

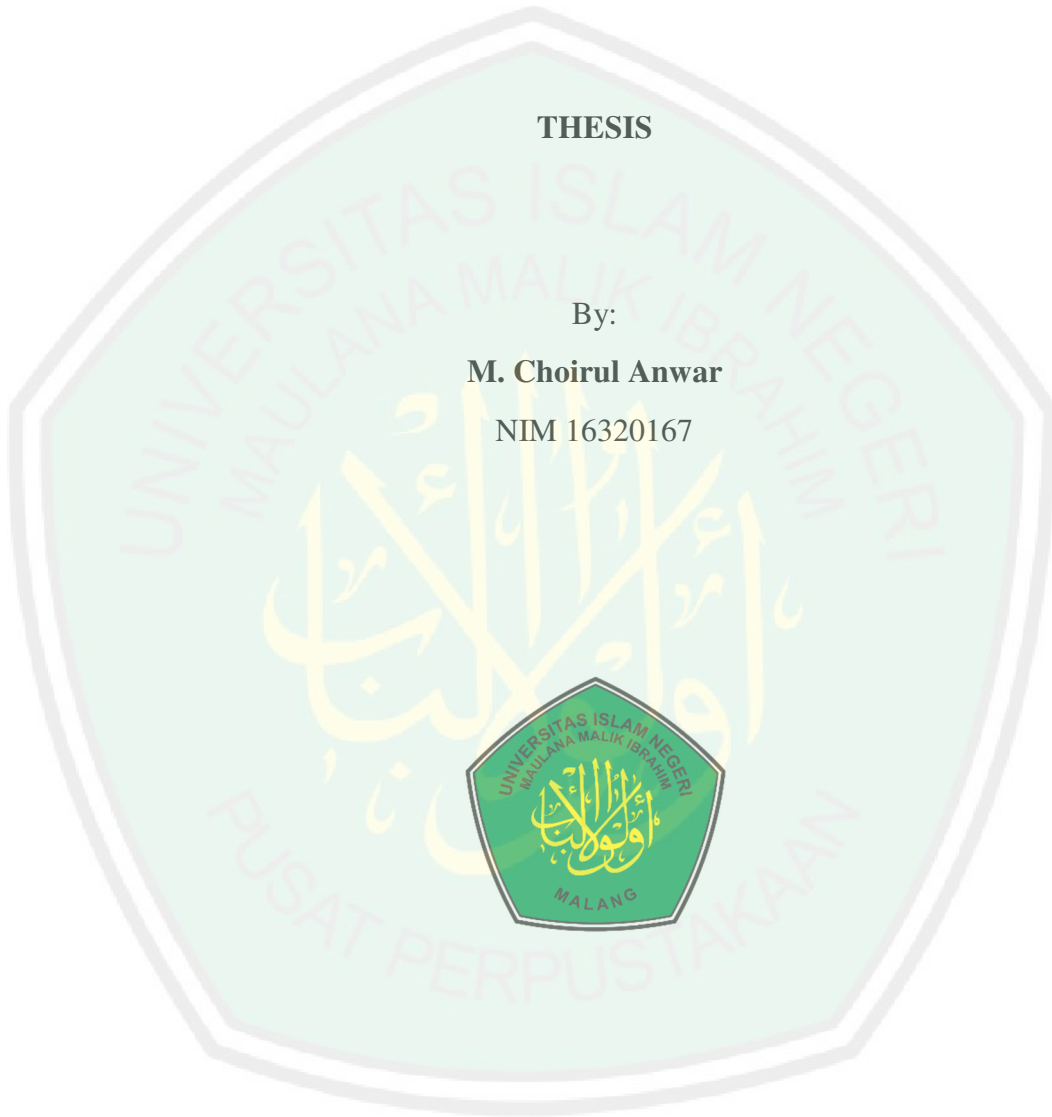
**‘FIGHTING’ AGAINST ISLAMOPHOBIA: A MULTIMODAL
DISCOURSE ANALYSIS ON MO SALAH’S PHENOMENON AS
REPRESENTED IN MEDIA**

