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## **9/11 CONSCIOUSNESS: A DISCOURSE ANALYSIS IN MALAYSIAN NEWSPAPERS**

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### **Abstract**

Our consciousness is somewhat shaped by our surroundings. External and internal consciousness can guide, explain, direct, and train us to form our socio-cultural belief systems. These socio-cultural belief systems may partly explain why we do what we do, why we see what we see, why we say what we say, and why we feel what we feel. Our consciousness, to a large extent, shapes and energizes our understanding of human beings' complex relations. As such, 9/11 strife-torn unrests, for example, leaves behind unnecessary complications, chaos, and risks, not only to many Americans, but also to other Islamic nation-states. These sporadic and unpredictable 9/11 complexities are not only discussed, debated, and negated, but has also contributed to our awareness on what it means to live in the post-9/11 era. While many of these explorations are affirmed, regarded, and profound in many Western nation-states, studies on 9/11 consciousness from Asian perspectives, particularly from the viewpoints of Muslim-dominated nations are, to this end, largely insufficient. Taking these contours into consideration, this paper attempts to discuss the extent to which 9/11 consciousness are highlighted in newspapers. Specifically, using spectrum of consciousness theory, this paper explores some of the many ways consciousness of 9/11 tensions is framed in five Malaysian newspapers. We will show the ways in which newspapers describe 9/11 contexts and how diverse layers of consciousness are delineated in the newspaper, forming some levels of questions, contests, and negotiations about 9/11 chaos. The discourse analysis included in this study will demonstrate different fragments of 9/11 reality. By describing these constructions of 9/11 in newspapers framed within spectrum of consciousness, we will be able to reveal the dynamics of these unsettled, unruly 9/11 complications.

*Keywords: 9/11; newspapers; spectrum of consciousness; naqli-aqli; discourse analysis*

### **INTRODUCTION**

Although one may contradict its various nuances, it is hard to deny the ubiquity of the use of *naqli-aqli* in discourse studies. Previous research on *naqli-aqli*, for example, have been undertaken by scholars in discourse attentive to issues of cohesion, coherence, religious authority, power, political thought, and human performance index (see for instance Adnan, Siddiquee, & Baulderstone, 2016; Marai, Muhammad Ridhwan, Fuadah, & Ali, 2015; Mughal & Ali, 2015; Tayob, 1999). Today, the idea that *naqli-aqli* concerns are addressed have been subjected to many ways language and textual

information are presented, couched against, among many others, media, information, communication, and information technology (ICT), and globalization. *Naqli-aqli* ‘discourse repository,’ as it is often called, usually reflects the intersection of textual and spoken corpus, paving ways for ‘inventions’ of alternative worldviews. This change in the ways discourse analysis revolutionizes itself stages emerging questions about the past, present, and future *naqli-aqli* dimensions. One reason being the frustration of not having an anchor on present discontents when familiar social, cultural, religious, and political theories slip into obsolescence, as some concepts no longer present novel revelations or simple cues for understanding world-changing issues. Limitations of studies, failures to provide real-world description of *naqli-aqli* knowledge, and failure to broaden socio-cultural dimensions are but some of the reasons that *naqli-aqli* contributions, albeit limitations, will be grist for the mill to discourse studies.

