

Intertextual Representation of the *Orang Asli* in the Malaysian Online News Media: A Critical Discourse Analysis

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ABSTRACT

In media discourse, intertextuality is an important aspect which is concerned with how voices are represented and weaved into news articles. The study sets out to explore how the Orang Asli are intertextually represented in the selected Malaysian news media, namely The Star (mainstream news media) and Malaysiakini (alternative news media). The corpus of this study comprises 24 online news articles from The Star (n=12) and Malaysiakini (n=12), respectively. The analysis is grounded on Fairclough's (1995b) Three-Dimensional Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) Framework focusing on the intertextual aspect, notably the news articles' discourse representation. The results showed that the voices of the authorities were represented more frequently in The Star as compared to the Orang Asli, whereas both voices were represented fairly by Malaysiakini. Furthermore, the quotation patterns revealed that the authorities were directly quoted more frequently than the Orang Asli, especially in The Star. Although Malaysiakini quoted the Orang Asli, the quotations continue to perpetuate an inferior and stereotypical imagery of the community which revolves around vulnerable and dependent narratives. In general, the intertextual analysis reveals that the authorities' voices continue to predominate the mainstream media in reinforcing existing perceptions of the Orang Asli community as well as speaking on behalf of the community, which in turn suppresses the Orang Asli's voices.

Keywords: CDA, discourse representation, intertextuality, media discourse, Orang Asli

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INTRODUCTION

Indigenous peoples constitute about 6.2 percent of the global population, which is equivalent to a total population of 476 million and are perceived to be distinct from mainstream populations in which their unique social identities, cultures, livelihood, and way of life are inextricably associated with their long-standing customary lands (The World Bank, 2023). Indigenous peoples are known to have been subjected to continuous acts of discrimination, suppression, marginalisation (Nicholas et al., 2010; Saifullah et al., 2021), and displacement from their customary lands (Aiken & Leigh, 2011; United Nations, 2018). Correspondingly, these acts stem from notable issues such as the lack of access to sociopolitical and socioeconomic participation, lack of access to basic amenities, and high poverty rates (Lastra-Bravo, 2021; The World Bank, 2023).

In response to these acts, indigenous communities worldwide have attempted to recapture their rights toward self-autonomy with the primary aim of safeguarding and preserving their customary lands, cultures, and traditional practices. This is illustrated by existing studies that examined the portrayal of indigenous communities by the media, and these studies revealed that the media has consistently perpetuated primitive and traditional imagery in depicting them as a group of people who are resistant to modern developments (Campbell, 2016; Godin, 2021; Jamal & Manan, 2016; Lowan-Trudeau, 2021; Mesikämnen, 2016; Walker et al., 2019) and it is through media discourse that enables the perpetuation of such imagery to the masses. More importantly, the media's perpetuation of such negative imagery reflects the news media's discursive practices, which are ideologically laden with discriminatory elements. This is because access to the media is oftentimes limited to a group of powerful and privileged entities (Fairclough, 1995b; van Dijk, 2008), thus enabling them to exert control and influence over the production and legitimisation of discourses concerning ethnic minorities, especially in the case of indigenous communities to conform to the ideological beliefs held by the dominant elites (van Dijk, 2016). In addition, Jamal and Ganapathy (2021) explain that the media serves as the main avenue in disseminating information to the masses on issues and topics concerning indigenous peoples while framing and shaping the cognition of the masses (Jamal & Ganapathy, 2021; Wong & Jamal, 2023).

In Malaysia, the *Orang Asli* are known as the sole indigenous people residing in Peninsular Malaysia, with a population of 209,575, constituting less than 1 percent of the country's overall population (Department of *Orang Asli* Development, 2022). The *Orang Asli* are categorised into three heterogeneous sub-ethnic tribes: the Senoi, the Aboriginal Malay, and the Semang (Jegatesen, 2020). To date, the *Orang Asli* have been regarded as one of the most socioeconomically and socio-politically deprived communities in the country, which is reflected by their dire state of poverty (Ibrahim, 2021; Nicholas, 2022), the lack of access to proper healthcare and education (Ganapathy et al., 2022; Jegatesen, 2020; Nicholas et al., 2010) and most importantly their constant struggles in defending and reclaiming their ownership and rights of their customary lands (Gomes, 2015; Jegatesen, 2020; Nicholas et al., 2010). In addition, several studies conducted in the local context have revealed that the *Orang Asli*'s portrayal in the media has revolved around anti-development, dependent, traditionalistic, and vulnerable imageries which presents them in a disadvantaged manner (Alagappan et al., 2010; Baharun & Ismail, 2022; Ismail et al., 2020; Jamal & Manan, 2016; Jamal & Ganasan, 2021; Wong & Jamal, 2023). However, Wong and Jamal (2023) point out that a paucity of studies still examine *Orang Asli*'s portrayal from a Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) approach. Likewise, Alkaff

