamic Summit Conference). He shows that knowledge is the solution for Muslims to develop modern defensive weapons and defend themselves from oppressed by their enemy. Besides, acquire knowledge serves as "word as action surrogate" where Mahathir argues that it is the hope for the world Muslims to regain their position in the international area and being treated injustice by their enemies. For example, during the Closing Remarks at KL Summit 2019 (21.12.2019), he says: "… acquiring this knowledge [technologies] is our only hope to stop the Ummah [Muslims] from continuously being bullied and mistreated by our enemies …".

4.4.1.2 Globalisation

Mahathir acknowledges the fast-changing of the modern world and urges Muslims must prepare for globalisation. He argues that the Muslim world today has to accept the fact that the world is moving fast into globalisation, and the Muslims can not continue to isolate themselves from the outside world and modern development. This mean, the Muslim world should catch up to the development of the other non-Muslim countries. Mahathir uses globalization as a "direct appeals" to persuade his audience that Muslims should "accept and apply

modern technology" in this technological era (08.11.1986, The RISEAP Fourth General Assembly). He believes hat modernisation not only will improve the well-being of the Muslims and improve the image of Islam.

However, Mahathir points that the Muslims seems to ignored and does not understand the importance of modernising their community He uses "mood creation" to create the fears to his audience that the Muslim world is going to miss the opportunity to develop themselves (09.12.1997, The Eighth Islamic Summit Conference). Globalisation also seems as "word as action surrogate" where Mahathir the Muslims should not blame anyone for their less fortunate and being backwards. For example, "... *whether the impact of globalisation on us will be beneficial or not depends upon us. Blaming others will get us nowhere. Remember the Quranic injunction that Allah will not change the fate of those who do not try to improve their fate themselves. Remember also that all that is bad is due to our own doing, all that is good comes from Allah ...*" (11.06.2001, The International Seminar on the Impact of Globalisation on the Islamic World). He urges his audience that they should make their own effort to change their lives and stop blaming on their fate in Islam. Mahathir believes that God unable to help the Muslims if they refused to help themselves in the first place.

4.5.2 Unity in Muslim Society

Mahathir uses "unity in Muslim society" to address the turmoil and conflict in the Muslim world. Mahathir urges his Muslim audience the need to solve their misunderstanding peacefully and the Muslims must be united. He believes the unity of Muslims is the only way to strengthen the Muslims and Islamic nations. This topic will be discussed in two parts:

4.5.2.1 Correct Interpretations of Islam

4.5.2.2 Cooperation Among Islamic Nations

4.5.2.1 Correct Interpretations of Islam

Mahathir believes that unity in Muslim society can be achieved if the Muslims return to the actual teachings of Islam. They differ in Islam had divided the Muslims and they often refused to accept each other beliefs. "Correct interpretations of Islam" function as "direct appeals" in most of Mahathir's

speeches. Mahathir urges Muslims must always refer back to the *Quran* whenever they are confused and have misunderstood with other Muslims. However, the Muslims should always remember that each person may interpret the verses in the *Quran* differently and it might create the wrong interpretations. For example, *"... Al-Quran menjadi panduan kita sebagai umat Islam. Apabila kita keliru atau sesat atau kita tidak bersaudara dan bersahabat dengan orang Islam lain, tidak aman dan selamat, kita perlu rujuk kepada Al- Quran. Tetapi haruslah kita ingat bahawa oleh kerana ayat-ayat dalam Al-Quran boleh ditafsir secara berbeza- beza oleh pentafsir-pentafsir, rujukan kita mungkin menghasilkan panduan yang salah, kerana sebenarnya kita rujuk kepada pentafsir dan bukan kepada Al-Quran ..."* (18.07.2003, Majlis Pelancaran Al-Quran Mushaf Malaysia).

Besides, Mahathir also reminds his audience that the Islamic teachings emphasised the same massages at all time, such as peace, tolerant, Muslim brotherhood and rejects violence. He urges his Muslim audience should not ignore the messages of Islam, especially peace and Muslim brotherhood. He argues that minor quarrels and have different opinions in Islam is unavoidable because everyone has different thinking and understanding. However, Muslim should be using peaceful settlements and always remember that all Muslims are brother. If not the Muslims will never be united and they are actually ignoring the teachings of Islam (18.09.2000, Majlis Perasmian Majlis Tilawah Al-Quran Peringkat Kebangsaan Kali Ke-43; 21.01.2003, Muslim Unity in the Face of Challenges and Threats).