One of the fundamental issues concerning *naqli-aqli* dimensions is the way how consciousness expands our worldviews. External and internal consciousness can guide, explain, direct, and train us to form our socio-cultural belief systems. These socio-cultural belief systems may partly explain why we do what we do, why we see what we see, why we say what we say, and why we feel what we feel. Our consciousness, to a large extent, shapes and energizes our understanding of human beings’ complex relations. As such, 9/11 strife-torn unrests, for example, leaves behind unnecessary complications, chaos, and risks, not only to many Americans, but also to other Islamic nation-states. These sporadic and unpredictable 9/11 complexities are not only discussed, debated, and negated, but has also contributed to our awareness on what it means to live in the post-9/11 era. While many of these explorations are affirmed, regarded, and profound in many Western nation-states (see for instance Bishop, 2016; Sturken, 2016), studies on 9/11 consciousness from non-Western contexts, are, to this end, largely insufficient. This paper, then, attempts to explore how the issue of 9/11 is presented in newspapers. Framed by spectrum of consciousness theory, this paper examines some of the many ways consciousness of 9/11 unfortunate conflict is framed in three Malaysian newspapers. The research question, therefore, is what is the macropropositional content of headlines in Malaysian newspaper? We will show the ways in which newspapers describe 9/11 contexts and how diverse layers of consciousness are delineated in the newspaper, forming some levels of questions, contests, and negotiations about 9/11 chaos. The discourse analysis included in this study will demonstrate different fragments of 9/11 reality. By describing these constructions of 9/11 in newspapers framed within spectrums of consciousness, we will be able to reveal the dynamics of these unsettled, unruly 9/11 complications.

This paper is important for the fundamental reason that it will serve as one of the many concerted efforts that can be told about 9/11 experience in particular to war, mass violence, and social chaos. These interactions that are explicitly or inexplicitly referred to in media texts are consistent with the intention to demonstrate that 9/11 consciousness can serve the broader and diverse *naqli-aqli* goals, amidst the changing political and social environment. Its expected outcome will include various meaning these newspaper headlines unveil the complex relation between particular streams of Islam and the mobilizations of global 9/11 consciousness. The paper is, therefore, organized into three different sections; we will begin reviewing literature about *naqli-aqli* and consciousness, including their links to 9/11, newspaper headlines, and discourse analysis. We then present and discuss findings. By framing our study this way, the paper will ultimately bridge the gap of what we understand about 9/11 and what we know of the unfolding of 9/11 conflicts in Malaysian newspaper.

## **CONSCIOUSNESS AND NAQLI-AQLI KNOWLEDGE**

One of the usefulness of *naqli-aqli* discourses within political, religious, and social contexts is that it facilitates the space for representing many narratives by its diverse foregrounding of complexities, rather than this-or-that simplifications in understanding complicated human (*ummah*) relations. It is here that this paper wishes to embrace *naqli-aqli* ambit by exploring the articulations of 9/11 consciousness as captured in Malaysian newspapers. This notion, under careful consideration, is worthy of discussion for the fundamental reason in that it supports the longevity of Islamic precepts, in particular to the idea of *salaam* that works in tandem with tranquility, peace, and security. In light

of this, let us revisit some points of what we know regarding consciousness and *naqli-aqli* breadth and scope:

1. *Naqli aqli* can be nurtured through family, cultural, and religious tradition (Taufiqurrahman, 2013; Mohd Kamal, 2013)
2. *Naqli aqli* can translate into science and technology curriculum (Mohammad Hilmy Baihaqy & Osman, 2016)
3. *Naqli-aqli* could be a result of the staging of debates between contemporary Western and Islamic framework of (scientific) knowledge (Shamsaie & Mahmoudi, 2016)

Under this view, varying levels of consciousness (critical and naive consciousness, for instance) are, to this end, considered fundamental to expanding the horizons of *naqli-aqli* ambit. The current attempt purported at describing the extent to which 9/11 consciousness is demonstrated plays the role of not only broadening the scope of *naqli-aqli*, but also describing the connection between consciousness and *naqli-aqli* in general. In consequence, shaping and understanding diverse human (*ummah*) relations can be nurtured and sustained. Although these readings represent one of the many readings concerning the intersection between *naqli-aqli* and consciousness, they shed lights on what we know of consciousness and *naqli-aqli* thus far. But how does consciousness reflect, imagine, and construct different present and future in the post 9/11 era as reflected in Malaysian newspapers? The following section expands on this.