THESIS

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FACULTY OF HUMANITIES

UNIVERSITAS ISLAM NEGERI MAULANA MALIK IBRAHIM MALANG

2020

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DISCOURSE ANALYSIS ON MO SALAH’S PHENOMENON AS
REPRESENTED IN MEDIA**

THESIS

Presented to
Universitas Islam Negeri Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang
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2020

STATEMENT OF AUTHORSHIP

I state that the thesis entitled **“Fighting against Islamophobia: A Multimodal Discourse Analysis on Mo Salah’s Phenomenon as Represented in Media”** is my original work. I do not include any materials previously written or published by another person, except those that are cited as references and written in the bibliography. Hereby, if there is an objection or claim, I am the only person who is responsible for that.

Malang, 8 December 2020



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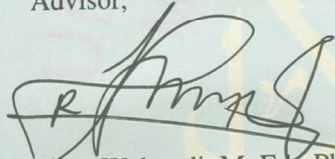
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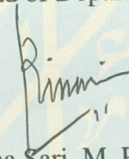
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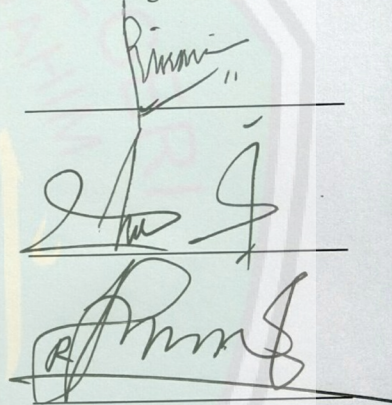
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MOTTO

Anything is possible for those who believe



DEDICATION

For:

Bapak & Ibu

Mbak Lia & Ridho



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First and foremost, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to Allah SWT for His true blessings and mercies throughout this beautiful life. It is truly of Him that I can finally complete this undergraduate thesis. Peace may always be upon Prophet Muhammad, the great leader and role model for us all.

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Finally, I am fully aware of some weaknesses in this thesis. Therefore, I would be very open and humble to welcome any suggestions from anyone who has the same interest in this field of study. I expect that, from this fair study, people can find something useful that they can use for a lesson – of being more critical and fully conscious of everything that happens around us, especially those informed by media.

Malang, 26 January 2021

M. Choirul Anwar

ABSTRACT

Anwar, M. Choirul (2020) *‘Fighting’ against Islamophobia: A Multimodal Discourse Analysis on Mo Salah’s Phenomenon as Represented in Media*. Undergraduate Thesis. Department of English Literature, Faculty of Humanities, Universitas Islam Negeri Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang. Advisor Ribut Wahyudi, M. Ed., Ph. D

Keywords: *Mo Salah, Media Representation, Islamophobia*

Since Mo Salah signed for Liverpool FC in the summer of 2017, the city of Liverpool and the UK in general have been presumed to have considerable decline for sentiments against Islam and Muslims. A study by Stanford University confirmed that positive exposures on the Egyptian player have indeed helped reduced Islamophobia rate in the UK during the past few years (Alrababa’h, Marble, Mousa & Siegel, 2019). Having seen this study profoundly intriguing, plenty numbers of mainstream media start to cite it forward through their reports in hope that more and more people realize the significance of having Mo Salah in the world where Islam and Muslims are widely discriminated. However, as there is no such thing as ‘neutral’ in the media, this research is therefore conducted to shed light on ‘suspicious’ representations of the Mo Salah’s phenomenon by media.