4.5.2.2 Cooperation Among Islamic Nations

Next, Mahathir believes that unity in Muslims society can enhance cooperation among Islamic nations. "Cooperation among Islamic nations" can be found as "direct appeals" in Mahathir's speeches to emphasise on the importance of unity in Muslim society. The cooperation that meant by Mahathir can be in terms of political, economic, social and any shared interests of the Islamic nations. Mahathir argues that Islamic cooperation not only going to increase the mutual benefit, but it will also strengthen the alliance of the Islamic nations. For example, "... as we all know, Islam transcends ethnic and geographical boundaries and all Muslims are brothers. As such, they should be willing always to cooperate

whether during times of difficulties or when times are good. Such cooperation will strengthen them and enable them to face any crisis when it comes ..." (06.09.1996, The RISEAP 9th General Assembly/15th Anniversary Celebration). Mahathir believes that cooperation will allow Islamic nations to help each other when they face any crisis or challenges. The cooperation among Islamic nations also functions as "word as action surrogate". For example, *"... we must therefore plan for the future and this means we need to analyse the past and take stock of the present. It is clear that man`s survival is dependent on new patterns of mutual partnership and cooperation, interdependence and symbiosis. This will not be possible without long-term planning for the next twenty to forty years. We also need to understand Islam within the context of the contemporary world, with the changed conditions of life. We cannot recreate the world of the early years of Islam ..."* (26.07.1984, The Opening of the Third International Seminar on Islamic Thoughts).

Besides, Mahathir also urges that the world Muslims should have common goals. The common goals will be allowed the world Muslims at least achieve specific aims or have a common opinion on certain issues. One of the regular example used was the conflict between Palestine-Israel. Mahathir argues that the Islamic nations should have a common view on issues such as the oppression of Palestine by Israel. Palestine's issues can be seen as a "mood creation" used by Mahathir to create hope and at the same time also create fear for the Muslims audience. The mood creation had enhanced the idea of cooperation between Islamic nations. For instance, *"... the current development in the Middle East certainly calls for unity and solidarity within the Ummah. What is happening to the Palestinians could obviously happen to us also. Indeed in Yugoslavia and Chechnya and elsewhere it is happening. Must we wait until all of us are ground into the ground before we appreciate the need to act? The OIC as an organisation, in particular the current Summit, can play a constructive role in championing the cause of the Palestinians and of Muslims everywhere. Our collective voice should be heard loud and clear in support of the Palestinians and there are obviously things which we can do to make our objections felt. We should remain steadfast in making no compromises on the status of Al Quds Al Sharif as the political and historical city*

of the Palestinian people and State. We should continue to address the cause of ensuring the return of the rest of the Occupied Palestinian and Arab territories including Syrian Golan. We should support all efforts including those made by the UN at achieving a peaceful settlement and at rescuing the peace process in the interest of regional peace and security. The Palestinian leadership too should be fully supported and assisted with whatever means possible ..." (12.11.2000, The Ninth Islamic Summit Conference).

4.5.3 Correcting the Image of Islam and Muslims

Mahathir often says that Islam is the most misunderstood religion by both Muslims and non-Muslims. He argues that both Muslims and non-Muslims had caused the misunderstanding of Islam. It is important for Muslims to correct the image of Islam and for the non-Muslims to understand Islam without any prejudice.

When Mahathir speaks to his non-Muslims audience, he often urges the non-Muslims should try to understand the Muslims without any negative prejudice. Mahathir tries to convince his non-Muslims audience that Islam is a peaceful religion and not all Muslims are involving in violent acts. Like any other religion, they will be some followers that did not follow the teachings of their religion and used violence as their settlement. This information can found in Mahathir's speeches function as "direct appeals". For example, "*... it must be remembered that the majority of the Muslims, like the majority of Christians or Buddhists or Hindus are good people who mean no harm to anyone even though their images of each other are grossly distorted. Among any people in any community there will be those who are irrational, extreme and violent. The number of such people among Muslims are no bigger than among other religious groups. It is really necessary to understand why they are what they are ...*" (30.06.2000, The International Seminar and Dialogue on 'Enhancing the Understanding of Islam for the Media').