and McLellan (2017) highlight the lack of comparative studies on media discourse grounded on a CDA framework. Therefore, this study aims to fulfill the methodological gap by examining how *Orang Asli*'s voices are represented in the media from an intertextual approach, which is grounded on Fairclough's (1995b) Three-Dimensional CDA framework by comparing the representation patterns between local mainstream and alternative news media.

LITERATURE REVIEW

THE *ORANG ASLI* IN CONTEMPORARY MALAYSIA

The term *Orang Asli* which directly translates into "original peoples," is recognised as one of the *bumiputera* communities of Malaysia in which the term refers to "princes of the soil" together with the Malay and native communities of Sabah and Sarawak (Nicholas et al., 2010). The general perception holds towards the *Orang Asli* is that they are a group of ethnic minorities that have been entrenched in various challenges and conflicts towards securing and reclaiming their self-determination in contemporary Malaysia (Subramaniam, 2015). The current marginalised state of the *Orang Asli* is a result of several historical and sociopolitical developments that can be traced back to three historical chapters of Malaysia: the pre-colonial era, the colonial era, and the post-colonial era (Ibrahim, 2021; Idrus, 2011).

The *Orang Asli* is regarded as a distinctive group who is defined by their location of abode which is normally found in either coastal or forest areas of the Peninsular (Jegatesen, 2020; Nicholas et al., 2010). These communities generally lead either a semi-nomadic or nomadic lifestyle which revolves around their dependency on harvesting and trading natural resources found within the vicinity of their customary lands (Nicholas et al., 2010; Nordin et al., 2016). The *Orang Asli* regards their customary lands or *sakaq* as a sacred asset to them, entrenched with a long-standing identity and historical anecdotes (Gomes, 2015). However, Abdullah et al. (2019) note that due to the nature of the *Orang Asli*'s traditional practices, they are adversely affected by the low returns from trading their yields which inhibits their socioeconomic development. This is further exacerbated by the continuous logging and deforestation activities which threaten the *Orang Asli* from being displaced and losing possession of the customary lands they struggle to defend (Gomes, 2015). Additionally, the Aboriginal Peoples Act (APA) 1954 which is the only statute that oversees the *Orang Asli*'s rights and welfare, does not fully acknowledge the *Orang Asli* as the rightful owners of their customary lands and are only regarded as "tenants-at-will" thus subjecting them to impending evictions from their customary lands by the state government (Gomes, 2015; Idrus, 2011). Besides, the Act confers the prerogative to the state government to either gazette or revoke the *Orang Asli*'s lands (Kan, 2020; Subramaniam, 2015). Despite the limitations of the Act, the Malaysian courts have generally acknowledged that the *Orang Asli* are indeed the rightful occupants of their respective customary lands, as reflected in the case of *Sagong bin Tasi & v State of Selangor* which ruled that the *Orang Asli* do possess native titles and that the state government has a fiduciary to protect and safeguard the *Orang Asli*'s land rights (Idrus, 2010; Kan, 2020; Subramaniam, 2013; Subramaniam & Nicholas, 2018). Although due recognition has been established by the common law, seeking legal action will be an arduous and lengthy process that requires a strong participant base and financial support coupled with complex litigation processes (Kan, 2020; Subramaniam, 2013).