## **9/11 COMPLICATIONS, DISCOURSE ANALYSIS, AND SPECTRUM OF CONSCIOUSNESS**

Before this paper gets into the discussion of 9/11, it is imperative that we dwell on the notions of discourse analysis, framed within the theory of spectrum of consciousness. How might discourse analysis present the conceptual frame and place of analyses that prevail? In what ways can discourse analysis describe 9/11 complications in light of existing Malaysian newspaper reporting? These lines of questions have come a long way in establishing integral connection that is by no means clear-cut. One of the ways in which discourse analysis demonstrates complex human relation is through illuminating dominant discourses (Brookes, 1995, Mohd Muzhafar, Nor Fariza, Izaham Shah, 2013; Mohd Muzhafar, Ruzy, & Raihanah, 2016b). These dominant discourses can be explained through devices, including, but are not limited to varying ideological stands, metaphors, participants, and processes, and most importantly, lexical items (Brookes, 1995, Mohd Muzhafar et. al, 2013, Wodak and Matouschek, 1993). Combination of lexical items is said to form part of recurring, dominant discourses that construct particular description of current, conflicting issues. The premise of lexical items, as discussed above, may pave way, one way or another, for a scrutiny of consciousness in Malaysian newspapers. In examining dominant discourses in newspapers, such method answers the following questions:

*What strategies (linguistic) are used in the construction of discourses? How do these strategies interplay with historical, social, cultural, and political aspects in public opinion? How do these strategies relate objects, subjects, concepts of the discourses to each other?* (Langer, 1997, p. 2)

These, among many of other inquiries that guide the idea of disclosing dominant discourses are among those that are important, therefore, useful for the present analysis on consciousness. This framework, as Langer (1997) explains, furnishes readers, in this case, newspaper readers, with discourses that are “socially determined” and “life world,” sharing “common social reality” (p.4). In a general understanding, Langer’s (1997) framework of unveiling dominant discourses through lexical items may describe how newspaper provides the interrelation between what newspaper produce and how they bind these issues to newspaper audience. Thus, the understanding of newspaper texts is, on one hand, unique to issue of 9/11 and consciousness, on the other. Accordingly, how can Langer’s (1997) lines of inquiry tap onto spectrum of consciousness?

This paper argues that, as dominant discourses are revealed, they form a pattern of consciousness. Such pattern of consciousness, can be divided into four components (Wilber, 1975):

### ***The Mind Level***

This is the innermost layer of consciousness. It connects to the absolute and ultimate reality of the universe. As Wilber (1975) puts it, this level is simply called “Mind,” which is linked to greater power of the universe- Brahman, Tao, Dharmakaya, and Allah.

### ***The Existential Level***

Existential level of consciousness deals with psychophysical dimension. It is here where the lines between the self and other, between organism and environment are established. Within the level of existential, its upper level is said to consist of Biosocial bands, an amalgamation of cultural, familial, and social understandings, including language, logic, ethics, and law.

### ***The Ego Level***

This is the level in which a person does not value psychosomatic organism. As Wilber (1975) explains, this level shows how one “identifies solely with a more-or-less accurate mental representation or picture of his total organism. In other words, he is identified with his Ego, his self-image” (p. 119).

### ***The Shadow Level***

In some occasion, a person can alienate various aspects of his own psyche. At this level, it is not about the links or awareness developed with the environment or people but narrowing one’s identity with “only parts of the ego, which we may refer to as the persona” (Wilber, 1975, p.110).

Although these four level spectrum of consciousness have further been developed by other scholars, Wilber’s (1975) is chosen as it shows the many ways connections are made between a person, his/her environment, and psyche. And although Wilber’s (1975) framework is Western-derived, we are reminded that a theory of any kind “is a way of seeing things in a particular light, of tentatively arranging things in particular configurations in order to comprehend accompanying relational constructions. Each analytical model, each inquiring approach, each discerning position has its own advantages and disadvantages” (Ruzy, 2003, p.14). Accordingly, how can Wilber’s (1975) framework be applied in this study? This paper argues that, as Malaysian newspaper readers engage with the headlines, these headlines relate to the four levels of consciousness. Put differently, it contends that by using Wilber’s (1975) spectrum of consciousness, we are open to many issues that can be categorized within these diverse four levelled spectrum of consciousness. Ideally, these newspaper headlines are selected for analyses. One can always pinpoint the flaws with the essence of 9/11 consciousness illustrated in newspaper headlines. Hence, this paper is compelled to surmise that under no illusion that whatever headlines this paper has selected regarding fragments of 9/11 will not be subjected to critiques and refutations. Instead, the point is not to belabour the validity of these headlines (Creswell, 2007; Piaw, 2012; Stewart, 1998), but to consider them as a rough guide in the selection of newspaper headlines that can best manifest the dynamics of 9/11 complications in understanding the many ways they present sporadic and unpredictable 9/11 complexities.