On the other hand, Mahathir blames the Muslims themselves did not show the positive side of Islam religion. The outside world sees the Muslim society today is in turmoil, fighting with each other, weak government administration and active in terrorism. Mahathir blames the

Muslims were aware that their acts would directly reflect on the reputation of Islam religion, but they still ignored the views of the non-Muslims. As a result, Mahathir often uses "direct appeals" to persuade his audience that the Muslims should prove to the non-Muslims that Islam is not violence but is a peaceful religion. For instance, "… *If we are to correct this image of Islam, if we want to banish the perception that Muslims are implacable enemies, intolerant, immoderate and extreme then we must demonstrate a willingness to forego the desire for revenge, for unmitigated violence …*" (10.05.1998, Toleration and Moderation in Islam).

Besides, "restore the positive reputation of Islam" also presented as "word as symbolic rewards" in Mahathir's speeches. Mahathir convinces his Muslim audience that they have the responsibility to explain Islam and its teachings to the non-Muslims. The reputation of Islam was further damaged when the extreme Islamists committed terror attacks that killed innocent people. For instance, "…. *whether we want to spread Islam or not, we have a duty to explain Islam to Muslims and non-Muslims alike. We have to explain it in such a way as to reduce the wrong perception of our religion that is now common worldwide. But the best explanation, the most convincing argument is through demonstrating visibly the true teachings of Islam with regard to tolerance and moderation, and the rejection of fanaticism and extremism …*" (10.05.1998, Toleration and Moderation in Islam). In addition, Mahathir also uses "mood creation" when he tries to differential the moderate Muslims and extreme Muslims to his non-Muslims audience. For example, "… the Muslims are not inherently against the West, the Christians or the Jews. Muslims want peace as much as anybody else. We want a share of the bounties of this earth. We are not violent people given to terror and anarchic behaviour. Some of us may misbehave but no more than others do. We should not be tarred with the same brush. The majority of us are good, peace-loving rational people …" (30.06.2000, The International Seminar and Dialogue on 'Enhancing the Understanding of Islam for the Media').

4.6 Conclusion

In conclusion, this study had applied Graber's five functions performed by political languages into Mahathir's speeches on Muslim identity. The study had examined Mahathir discourses based on the theory, and the author argues that all five functions suggested by Graber are applicable for discourse analysis. However, some modifications are required as the theory was suggested in the 1980s. The author had included priming effects and framing effects of this study. The combination of Graber's theory and the addition theories mixed perfectly in this study and the result of the findings are sufficient to answer the research question.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter will conclude the study of Mahathir's speeches on Muslim identity by providing a summary of the overall study. Then, the author will discuss his experiences and opinions on this study. Besides, the study will also discuss the limitations of this study and provide recommendations for future study.

5.1 Summary Of The Study

The purpose of this study is to analyze how Mahathir used political languages in his speeches on Muslim identity. The speeches are focusing on Mahathir's first and second premierships, from 1981-2003 and 2018-2020, respectively. A total number of 144 speeches were downloaded from the archive of the Prime Minister Office (PMO) official website. This study is qualitative research by using the content analysis method.

This study applied Graber's (1981) five functions of political languages to analyze Mahathir's speeches. The five political language functions are (i) information dissemination, (ii) agenda-setting, (iii) interpretation and linkage, (iv) projection to future and past, and (v) action stimulation. All five functions of political languages illustrated by Graber helps to break the information that Mahathir often used in his discourses. Each function is guided with different criteria suggests by Graber. In addition, this study further expanded the theory by adding priming effects into the agenda-setting function and framing effects into the interpretation and linkage function. This study argues that both theories -- priming effects and framing effects – are parallel with Graber's theory.