To elucidate further, the Aboriginal Peoples Act (APA) which was initially drafted to safeguard the *Orang Asli* from the threat of communist insurgents during the Malayan Emergency (1948 – 1960), is shrouded with paternalistic elements that indirectly limit the *Orang Asli*'s self-autonomy (Idrus, 2011). Subramaniam and Endicott (2020) add that the Act remains entrenched with remnants from British colonial rule and is deemed a dated form of legislation. In this context, Idrus (2011) highlights that the Act establishes a dichotomous relationship between the *Orang Asli* and the authorities, positioning the former as wards of the state which creates the perception that the *Orang Asli* require the authorities' guidance to safeguard their well-being (Idrus, 2011; Subramaniam, 2015). As a result, the Act is perceived as an obstacle that hinders the *Orang Asli* from reclaiming their self-autonomy in tandem with the country's development (Idrus, 2011; Kan, 2020; Wook, 2016). The protectionist nature of the Act has gradually permeated into the narratives of the post-independent administration, whereby policies and programmes which are designated to improve and uplift the *Orang Asli*'s livelihood are used to depict the government as the main providers of assistance (Jegatesen, 2020). Additionally, Jegatesen (2020) argues that the media constructs the narrative that portrays the *Orang Asli* as victims of colonial rule, thus reinforcing the perception that they require support from both the government and non-governmental organisations (NGOs). Nevertheless, this is further exemplified by studies which have examined the representation of the *Orang Asli* in the Malaysian media which portrays them as beneficiaries and recipients of social assistance (Alagappan et al., 2010; Jamal & Manan, 2016; Jamal & Ganasan, 2021; Wong & Jamal, 2023). In general, Jegatesen (2020) maintains that such narratives will further disempower the *Orang Asli* community's position and perception among the Malaysian populace.

INTERTEXTUALITY

Intertextuality is a crucial aspect under the dimension of discourse practice of Fairclough's (1995a, 1995b) Three-Dimensional CDA Framework. Intertextuality, in its broadest sense is understood as the presence or traces of other texts that are interwoven or recontextualised in another text (Fairclough, 2003). According to Fairclough (1995a, 1995b), the dimension of discourse practice operates as an intermediary between both textual and sociocultural dimensions which focuses on the examination of how sociocultural practices are adapted and interwoven into the production and consumption of texts.

The analysis of discourse practice is thus achieved through intertextual analysis which aims to unravel the traces of discourse practices stemming from both institutional and discourse processes which have been subsumed into texts (Fairclough, 1995b). In media discourse, different voices are introduced into the article intertextually by attributing one's viewpoint to another source or reflecting one's attitude and stance towards an issue covered in the text (Bloor & Bloor, 2007). One of the pervasive forms of intertextuality in news articles is the presence of quotations or reported speech which Fairclough (1992, 1995b) calls "discourse representation" which will be elucidated in the following subsection.

DISCOURSE REPRESENTATION IN NEWS ARTICLES

Fairclough (1992, 1995b) describes discourse representation as a form of intertextuality that involves integrating specific components from other texts into another text represented by quotations (Fairclough, 2003). Discourse representation or quotations, in general, is an important

constituent of a news article as it is “a representation of what newsworthy people have said” (Fairclough, 1992, p.273).

The analysis of discourse representation focuses on three aspects: voice and attribution, modes of representation, and framing (Bednarek & Caple, 2014; Fairclough, 1995b, 2003). Firstly, voice and attribution are concerned with whose voices are being selected and reported in the text and whether the utterances reported are attributed or non-attributed (Bednarek & Caple, 2014; Fairclough, 2003). Secondly, the mode of representation reflects the demarcation of boundaries between the reporter and the voice quoted (Fairclough, 1995b). Lastly, framing is concerned with how the discourse represented is contextualised and interpreted based on the reporters’ evaluations or judgement which is depicted by the choice of reporting expressions used (Bednarek & Caple, 2014; Fairclough, 1995b, 2003). In terms of the representational modes, two main modes of discourse representation which were outlined by Fairclough (1992, 1995b, 2003), will be presented in the following table:

Table 1

Modes of Discourse Representation

Modes of Discourse Representation	Example	Explanation
Direct quotation	She said: “ <i>He’ll be there by now</i> ”	The presence of quotation marks retains the original utterances of the reported source. Both tense and deixis are retained.
Indirect quotation	She said <i>he’d be there by then</i> .	The utterance of the reported source is either summarised or paraphrased, and a shift in tense and deixis occurs.