## **METHODOLOGY**

The newspaper headlines were obtained from several different Malaysian-based sources. Headlines from the New Straits Times (NST), The Star (TS), Aliran (A), Malaysia Kini (MK), and Malay Mail (MM) from 2000-2016 were gathered. With diverse political and ideological viewpoints, these newspaper headlines give, in one essence, Malaysian voices about 9/11 tensions. Whereas NST is considered pro government, TS is a local news production. MM is a daily tabloid from Kuala Lumpur

while newspaper A and MK focus on reform movement. 211 newspaper headlines were selected after keywords, “9/11” and “Sept 11” were run on each of these newspaper websites. However, a detailed examination of these headlines also revealed issues other than the reporting of 9/11. Therefore, 107 were eliminated as they deviated from the topic at hand. Since the aim of the study is to explore how 9/11 consciousness is played out in newspaper headlines, 104 headlines were only used. Appendix A lists the headlines.

**Procedure**

After these newspaper headlines were obtained, the topics or macropropositional content of all 104 headlines were analyzed using Statistical Procedure for Social Sciences 20.0 Version (SPSS 20.0). In addition to using SPSS 20.0, the macrorule of generalization is utilized in order to position the propositional content of the news texts contained in the headlines onto broader macroproposition (Van Dijk, 1987). Thus, if the headline of TS4 reads, “U.S. judge dismisses September 11 victims’ case against Saudi Arabia,” this headline can be categorized under *existential*. As Kintsch and Van Dijk (1978) put it, through semantic macrostructures, these 9/11 ambits are likely to occupy readers’ minds.

**RESULTS**

This part summarizes the analysis that was carried out. In order to present the result of these analyses in a consistent manner, the discussion of results is organized according to their macrostructures. MK offered the most significant number of headlines related to 9/11, NST with 37, and TS with 12 headlines. MM and A wrote 4 and 6 headlines respectively. Table 1 presents these headlines categorized based on spectrum of consciousness:

Table 1. Macropropositional content of 9/11 in Malaysian newspaper headlines

Order	Macropropositions	Number of Headlines						Examples
		Total	NST	TS	A	MM	MK	
1	The Mind Level	-	-	-	-	-	-	
2	The Existential Level	83	30	11	6	4	31	NST 19, TS4,
3	The Ego Level	20	6	1	-	-	13	NST3, TS2, MK1, MM2
4	The Shadow Level	1	1	-	-	-	-	NST29

Existential level, which focuses on the self and its biosocial bands, as well as ego level, that emphasizes one’s mental representation of his/her total organism contributed to the many headlines on 9/11. The Malaysian newspapers, selected from five different sources, glorified the efforts within political, legal, social, and religious dimensions, including but are not limited to organizing cases to judges, putting Iraqi’s politicians into jail, paying tributes to unfortunate 9/11 anniversary, and how global reactions towards 9/11. There were also headlines examining statues or landmarks erected following 9/11, including mosque and World Trade Site (Ground Zero). Finally, headlines, putting Malaysia on the world map regarding 9/11, are also portrayed. These levels of consciousness, therefore, apply to the newspaper headlines gathered.

## CONCLUSION

From the newspaper headlines above, we see the workings of diverse ways (post) 9/11 era encourages a sense of consciousness which is not just informed by content and pictures per say. The newspaper readers, as illustrated above, are exposed to diverse layers of consciousness, using partly the headlines that they skim, scan, and glance. When these newspaper headlines are examined, they provide the ways in which consciousness about 9/11 is described, mainly through existential and ego layers that exist within the broad contexts of 9/11 conundrum from Malaysian perspectives that, perhaps, expand the territories of *naqli-aqli* knowledge.