The findings show that Mahathir's speeches on Muslim identity focusing on the misinterpretations of Islam, the problems of Muslim society and to correct the image of Islam to both domestic and international Muslim audiences. First, based on the information dissemination functions, this study identified that Mahathir's

speeches frequently discuss the fundamental teachings of Islam, correct interpretations of Islam, weaknesses of Muslims, turmoil in Muslim society, misunderstanding of non-Muslims, and Western propaganda. This function helps to identify "what" information projected in Mahathir's speeches.

Second, the agenda-setting function and priming effects examine Mahathir's speeches based on the finding in the information dissemination function. This function identified that Mahathir's speeches were consistently controlled over the information by priming three main issues of the Muslim world: misinterpretations of Islam, turmoil in Muslim society, and non-Muslims prejudice towards Muslims. This function discusses how Mahathir primed the issues to his audience and answered "why" Muslim identity is critical for Mahathir's political agenda.

Third, the interpretation and linkage function analyses "how" the findings from agenda-setting and priming effects. This function also included framing effects to analyze how Mahathir used keywords, phrases, information, and connotative meaning to frame his arguments. This study found Mahathir uses much reality creation and takes control over the definition of the situation faced by Muslims, such as the misinterpretations of Islam, problems and weaknesses of Muslims, and to correct the image of Islam.

Forth, the projection to future and past function analyses "how" Mahathir links the past experiences and foresight the future into his arguments. This study found Mahathir frequently used an informal projection of the past, specifically the projection of Islam during the pre-Islamic era, the glory of Islamic civilization era, and the fallen of Islamic civilization.

Firth, the action stimulation function analyses "how" Mahathir used his language to stimulate the actions of his audience based on his agenda. This study found Mahathir mostly used direct appeals and mood creation to persuade his Muslim audiences to change their current situation, such as correct interpretations of Islam, bring peace to Islam, and correcting the image of Islam.

5.2 Discussion

5.2.1 Graber's Functions Performed by Political Languages

The analysis of this study applied Garber's functions performed by political languages into Mahathir's speeches on Muslim identity. This study shows that all five political language functions suggested by Graber (1981) can apply in speech analysis research. The theory first helps this study to organize the information in Mahathir's speeches into different groups and themes. Then, the same group of information able to be analyzed from different dimensions based on political language functions.

Unlike other discourse analysis's theories or framework, the author's experiences on Graber's theory shows that the theory is less complicated and straightforward compared to other theories such as Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). The theory itself not only serves as an analytical framework, but it has also provided an ideal guideline for speech development. Besides, this study also found that the theory can help researchers develop an in-depth understanding of the research subjects. For example, this study allowed the author to understand more about Mahathir's political views, agenda, and background of his political career. The author argues that the theory is not limited only to analyzing the rhetoric and propaganda of an individual, but it also can apply to any discourses of a political party or an organization.

However, Graber's theory still has its limitation. First, the theory had not been tested in any past research and lack of development. Most of the literature cited Graber's definition of political languages and not applying her theory to their research. The theory required further developments and interpretations as Graber only briefly introduced the theory, and she did not further expand her works. Second, the theory did not illustrate the framework of the theory and how the theory can be implemented into discourse analysis. This study tried to interpret the function of each political language according to Graber's explanation and outlined it into an applicable analytical framework.

Based on the experience of this study, the author had tried to expand the agenda-setting function and interpretation and linkage function. This study suggests that the agenda-setting function can be expanded by adding priming

effects, which is the mainstream debates among the scholarship of agenda-setting theory. The debates in the literature of agenda-setting theory suggest that priming effect and framing effects can be the extended version of the traditional agenda-setting theory. However, this study found that only the priming effect is suitable to combine with the agenda-setting function in Graber's theory. On the other hand, this study tested that framing effects are also applicable in Graber's theory, but it is more suitable to fall into interpretation and linkage function. The author argues that the agenda-setting function and priming effect are both examine how to make an issue more "salience" for the audience to make their judgment. In contrast, interpretation and linkage function and framing effect are both examine how to "attribute" the issues to the audience.

Hence, this study proposed that Graber's theory can be the alternative theory for discourse analysis. The author argues the theory itself provides a different dimension for analyzing political discourse compared with the mainstream theories, such as Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) and Political Discourse Analysis (PDA). Besides, Graber's theory not only helps to examine the ideology in the discourses, but it also helps to examine how a discourse was presented and constructed. The author concludes that Graber's theory is suitable to use in both academic research and practical application, especially in the areas of speech writing, strategic communication, political communication, linguistics and other related professions.