Based on the two modes presented above, the distinction between direct and indirect quotations is that the former enables the reporter to detach their voice from that of the reported source which provides a clear demarcation between both voices whereas, in the latter, the reporter’s voice is intertwined with that of the reported source (Fairclough, 1992, 1995b). However, for indirect quotation, the demarcation between the reporter and the reported voice is vague despite maintaining the original proposition made by the reported voice (Fairclough, 1995b). Hence, the choice of discourse mirrors the ideology held by the news media (Teo & Xu, 2021), as the inclusion and exclusion reveal the news media’s power relations with other voices as well as how these voices are interpreted and portrayed in the news articles (Li, 2009). More importantly, in terms of representing the voices of ethnic minorities, scholars are of the consensus that quotations serve as a strategic tool in accentuating the voices of the dominant elites while diminishing those of ethnic minorities (Suppiah & Kaur, 2018; Teo, 2000; van Dijk, 2016). Nevertheless, elite voices quoted in news articles are significantly deemed credible and reliable sources of information (van Dijk, 1991).

METHODOLOGY

The sample selection for the study consists of 24 online news articles, whereby 12 online news articles were selected from *The Star* (mainstream news media) and *Malaysiakini* (alternative news media), respectively. According to Similarweb (2023), both news portals were recognised as one of the most popular news portals with a high number of site users. The purposive sampling method was used to select the news articles that were published from 1 January 2022

till 30 June 2022. The chosen timeline was randomly selected and did not coincide with specific events concerning the *Orang Asli* and the authorities. The news articles were obtained from the respective online news portals, www.thestar.com.my and www.malaysiakini.com.

This study adopts Fairclough's (1995b) Three-Dimensional CDA Framework which serves as the theoretical foundation of the study focusing on the discourse practice dimension (Meso Level) which is concerned with the production and consumption of texts. An intertextual analysis was done for all 24 online news articles focusing on three aspects: 1) voice and attribution, 2) modes of discourse representation, and 3) framing. Upon completing the analysis, the frequencies for the modes of discourse representation identified were tabulated and subsequently compared to identify if the *Orang Asli* is represented more prominently by either news media. Moreover, the reporting expressions used in the reporting clauses were examined under the aspect of framing.

Table 2

Analytical Procedure of the News Articles

Dimension of Analysis	Method of Analysis	Structures of Analysis
Discourse Practice Analysis (Meso Level)	Intertextual Analysis	Voice and Attribution
		Modes of Discourse Representation:
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct Quotation • Indirect Quotation
		Framing:
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reporting Expressions

ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

FREQUENCY OF DISCOURSE REPRESENTATION

A comparison between the frequencies shows that *Malaysiakini* represents the *Orang Asli*'s voices more frequently than *The Star*. Instead, *The Star* was more inclined to represent the voices of the authorities, as indicated by the stark contrast in the frequency presented in Table 3. The frequency patterns also suggest that *Malaysiakini* opts for a balanced approach in representing the voices of both the *Orang Asli* and the authorities.

Table 3

Frequency of Discourse Representation in The Star and Malaysiakini

<i>The Star</i>	<i>Orang Asli</i>		Authorities		Others		Total
Direct quotation	3	5.3 %	49	86.0 %	5	8.8 %	57
Indirect quotation	3	4.05 %	62	83.8 %	9	12.2 %	74
Scare quotes	0	0 %	0	0 %	2	100 %	2
	6		111		16		133
<i>Malaysiakini</i>	<i>Orang Asli</i>		Authorities		Others		Total
Direct quotation	23	41.1 %	27	48.2 %	6	10.7 %	56
Indirect quotation	34	44.7 %	38	50.0 %	4	5.3 %	76
	57		65		10		132

SOURCES OF DISCOURSE REPRESENTATION

A more detailed analysis of the sources of quotations reveals that *The Star* prefers to quote voices that are authoritative and powerful, unlike *Malaysiakini* which focuses on quoting the *Orang Asli*'s voices despite their limited authority and social position. Table 4 presents the voices that were identified from both news media.