The data sources of this research are two video reports: one by Middle East Eye (MEE) entitled *Is Mohamed Salah changing the way Muslims are seen in Liverpool and beyond?* and the other by Independent Television (ITV) entitled *The Mo Salah Effect: Islamophobia in Liverpool Falls Following Striker’s Arrival, Study Finds*. Collected from the websites of both respective media, the data were then multimodally analyzed using Social Actor Representation (van Leeuwen, 2008), Social Semiotic Theory of Representation (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006) and News Discourse (Bednarek & Caple, 2012). Going further, this research examined the news values as well as the representational and interactional meanings embedded in the video reports, along with critical analysis on the socio-historical and economic contexts of both MEE and ITV.

The key findings of this research suggested that the two video reports might have potential to produce quasi-acceptance of Islam and Muslim; the condition where Islam and Muslim are accepted *seemingly; apparently; not really*. Instead of giving more spotlights on Mo Salah’s identity as a Muslim, both MEE and ITV emphasize on Mo Salah’s stellar

statistic and achievements in football as the main factors which earn him the position he is today – the position which public see as advantage and capable of decreasing the sentiments upon Islam and Muslim community, and therefore can improve public's perception. This research argued that these so-called 'off-target' representations might lead to misconception once Mo Salah is not anymore in his peak performance. It was then understood that their real agendas were to possibly essentialize that Mo Salah, as a symbol of Muslim in the footballing world, is not worth of positive recognition and therefore insist that they are always 'behind'.



ABSTRAK

Anwar, M. Choirul (2020) *‘Melawan’ Islamofobia: Analisa Wacana Multimodal terhadap Fenomena Mo Salah berdasarkan Representasi Media*. Skripsi. Jurusan Sastra Inggris, Fakultas Humaniora, Universitas Islam Negeri Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang. Dosen Pembimbing Ribut Wahyudi, M. Ed., Ph. D.

Keywords : *Mo Salah, Representasi Media, Islamofobia*

Sejak Mo Salah bergabung dengan Liverpool FC pada musim panas 2017, muncul anggapan bahwa sentimen terhadap Islam dan Muslim di kota Liverpool dan UK mengalami penurunan yang cukup signifikan. Sebuah studi yang diterbitkan oleh Universitas Stanford menunjukkan bahwa pemberitaan positif terhadap penyerang timnas Mesir tersebut terbukti mampu mengurangi tingkat Islamofobia di UK dalam beberapa tahun terakhir (Alrababa’h, Marble, Mousa & Siegel, 2019). Temuan ini menarik banyak perhatian media *mainstream* yang berlomba - lomba meneruskannya melalui pemberitaan mereka. Dengan harapan bahwa temuan ini akan ditangkap oleh khalayak yang lebih luas, media dalam hal ini berperan dalam membantu mendefinisikan ulang tentang apa itu Islam dan siapa itu Muslim melalui Mo Salah. Namun, menyadari bahwa tidak ada yang ‘netral’ dalam media, maka dari itu penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengungkap apa di balik pemberitaan media tentang fenomena yang melibatkan Mo Salah ini.

Sumber data penelitian ini adalah dua video liputan: satu oleh Middle East Eye (MEE) berjudul *Is Mohamed Salah changing the way Muslims are seen in Liverpool and beyond?* dan satu lagi oleh Independent Television (ITV) yang berjudul *The Mo Salah Effect: Islamophobia in Liverpool Falls Following Striker’s Arrival, Study Finds*. Diambil dari *websites* resmi kedua media, data tersebut kemudian dianalisis secara multimodal menggunakan Social Actor Representation (van Leeuwen, 2008), Social Semiotic Theory of Representation (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006) dan News Discourse (Bednarek & Caple, 2012). Selanjutnya, penelitian ini mengkaji aspek *news values* serta makna *representational* dan *interactional* yang melekat pada kedua video liputan tersebut. Selain itu, penelitian ini juga menghadirkan analisis kritis pada konteks *socio-historical* dan *economic* guna melihat faktor - faktor yang kemungkinan dapat memengaruhi sikap MEE dan ITV dalam pemberitaan tentang fenomena Mo Salah ini.