5.2.2 Mahathir's Speeches on Muslim Identity

Based on the results in Chapter 4, this study identified that Muslim identity is crucial in Mahathir's discourses. Although Mahathir's speeches mainly were addressing the problems in the Muslim world and Islamic affairs, however, this study argues that Mahathir's arguments were heavily motivated by political affairs. His arguments had not much related to performing religious rituals or worships, but nearly all his arguments were highlighting the misinterpretations of Islam, weaknesses and problems of Muslims in the modern-day, and to correct the image of Islam.

In Mahathir's speeches, he combined his views and knowledge in Islam to connect with Islamic affairs. For example, Mahathir frequently primes the

correct interpretations of Islamic teachings is not to urge his Muslim audience becoming more religious person. Indeed, he aims to emphasize on the *fardhu kifayah* or the responsibility to the Muslim community. He used the context in Islamic teachings to contrast the situation of the Muslim community, such as acquiring knowledge, modernizing the Muslim world, and protecting the Muslim brotherhood. Mahathir believes that the weaknesses of Muslims and turmoil in their society had caused the Muslim world to be disrespectful to non-Muslims. As a result, he often argues that Islamic nations should always remain united and modernize their nations.

Besides, Mahathir's discourses between the 1990s and 2000s were always criticizing Western propaganda. Mahathir often primes that the Muslims should always defense themselves from Western influences and domination. He argues that the Western often used their ideology to force the Islamic nations to follow their values and intervened in Islamic affairs. His open criticism had caught the Western politicians and media attention. In the mid-1990s, the Western media became to criticize Mahathir's policies and domestic politics in Malaysia. Mahathir, in his domestic speeches, often criticizes the Western media often had a bias report on his opponents and supporting those Muslim extremists' activities. The evidence showed that Muslim identity was not just about religion in Mahathir's discourses, but it played a huge part in Mahathir's political discourses.

This study argues that Mahathir is not shy to acknowledge the problems and dilemmas of Muslims. Although most of his projections of the Muslims and Islamic nations in his discourses were often negative, however, his agenda is to create awareness for his audience that the Muslims should admit their weaknesses and take immediate actions to change their situations. Mahathir often in his speeches says that he hopes to develop the Muslim world into modern society and well-respected by the world community. His speeches on Muslim identity were arguable that it motivated many Muslims and world leaders to acknowledge the weaknesses and turmoil in their community. This study believes that Mahathir's agenda is not to shame the Muslims, but he intended to create awareness for the Muslims to change. As discussed in Chapter 1, Mahathir sees himself as the representation of the Muslim

world. The evidence of this study shows that Mahathir put much effort into his speeches to address the problems in the Muslim world.

However, this study also argues that some of Mahathir's arguments were contradicting with his actions, especially the use of Islamic teachings in politics. Mahathir often criticizes the Ulamas and political Islamists interpreted the Islamic teachings for personal political interests. Indeed, Mahathir himself also frequently using the teachings of Islam in his political discourses. His arguments often cited the history of Islam and verses from the *Quran*. In domestic politics, Mahathir regularly used the Islamic teachings to criticizes the actions of PAS (Malaysia Islamists opposition political party). He argues that PAS is a radical Islamists party that is not following the actual teachings of Islam and always misinterpreted the teachings in Islam to influence their Muslim supporters. He openly criticizes that PAS's political agenda was un-Islam and misused Islam for their benefits. This evidence shows Mahathir's political agenda was also presented in his Muslim identity speeches. Hence, this study acknowledges that Mahathir did also used Islamic teachings in his discourses for his political agenda like any other political Islamists.