Table 4

Voices Quoted in The Star and Malaysiakini

Voices	<i>The Star</i>	<i>Malaysiakini</i>
<i>Orang Asli</i>	<p><i>Orang Asli</i> traders: Kristina, who is a Seletar <i>Orang Asli</i> Atan Mamut, 41, of Kampung Teluk Jawa</p>	<p><i>Orang Asli</i> residents: A group of <i>Orang Asli</i> Amer Sidan, 57 The women in the village Siah, 52 The villagers from the Temiar tribe The <i>Orang Asli</i> community battling the Nenggiri and The <i>Orang Asli</i> community Members of the community [An <i>Orang Asli</i> in Kelantan] Jimi Angah They [a Temiar community]</p> <p><i>Orang Asli</i> leaders: Ayu, 52, the <i>Tok Batin</i> of the <i>Orang Asli</i> village of Kampung Sentosa, Lenga, Pagoh The two Temiar leaders [Musa Nor Apat and Anjang Rangget]</p> <p><i>Orang Asli</i> activists: The group's spokesperson Nasir Dollah The activists A group representative Kelantan <i>Orang Asli</i> Villages Coalition (JKOAK) chairperson Mustafa Along The memorandum</p>
Authorities	<p>Federal government officials: Datuk Seri Ismail Sabri Yaakob (Prime Minister) Deputy Energy and Resources Minister Datuk Ali Biju Datuk Seri Mahdzir Khalid (Rural Development Minister) Senator Datuk Isa Ab Hamid People's Volunteer Corps (Rela) honorary Commissioner Datuk Seri Michael Chong</p> <p>State government officials: Datuk Seri Amirudin Shari (Selangor Mentri Besar) Kelantan Deputy Mentri Besar Datuk Mohd Amar Endau assemblyman Alwiyah Talib Johor health and environment committee chairman R. Vidyananthan</p> <p>Civil service officials: Mersing Jakoa officer Nor Faizzi Sulaiman The Perak Health Department Commanding officer Supt Azhar Hashim</p>	<p>Federal government officials: Rural Development Deputy Minister Abdul Rahman Mohamad Deputy Education Minister 1 Mah Hang Soon Deputy Rural Development Minister Abdul Rahman Energy and Natural Resources Minister Takiyuddin Hassan</p> <p>State government officials: Kelantan Menteri Besar Ahmad Yakob</p> <p>Civil service officials: Medical officer Dr Jeshua Nevaraj Northern Corridor Implementation Authority (NCIA) Human Capital head Shahdee Ahmad UPSI vice-chancellor Prof Md Amin Md Taff</p> <p>Tenaga Nasional Berhad officials: Tenaga Nasional Berhad (TNB) Kelantan and Terengganu Tenaga Nasional Berhad (TNB) general manager Mustaphakamal Yaacob</p>

News media:

The media

Organisation leaders:

Ninja Van Malaysia chief executive officer

Adzim Halim

[Global Peace] foundation chief executive

officer Dr Teh Su Thye

Based on Table 4, the voices of influential figures, especially those belonging to ministers, political figures, and government affiliates, were quoted by *The Star*. The choice of voices suggests that authoritative figures possess more credibility and reliability regarding the facticity of their utterances, legitimising the claims and information conveyed in the news articles. As for *Malaysiakini*, the alternative news media's inclusivity is reflected by the numerous *Orang Asli* voices that were quoted, especially those from the villagers, allowing them to express and convey their concerns and opinions to readers from their perspective. More importantly, the contrasting preference of voices by *The Star* indicates a dichotomy between the authorities and the *Orang Asli*.

DISCOURSE REPRESENTATION OF THE *ORANG ASLI* AND THE AUTHORITIES

This subsection will discuss several examples selected from the corpus to discuss the modes of discourse representation and the reporting expressions used for both the *Orang Asli* and the authorities.

Table 5

Direct Quotations representing the Orang Asli

Direct Quotations (<i>Orang Asli</i>)		
<i>The Star</i>	Code	Examples
	DS1	"I have been fishing for five years and this has been my main source of income to support my family. After I'm satisfied with the day's catch, I will come straight to the market to sell it. Many of my customers find the prices affordable." [S. Kristina]
	DS2	"I don't mind selling my catch at a cheap price. I feel satisfied knowing that my customers are happy with what I sell them. I am grateful to them for buying our catch," she [S. Kristina] told <i>Bernamea</i> recently.
	DS3	"Since the pandemic, we have been getting fewer customers until we hardly made RM200 a day. At times, I could only sell RM30 worth of seafood, but thankfully, the situation is back to normal now," said the mother of four.
<i>Malaysiakini</i>	Code	Examples
	DS4	"So, we hope that Putrajaya would give the royalties to Kelantan, and then we can see if they would really stop logging," Nasir said . [...]
	DS5	"For this state election, I urge the elected representatives from all winning parties to remember us. Whichever party wins, do not make the <i>Orang Asli</i> suffer this way. Aren't we also part of Keluarga Malaysia?" he [Amer Sidan] asked .
	DS6	"JKOAK wishes to suggest the cancellation of the project because it will blatantly affect the lives of the <i>Orang Asli</i> community directly and indirectly." [Kelantan <i>Orang Asli</i> Villages Coalition (JKOAK) chairperson Mustafa Along].
	DS7	"We request that the authorities find an alternative solution to handle issues such as drought, flooding and other relevant issues (faced by the community)," Mustafa said .