Hasil dari penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa kedua pemberitaan tersebut berpotensi menciptakan *quasi-acceptance of Islam and Muslim*; sebuah kondisi di mana Islam dan Muslim *seolah – olah* diterima. Baik MEE maupun ITV lebih menekankan statistik memukau Mo Salah di lapangan hijau sebagai faktor utama yang mampu memengaruhi cara pandang publik terhadap Islam dan Muslim daripada identitasnya sebagai seorang Muslim. Penelitian ini menilai MEE dan ITV telah merepresentasikan fenomena ini secara kurang berimbang. Hal tersebut memunculkan kekhawatiran mengingat representasi yang ‘*off-target*’ tersebut dapat memicu miskonsepsi pada saat, misalnya, Mo Salah sudah tidak dalam performa terbaiknya. Penelitian ini kemudian menyimpulkan kemungkinan agenda utama dibalik kedua media tersebut adalah untuk semakin menyudutkan posisi Mo Salah sebagai simbol umat Islam di dunia sepak bola khususnya di Barat dan juga membingkai mereka sebagai kelompok ‘kelas kedua’.

مستخلص البحث

أنوار، م. خ.، 2020. "التخاصم ضد إسلاموفوبيا: تحليل الخطاب متعدد الوسائط في ظاهرة محمد صلاح الممثلة في وسائل الإعلام. بحث جامعي، قسم الآداب الإنجليزية، كلية العلوم الإنسانية، جامعة مؤننا مالك إبراهيم الإسلامية الحكومية مالانج.

مشرف : ريبوط وحيودي، الماجستير.

الكلمات الرئيسية : محمد صلاح، تمثيل وسائل الإعلام، إسلاموفوبيا.

منذ انضمام محمد صلاح بليفربول لفريق كرة القدم في الموسم الصيف 2017، ظهر اعتبار بأن الخلجة تجاه الإسلام والمسلمين في مدينة ليفربول والمملكة المتحدة قد تدهورت بشكل تافه. تدلّ الدراسة التي أصدرتها جامعة ستانفورد إلى أن الأخبار الإيجابية تجاه المهاجم المصري تقدر على أن تحقّض مستوى إسلاموفوبيا في المملكة المتحدة في السنوات الأخيرة (Alrababa'h, Marble, Mousa Siegel, 2019). أعجب هذا الإكتشاف وسائل الإعلام التيرة حيث تتسابق لإخبارها في وسائلهم. برجا أن يصل هذا الخبر إلى عامة الناس بشكل أكثر، تلعب وسائل الإعلام دورها لهذا الأمر في مساعدة تكرار التعريف عما هو الإسلام ومن هم المسلمون من خلال محمد صلاح. لكن بالفهم توجد أية وسائل الإعلام المحايدة، فلذلك يهدف هذا البحث إلى إكشاف ما وراء الأخبار من هذه وسائل الإعلام عن الظاهرة المتعلقة بمحمد صلاح.

مصادر البيانات لهذا البحث هي فيديوان: الأول من Middle East Eye (MEE) بموضوع " Is Mohamed Salah changing the way Muslims are seen in Liverpool and beyond? " الثاني من Independent Television (ITV) بموضوع " The Mo Salah Effect: Islamophobia in Liverpool Falls "Following Striker's Arrival, Study Finds. حيث تم تحميلها من الويب الرسمي لوسيلني الإعلامين، ثم يتم تحليل تلك البيانات بشكل متعدد الوسائط باستخدام نظرية التمثيل السيمائية الاجتماعية (كريس وبان ليون، 2006) وتحليل الأخبار (بيدناريك وكافل، 2012). ثم يبحث هذا الباحث في مجال قيمة الأخبار ومعنى التمثيل والتفاعل الموجودة في الفيديوين. إضافة إلى

ذلك أتى هذا البحث بتحليل النقد تجاه سياق الإسلام الاجتماعية التاريخية والإقتصادية لمعرفة العوامل التي تمكن أن تؤثر موقف MEE و ITV في إخبار ظاهرة محمد صلاح.