5.2.3 Contribution To The Literature

There is limited literature on Mahathir's speeches that are specifically focusing on Muslim identity (Haque & Khan, 2004; Schottmann, 2013). The past literature was mostly focusing on "what" was presented and "why" Muslim identity is important in Mahathir'sspeeches. This study provides a further expansion of the existing literature by focusing on "how" Mahathir conveys the Muslim identity in his discourses. Besides, this study also examines Mahathir's speeches from 1981-2003 and 2018-2020, both English language and Malay language texts. Although Schottman (2013) also studied Mahathir's speeches from 1981-2003 (as well as speeches after 2003 and personal interviews with Mahathir himself), however, his study is only limited to English language texts. Based on the author's experiences of this study, the author argues that most of Mahathir's speeches for the domestic audience were in the Malay language. There were limited English language texts, neither original nor translated versions were available in the archives for the domestic audience. Hence, this study would offer further validation for the past

literature finding by including Malay language texts as the data source in this study. This study will be providing three contributions to the literature.

- The similarity of the findings with past studies
- The differences in the findings with past studies
- Analytical framework

First, the similarity of the finding in Haque and Khan (2004), Schottman (2013), and this study is the interpretations of Islam and the importance of acquiring knowledge. All studies agreed that Mahathir often argues that the misinterpretations of Islamic teachings and the *Quran* are the problems of the current generation of Muslims. Mahathir blames the misinterpretations of the Ulamas had caused the Muslims to become a weak and backward society. Besides, all studies found that knowledge or secular knowledge is essential in Mahathir's discourses. Mahathir argues that Muslims today only focusing on religious knowledge and ignored other knowledge that will contribute to the development of the Muslim world.

However, there are differences between Haque and Khan (2004) and Schottman (2013) studies. Haque and Khan's findings found that Mahathir's speeches addressed issues on the importance of unity and terrorism. The information on the unity of Muslims and terrorism were also found in the findings of this study, but the author argues that the "unity" in domestic speeches were mostly limited to the unity between Malay Muslims within Malaysia. As for terrorism, this information is more frequently found in international political speeches and least mentioned in domestic speeches. In contrast, Schottman's findings found that Mahathir's speeches emphasize on *fardhu kifayah* and Islamic values (Schottman referred it to *nilai-nilai murni)*. This study also agreed that *fardhu kifayah* and Islamic values are crucial in Mahathir religious discourse.

Haque and Khan's (2004) and Schottman (2013) studies were both had different findings because both they were focusing on a different aspect of Muslim identity in Mahathir's speeches. For Haque and Khan's study was selecting speeches during the critical moment of terrorism (in the 1990s and early 2000s) where the Muslims were often recognized as terrorists by the non-Muslims. The

findings of this study also show that unity and terrorism frequently prime by Mahathir in the early 1990s and become more aggressive after the mid-1990s. On the other hand, Schottman's study was looking in-depth into the religious discourse of Mahathir. The author argues that Schottman's study was concentrated more on biography analysis on Mahathir's life, religious background, and political agenda. Hence, *fardhu kifayah* and Islamic values will be the focus of Schottman's study compared to Haque and Khan's study.

Second, this study had identified new information that had not been discussed in both studies. This study discovered that four pieces of information are frequently found in Mahathir's speeches: preparation for defense, turmoil in Muslim society, prejudice of non-Muslim and Western propaganda. These four pieces of information had been discussed in Chapter 4 of this study and further elaborated on in five different political language functions. The author would like to clarify that some information were found in the cited texts from Mahathir's speeches in both Haque and Khan's and Schottman's studies. However, they did not further elaborate or discuss this information. As mentioned in the previous section, the author argues that both of the studies were focusing on different dimensions of Muslim identity.

This study decided to include the four information into the discussion because it was frequently found in Mahathir's speeches. Based on the agenda-setting function and priming effect theory, the author argues that preparation for defense, turmoil in Muslim society, prejudice of non-Muslim and Western propaganda are critical in Mahathir's discourses for different issues. Besides, the author also argues that Mahathir included non-religious related information into his speeches which are closely related to Islamic affairs. For example, Muslims often ignored the views and prejudice of the non-Muslims towards the Muslim world and Islam religion. Mahathir argues that Muslims should not ignore those negative prejudice because it will further misunderstand the non-Muslims on Islamic teachings and affairs. Besides, the author also included Western propaganda in this study because Mahathir often compared Western values with Islamic values. As various literature argued that Mahathir was not favored over the Western's influences. He often criticizes Western domination and injustice in developing countries. Hence, this

study believes that these non-religious related affairs should also be included in Mahathir's Muslim identity discourses for further understanding of Mahathir's non-religious views on Islamic affairs.