Based on the examples outlined in Table 5, S. Kristina was the only *Orang Asli* voice to be directly quoted thrice by *The Star* which focused on her lifestyle as a fisherman (DS1 – DS3).

Conversely, *Malaysiakini* directly quotes the community more frequently when reporting on their social issues, providing readers firsthand access to the *Orang Asli*'s utterances while giving prominence to their voices to be heard. Despite *Malaysiakini* directly quoting the *Orang Asli*, elements of disapproval, dependency, and vulnerability are reflected in the quotations. For instance, the verbs “hope” (DS4) and “urge” (DS5) illustrate *Orang Asli*'s call for the authorities' intervention in resolving their issues. Moreover, the verbs “wishes” (DS6) and “request” (DS7) express the community's objection towards the construction of the Nenggiri hydroelectric dam which will inevitably result in the loss of their customary lands. These examples show that the *Orang Asli* are faced with limited self-autonomy in resolving their issues as well as managing their livelihood.

Table 6

Indirect Quotations representing the Orang Asli

Indirect Quotations (<i>Orang Asli</i>)		
<i>The Star</i>	Code	Examples
	IDS1	Kristina, who is a Seletar <i>Orang Asli</i> said that previously she was able to get RM300 a day from sales of her catch, but the situation changed when the Covid-19 pandemic hit.
<i>Malaysiakini</i>	Code	Examples
	IDS2	The villagers from the Temiar tribe raised concerns about their ancestral home, claiming the dam would submerge four <i>Orang Asli</i> settlements in the area - Pos Tohoi, Pos Pulat, Kampung Wias and Kampung Bering - as well as flood 5,384ha of forest land.
	IDS3	The <i>Orang Asli</i> communities rely on hunting and foraging in the nearby forests and have complained that their roaming lands would be affected.
	IDS4	Community members said they were seeking the federal government's intervention as their plight had fallen on deaf ears of the Kelantan government.

As presented in Table 3, the *Orang Asli* were indirectly quoted (43) more frequently by *Malaysiakini* as compared to the direct quotations (23), whereas they were only quoted thrice by *The Star*. In general, indirect quotations observe the injection of the reporter's voice when summarising and paraphrasing information concerning the reported events. In this context, a closer examination shows that *Malaysiakini* maintains a neutral evaluation, as revealed by the preponderance of the verb “said”. However, speech act verbs were also often used to frame the *Orang Asli*'s quotations indirectly. For instance, the speech act verb “claiming” (IDS2) frames the information provided by the Temiar community in a doubtful manner. This exerts a rhetorical effect whereby readers may question the veracity of the claims made by the community which situates them in a dubious manner. Additionally, the speech act verb “complained” (IDS3) illustrates *Orang Asli*'s verbal act of disapproval towards the development of the Nenggiri hydroelectric dam. As a whole, the outlined examples show that using speech act verbs enable the reporter to assign their evaluation and judgement in representing the verbal acts of the *Orang Asli* community which carry negative connotations.

Table 7

Direct Quotations representing the Authorities

Direct Quotations (Authorities)		
<i>The Star</i>	Code	Examples
	DS1	“If the villagers require supplies or have health emergencies, we will request help from agencies such as the Fire and Rescue Department (JBPM) and Malaysian Civil Defence Force (APM),” he [Mersing Jakoa officer Nor Faizzi Sulaiman] told Bernama [...]