However, it is not the objective to underscore or complicate the value of *naqli-aqli* knowledge. Indeed, *naqli-aqli* knowledge breaks down territories because the many opportunities it offers for researchers simply push the boundaries. But as shown in the analysis above, the discourses of 9/11 unsettled fragments of reality and *naqli-aqli* knowledge is worth scrutinizing because if global political and social dimensions evolve, so is the *naqli-aqli* scholarship surrounding 9/11 era. It is, however, worth noting that these newspaper headlines are not necessarily freed of limitations as newspaper headlines vary from one country to the other and that legitimacy of these newspaper headlines are unknown (Mohd Muzhafar & Nor Fariza, 2016a). But the comfort is that *naqli-aqli* discourses such as what this paper has examined in fact expands the scope of *naqli-aqli*, seeking the attention from scholars in political, cultural, and social studies. And as they do so, these scholars continue to reinforce and reproduce their diverse expertise and knowledge on the uncertainty of 9/11, consciousness and *naqli-aqli*. There is nothing to resolve about the interrelations of 9/11 unfortunate fragments of reality and *naqli-aqli* dimensions; it is merely to reconcile and describe the intricacies of 9/11 era, amidst the changing and challenging narratives of *naqli-aqli* consciousness. It is as though it is within these 9/11 newspaper headlines that consciousness becomes enlivened and diversified, metamorphosed into various fragments of *naqli-aqli* precepts. Paraphrasing Abdul Karim (2015), it is through this study that help strikes “a balance in the pursuit of the two types of knowledge (*naqli-aqli*)” (p.7).

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## **Appendix A**

### **Newspaper headlines on 9/11**

#### **New Straits Times**

- NST1 9/11 suspects' treatment a focus in Guantanamo hearing
- NST2 US Senate votes to allow 9/11 victims to sue Saudi Arabia
- NST3 9/11 bomb plot suspect had mental illness history
- NST4 Be more prepared to counter terrorists
- NST5 9/11 bomb plot suspect had mental illness history
- NST6 A balanced approach to moderation
- NST7 Muslim Americans beg Trump to stop accusations
- NST8 Making an impact on world diplomacy
- NST9 Obama tells Americans terror will be defeated
- NST10 New global currency for the region?
- NST11 The global fight against terrorism
- NST12 Muslim Americans welcome first NY Eid school holiday
- NST13 Washington rail station evacuated after reports of shooting
- NST14 How IS grew stronger
- NST15 Jihadi John condemned 9/11, London attacks
- NST16 Extremism comes in many guises
- NST17 No boundaries to terrorism
- NST18 These days, conquest is for losers
- NST19 Guantanamo 9/11 hearing canceled after US torture report
- NST20 Islam and rights
- NST21 Prosecute the torturers
- NST22 CIA letter shows pre-war concern about Iraq 9/11 link
- NST23 The case for openness
- NST24 US Senate report exposes shocking CIA torture
- NST25 We are always still Americans
- NST26 Soul-searching to counter IS
- NST27 'We crossed the line', US admits to UN anti-torture body
- NST28 NYC's Sept. 11 museum gets 1 millionth visitor
- NST29 Living in Osama's shadow
- NST30 Afghanistan captures two Haqqani commanders
- NST31 US general killed in Kabul attack
- NST32 US lawmakers warn of 'next 9/11' threat in Iraq
- NST33 Australia unveils measures to tackle rise of foreign fighters
- NST34 Playing soldier in America's suburbs
- NST35 Palestine radicalising Muslim youth
- NST36 US sentences British men over Taliban support
- NST37 Al-Qaeda affiliates a long-term threat in Afghanistan