تدلّ نتيجة هذا البحث إلى أن هذين الفيديويين يحتملان أن يكونا شبه قبول الإسلام والمسلمين، الحالة حيث كأن الإسلام والمسلمين مقبولون. MEE و ITV يؤكدان الإحصائيات المعجبة من قبل محمد صلاح في الملعب كالعامل الأساسي الذي يقدر على تأثير وجهة النظر المجتمع تجاه الإسلام والمسلمين بالنسبة إلى هويته كالمسلم. قدّر هذا البحث أن MEE و ITV قد مثّلا الظاهرة بعدم التعادل. وأدّى ذلك الأمر إلى الخشية بالنظر إلى التمثيل الخارج الهدف يسبّب إلى المفهوم الخاطئ، على سبيل المثال، كان محمد صلاح ليس في أفضل حالته. ثم استنتج هذا البحث إلى احتمال من البرنامج الرئيسي لكلتا الوسيلتين هو للتضييق على موقف الإسلام والمسلمين خاصة في عالم الغرب ولصياغهم كمجموعة المرحلة الثانية.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter highlights the background, research questions, objectives, and also significances of the study. Along with them is also the scope and limitations as well as method used in this research.

A. Background of the Study

Islamophobia remains something of a highly contested issue in today's world. Assuming that Islamophobia is a mere sentimental religious phenomenon can possibly be a fatal howler. Klug (2012) argued that such understanding has 'come of age' since Islamophobia has further given birth to 'anti-Islam/anti-Islamism' which implies on a more severely chaotic situation for Islam and Muslims. Islamophobia is articulated by the fear, hatred, and humiliation directed against Islam, often deliberates and organized ones, which by any means (e.g. media and political discourse) intend to thwart Islam and Muslims away from being integral with Western cultures and values. The better way, therefore, is to see Islamophobia a little more than just a phobia; Islamophobia has now become a socio-political phenomenon whose function is as ideology – embraced by those who hate or fear Muslims (Esposito & Kalin, 2011). After the Cold War ended with the West notoriously being regarded as the winner, so new imperial ideology was invented along the way to establish the so-called new world order. The ideology says that a new rival must be created – and that rival must be Islamic civilization (Huntington, 1996). It is

reasonable, as Ali (2017) further explained, since Islam remains the only entity they (the West) assume as monolithic; owning powerful and intractably indivisible life systems.

9/11 was absolutely the vital momentum and most remembered tragedy where the world cobbled together what they had seen in the mainstream media; cursed Islam and Muslims as the masterplan behind that unforgivable event. The level has mounted ever since. In the the UK post-9/11, the level of indirect Muslim discriminations was reported to rose by 82,6% and direct discriminations by 76,3% (Sheridan, 2006). Many political rhetorics were developed and spread throughout Western society by then. The main goals were of course to persuade them with evil slogans like 'Islamic Terrorism', 'Islamofascism', 'Muslim equals terrorist' and thus brought the idea of 'the clash of civilization' into reality. Consequently, 9/11 had caused reversed belief among Western society.

The slogans of 'living together', 'coexistence', 'multiculturalism' which had long been the character and philosophical basis built on Western communities have now been placed in the opposite direction as for current socio-political developments mean so (Bilgenoğlu, 2018). Boris Johnson and Donald Trump are only examples of other world leaders who are known for their openly racist and Islamophobic attitudes. Stories of headscarf ban in the workplace and Executive Order 13769¹ are the proofs that Islamophobia today is not merely a problematic social instinct when meeting a

¹ Executive Order 13769 (often known as Muslim Travel Ban) is an order by President Donald Trump that aims to ban seven predominantly Muslim countries from entering US.

stranger, but the reality reveals, it is much worse. It has entered political domains and has often been utilized as a tool for propaganda.