	DS2	“Another major issue the Orang Seletar faces is poor living conditions, especially the younger generation who has built homes along the coastline,” said Isa.
	DS3	“The government is looking for a formula to overcome this problem because the government does not want anyone’s children, neither <i>Orang Asli</i> nor other ethnicities, to be left behind in terms of education,” Bernama quoted him [Datuk Seri Ismail Sabri Yaakob] as saying [...]
<i>Malaysiakini</i>	Code	Examples
	DS4	“Looking at our predicament and having reached this community in the first place, getting them to come out for the booster dose would be quite a challenge,” he [Dr Jeshua Nevaraj] said .
	DS5	“However, the <i>Orang Asli</i> community had never rejected the vaccination programme conducted by the government, and this is proven by the percentage of adults who have been vaccinated which had exceeded the national target,” he [Deputy Rural Development Minister Abdul Rahman Mohamad] said .
	DS6	“Apart from basic infrastructure facilities for the <i>Orang Asli</i> community, social amenities will also be expanded, human capital development and an increase in the income rate of the community is also given focus,” he [Deputy Rural Minister 1 Datuk Seri Abdul Rahman Mohamad] said .

Table 8

Indirect Quotations representing the Authorities

Indirect Quotations (Authorities)		
<i>The Star</i>	Code	Examples
	IDS1	He [Deputy Mentri Besar Datuk Mohd Amar Nik Abdullah] said the state government was confident that the matter could be resolved with the various efforts and initiatives that are being undertaken by the Kelantan Department of Wildlife and National Parks (Perhilitan).
	IDS2	Meanwhile, asked about allegations by some parties that tigers are roaming in <i>Orang Asli</i> settlements due to illegal logging, Mohd Amar admitted that there was illegal logging in the Permanent Forest Reserve.
<i>Malaysiakini</i>	Code	Examples
	IDS3	Mah said RM275mil has been allocated to the <i>Orang Asli</i> community to raise their standard of living, such as providing subsidies, school aid as well as welfare assistance to benefit almost 200,000 people apart from secondary school student pocket money which has been increased to RM4 a day.
	IDS4	TNB alleged that the project was in full compliance with legal and regulatory requirements set by the authorities, including the <i>Orang Asli</i> Development Department and the Wildlife and National Parks Department.
	IDS5	Mustaphakamal said apart from job opportunities, and the project would also offer economic opportunities to the <i>Orang Asli</i> community and surrounding residents when there is a main reservoir lake at the dam.

Referring to the frequencies presented in Table 3, in general, the voices of the authorities in *The Star* predominate that of the *Orang Asli* for both modes of discourse representation. The results also show that voices possessing esteemed positions and authorial accounts are more likely to be directly quoted to maintain the originality of their utterances as well as ensure the objectivity of the news article while being regarded as credible and trustworthy sources of information. Moreover, the examples above also reveal a contrasting difference in the quotation patterns between the *Orang Asli* and the authorities, whereby the authorities are portrayed positively as providing assistance to the *Orang Asli*. For example, in DS3, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Ismail Sabri Yaakob explains the government’s commitment to mitigate the high dropout rates by ensuring that all children, including the *Orang Asli* can pursue and complete their education up to the secondary level. However, there are certain instances whereby the authorities were portrayed in a negative manner, as exemplified by IDS2 and IDS5. For instance, the speech act verb “alleged” (IDS5) frames the information provided by Tenaga Nasional Berhad (TNB) in a doubtful manner which may lead readers to question the authenticity of the utility giant’s actions. Moreover, neutral and positive reporting expressions such as “said”, “announced”,

“stressed”, and “added” were frequently used to frame the quotations of the authorities to portray them in an encouraging manner.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of the intertextual analysis, in general, the voices of the *Orang Asli* are substantially underrepresented in *The Star* compared to *Malaysiakini* which gives prominence to *Orang Asli* voices. In *The Star*, the only exception is in one news article which focuses on reporting the daily activities of fisherman cum trader S. Kristina as presented in Table 5 (DS1 – DS3) and Table 6 (IDS1). In contrast to *Malaysiakini* which provides the platform for the *Orang Asli*'s voices to be represented and heard, the frequency of discourse representation, as presented in Table 3, shows that *The Star* is more inclined to represent the voices of the authorities.