#### **The Star Online**

- TS1 U.S. Senate passes bill allowing September 11 victims to sue Saudi Arabia
- TS2 Before death, bin Laden eyed September 11 anniversary media blitz
- TS3 U.S. frustration simmers over Belgium's struggle with militant threat
- TS4 U.S. judge dismisses September 11 victims' case against Saudi Arabia
- TS5 New bin Laden documents show a suspicious, pressured al Qaeda
- TS6 Iraqi politician Ahmed Chalabi who pushed Bush to invade Iraq dies
- TS7 Saudi court jails al Qaeda recruiters, bin Laden associate newspaper
- TS8 Sept 11 conspirator Moussaoui says Saudi royals backed al Qaeda
- TS9 Britain honours Afghan war dead with memorial day
- TS10 FBI workers with foreign ties face unfair security checks
- TS11 With World Trade site largely rebuilt, New York marks September 11
- TS12 Guantanamo judge to hear 9/11 suspect's bid for separate trial

## **Malay mail**

- MM1 Today's terrorists can't be categorised so easily
- MM2 How Islamic State overtook al-Qaeda
- MM3 ISIS is just an umbrella brand for hate
- MM4 Trump urges ban on immigration from countries with 'history of terrorism'

## **Aliran**

- A1 How must Muslims react to Isis?
- A2 The chain of accountability in foreign policy
- A3 Is the Security Offences Bill constitutional?
- A4 Reactions to bin Laden assassination
- A5 Anti-terrorism and uprisings
- A6 Mosque near Ground Zero!

## **Malaysia Kini**

- MK1 Trump reframes claim that Muslims cheered 9/11
- MK2 Bin Laden warns US against executing 9/11 mastermind
- MK3 Iran to put three US hikers on trial
- MK4 G'ovt frees alleged militant tied to 9/11 attackers
- MK5 Dr M: Arabs incapable of 9/11, but CIA, Mossad are
- MK6 '9/11 conspiracy theories are conspiracy fact'
- MK7 Yazid a member of JI Malaysia, witness tells court
- MK8 US exit from Iraq: Horrific costs negate benefits
- MK9 Tears unite Americans on 10th anniversary of 9/11
- MK10 Yazid hails 9/11 attackers as 'marketers of Islam'
- MK11 Osama burial at sea an insult to Muslims: Jamilkhir
- MK12 Dr M: If they can make Avatar, they can make 9/11
- MK13 Internet bristles with conspiracy theories
- MK14 Main 9/11 plotter will be convicted, executed: Obama
- MK15 Obama leads tributes at 8th anniversary of 9/11
- MK16 9/11 a double-edge sword for Muslims
- MK17 1511, 7/11 and 9/11
- MK18 Conspiracy here, there, everywhere
- MK19 How US spies found Osama's hideout
- MK20 'JihadJane' pleads not guilty in domestic terror case
- MK21 The soft-spoken millionaire 'mass murderer'
- MK22 Al-Qaeda suspect pleads guilty to NY bomb plot
- MK23 The world after 9/11 and Iraq
- MK24 Other 9/11 victims besides Americans
- MK25 Sept 11 attacks - don't pin blame on Msia: PM
- MK26 Budget did not factor in Sept 11 effects: Wan Azizah
- MK27 Al-Qaeda informer tells of past M'sian hijack plot
- MK28 The tactical irrelevance of Osama's death
- MK29 US overhauls terror watch lists
- MK30 For CIA, Afghan attack a historic blow
- MK31 Obama blames plane attack on 'catastrophic' flaws
- MK32 Afghan govt distances itself from CIA 'black ops'
- MK33 Khomeini, the man who changed the Muslim world
- MK34 Mumbai attacks could happen in the US: FB
- MK35 Why we should mention Iraq

MK 36 Obama to examine probes into foiled plane  
attack

MK 37 The public perception of Bush

MK 38 Despite 911, Dr M & co fail to turn over the US

MK 39 Airfare bargains for the bold after Sept 11 scare

MK 40 Mahathir says arrests of Islamic militants unrelated to US  
tragedy MK 41 PAS declares 'jihad' over attacks in Afghanistan  
MK 42 '9/11 conspiracy theories are conspiracy fact'  
MK 43 9/11 and Malaysia's political fetishes  
MK 44 The post-9/11 world and Malaysia