Third, unlike other discourse analysis theories and frameworks, this study adapted Graber's (1981) functions performed by political languages provides a different perspective. First of all, Graber's theory is not originated from linguistics studies or communication studies. Her approaches are more likely a combination of political sciences and communication studies. Besides, Graber was also contributed to literature in political communication fields, and her studies were mostly on analyzing political discourses.

Based on the experiences of this study, the author argues that this theory provided a dimension of research. Most of the existing discourse analysis theories and frameworks are focusing on answering the "what" and "why" questions. In contrast, Graber's theory is more towards answering the "how" question. The theory provided five political language functions for the analytical framework. Each function is given different dimensions of the same information. For example, the "misinterpretations of Islam" in this study first discussing the information dissemination function -- what issues conveyed by Mahathir; then, the same information was examined with agenda-setting function, interpretation linkage function, and projection to future and past function – how Mahathir conveyed the issues; and finally examined with action stimulation function – why Mahathir conveyed the issues.

Besides, Graber's theory also suitable to ask a practical application model for speech writing. The theory provides the fundamental ways of constructing a speech or discourse material. As Graber mentioned in her essay, not all five functions will be used in the same speech; but in the same speech might be using more than one of the functions. Hence, the author argues that Graber's theory is suitable to apply in discourse analysis and also a practical application for working professions.

5.3 Limitations Of The Study

The author would like to draw three limitations of this study which the author unable to achieve through this study:

First, this study only focuses on one theme, which is the Muslim identity in Mahathir's speeches. The author found that some of the Muslim identity speeches will be overlapping with other issues such as domestic and international politics, economic, business, and education. For example, Mahathir in certain speeches will discuss Islamic finance which is related to Muslim identity, but Islamic finance was not the focus of this study.

Secondly, this study also unable to compared Muslim identity with Malays identity in Mahathir's speeches. Muslims and Malays are interrelated because in Malaysia all Malays are Muslims. However, this study looks beyond Malaysia's contexts and focuses on global Muslims, including Malay Muslims in Malaysia. Hence, the author decided to only focus on Muslims and Islam in general.

Third, this study only focuses on Mahathir's speeches. The study did not compare other Muslim leaders' discourses and ideas on Muslim identity. Besides, the author also did not compare the discourses from the West, especially after the 9-11 incident. The author believes that it will be interesting to study how Mahathir replies to the criticism and comments of the West or political Islamists from other Islamic nations.

5.4 Recommendations And Implications

Speech analysis is a common study in the political communication field. However, different theories and models will be resulting in different findings on the same discourses. The author will provide recommendations and implications from this study: 1) development of the theory, 2) further studies, 3) practical applications, and 4) self.

First of all, Graber's theory is applicable in discourse analysis, and it provides a different perspective of suggestions compared to the mainstream theory

such as CDA. Besides, this theory also able to analyze both political concepts and the use of languages in political discourses. Hence, the author recommends that Graber's theory should be further developed in political communication studies.

Secondly, this study examined Mahathir's ideas and identity as a Muslim leader. The evidence showed that Muslim identity plays an essential role during Mahathir's premiership. This study allowed non-Muslims to understand more in-depth on how Mahathir uses Islamic religion in his political discourses. The author recommends that further studies can compare Mahathir's Muslim identity discourse with other Muslim leaders.

Thirdly, the author strongly agreed that the theory of this study is suitable to use in discourse analysis. It is also suitable to use in speech writing, especially for students, academians, and speechwriters. The author argues that Graber's theory is easy to understand, and her theory provides a complete structure for political speech writing. Besides, the findings also benefit further politicians, especially politicians in the Islamic nations, to understand how religion and politics can combine in their discourse.

Lastly, this study is beneficial for personal interests. The author concludes that this study covered a wide range of information, such as politics, leadership, religion, history and communication. Besides, this study allowed the author to understand more in-depth about Malaysia's politics between the 1980s and the 2000s. It also helps the author to understand why Mahathir is still popular among the Muslim community

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