A disparity in the quotation patterns between the *Orang Asli* and the authorities is observed, whereby quotations representing the *Orang Asli* focus on the community's issues, needs, and grievances, whereas those of the authorities often revolve around narratives that present them as providers of aid and welfare as well as being the community's de facto spokesperson. Once again, this is exemplified by the contrasting quotation frequencies between *The Star* and *Malaysiakini*. One of the factors that may lead to such representational choices is the news media's ownership profile, which is often managed by large media corporations (Fairclough, 1995b). In the Malaysian context, the mainstream news media, for instance, *The Star*, is perceived to be owned by major stakeholders who are politically affiliated with several high-profile political establishments (Anuar, 2014; Lee & Mohd Don, 2014; Manan, 2019, Teoh, 2020). On the other hand, *Malaysiakini* is recognised for its independence from any political affiliations and its balanced and critical reporting (Mohd Don & Lee, 2014; Manan, 2019). Henceforth, it is perceived that *The Star*, as a mainstream news media, tends to empower the voices of the authorities to reinforce existing ideologies held towards the *Orang Asli*, as authoritative voices have higher chances of having their views and opinions represented (Suppiah & Kaur, 2018). The quotation patterns from *The Star* also support the notion that voices of dominant entities tend to be quoted by the media more frequently (Teo, 2000; van Dijk, 2016) given their strong socioeconomic and sociopolitical standing in having the privilege to gain firsthand access to the media (Fairclough, 1995b; van Dijk, 1993).

Likewise, *Malaysiakini* has provided more opportunities for the inclusion of the *Orang Asli*'s voices which conform to their inclusive approach of reporting voices that are virtually absent from the mainstream news media (Anuar, 2014). The community's portrayal revolves around vulnerable and dependent imageries, as shown in Table 5 (DS4 – DS7). Despite the community's voices being represented, the quotation patterns reveal that both news media continue to impart weak imageries of the *Orang Asli* which will lead the masses to continue believing that they lack the self-determination to manage themselves. As discussed in the literature review, the community's calls for assistance and support from the authorities have been a result of the various episodes of historical marginalisation which is further exacerbated by ineffective affirmative policies and programmes that were designed to uplift the community (Jegatesen, 2020). Likewise, the paternalistic nature of the dated Aboriginal Peoples Act continues to limit the community's autonomy (Loh & Idrus, 2023). Hence, this results in the continuation of an asymmetrical relationship between the *Orang Asli* and the authorities as being ““oppressor/victim” and “strong/weak”” (Jegatesen, 2020, p.118).

In addition, the findings of this study also support those from existing studies which have examined the community's portrayal in the news media, notably *The Star*, from different analytical approaches which revealed that the community's voices were oftentimes overshadowed and predominated by those of the authorities (Jamal & Manan, 2016; Jamal & Ganasan, 2021; Wong & Jamal, 2023). Likewise, studies which examined the representation of minority groups such as sex-trafficking victims and refugees from an intertextual lens have also revealed that their voices tend to be overlooked (Bolte & Yuen, 2014; Lee & Mohd Don, 2014; Suppiah & Kaur, 2018). Furthermore, the quotation patterns also reveal that *Orang Asli's* utterances were depicted in a stereotypical fashion that exudes a dependent narrative which reflects the community's sheer dependence on the authorities' assistance (Jamal & Manan, 2016; Ismail et al., 2020; Baharun & Ismail, 2022).

Given the findings and the discussion, the intertextual analysis has provided insight into the selection of voices which are either included or excluded (Fairclough, 2003) and is relatively dependent on the importance of the voices quoted (Caldas-Coulthard, 2004). As a whole, the analysis reveals that both forms of news media continue to empower the authorities' voices, enabling them to perpetuate and legitimise existing notions held towards the *Orang Asli*. Although the *Orang Asli's* voices were reported in a balanced approach by *Malaysiakini*, their utterances were more prone to be indirectly reported as voices which have lesser importance have a high probability of having their utterances being indirectly quoted (Goatly & Hiradhar, 2016) as shown the use of speech act verbs in framing the indirect quotations of the *Orang Asli*. This enables the reporter to assign their evaluations towards the community, accentuating their stereotypical characteristics. Despite the space that is accorded to the *Orang Asli* in *Malaysiakini*, Loh and Idrus (2023) highlight the advent of social media platforms has permitted the community to engage in critical and constructive discussions concerning their community's welfare thus, there is a need to accentuate these voices in news media platforms to challenge existing stereotypes projected by the news media.

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