1. Islamophobia in the UK Context

Before the arrival of Mohammed Salah, Muslims make up around 4.8% of the total population in the UK (US Department of State, 2015). The number grows around nearly 6% in 2018 as the trend continues to widespread across all areas in the UK; with the fact that nearly a half of them are native British. For the non-UK born, the greater Muslim proportions come from Asia and Africa, while the rest are filled up by immigrants from some other countries in Europe (The Muslim Council of Britain, 2015). More specifically, Pakistani and Bangladeshi still come up the top for Asian ethnicity as they gain 42.9% in a joined percentage compared to Indian 7.3%, Chinese 0.3%, and other Asians 7.2%. Somalians figure dominate the population of African Muslim communities in the UK with around 250.000 residents. Outside Asian-African categories, there were also estimated instances of mixed-blood populations such as mixed Asians 1.8%, mixed Africans 0.6%, mixed Caribbean 0.2%, and other mixes 1.2% (p. 22).

In addition to birthplaces and diverse ethnicities of Muslims in the UK, their distributions also remain interesting. In general, the distributions of Muslims in the UK are channeled to four main regions: Yorkshire, London, West Midlands, and The Humber. In the more cities-census details, Birmingham has one of the biggest Muslim populations with approximately 21.8%, only second to Bradford which has

24.7%. Manchester comes third with 15.8% and London has 12.4%. The rests of Muslims reside mainly in Blackburn, Liverpool, Burnley, etc (p. 25).

Although the denominations of Islam are often misread as a monolith, since Islam is not a race, so it is quite logical to say that the lived belief of Islam among Muslim communities is diverse (Hamid, 2013). In the UK, the theological breakdowns of Muslims are generally made up of Sunni and Shia, with the first sect of around 80-85% while the latter 20-15% (Institute of Community Cohesion, 2018). So to speak, most Sunni concepts evolve from four major Schools of Thought (Hanafi, Maliki, Shafi'i, Hanbali).

From those schools of thought, some branches such as Sufism, Barelwi, Deobhandi, and Wahabi-Salafi were born as well. But as the Institute of Community Cohesion adds further, only the last three mentioned branches are found commonly established within almost all Muslim communities in the UK. The Barelwi, who was originated from the Hanafi Madhab, emphasized on spirituality and prefer to be described as *Ahle Sunnah wal Jammāt* (exclusive adherents to the traditions of the prophet Muhammad SAW), makes up around 40% and thus is credited as the largest in the UK. Whereas, the Wahabi-Salafi, who was ever claimed to have a root from Hanbali madhab, but later confirmed to reject the need to derive their teaching from all four and thus lead to the founding of extremist belief, populates only 2% of the total. Moreover, although the Shia also have numbers of subdivisions, but they remain less diverse compared to Sunni (pp. 29-31).

Despite the increasing numbers and the diversity in theological sects, however, the Muslims in total are still relatively far behind compared to Christians, which accounts for the dominant religion in the UK and across Europe, or even to the population of groups who do not affiliate themselves with particular religions (Steed, 2020). Perraudin (2019) suggested there are indeed improving attitudes towards Muslims coexistence in their neighborhood but the perceptions remain fluctuate. Polling conducted by Hope not Hate (2019), an anti-fascist organization, indicated that more than a third of Britons agree with the idea that there is a mismatch between Islamic values and British ways of life. Islamophobia's main supporters in the UK mostly come from those who are indicated as sympathizers of or those who voted Conservative Party in the general election. The fact that the last two UK Prime Minister – Theresa May (2016-19) and Boris Johnson (2019-) – are former leaders of the Conservative Party somewhat adds to Muslims' sufferings. They are known for their common visions to fight terrorism, the marginalization of ethnic minority and Brexit (Abdelkader, 2017).

Besides, Islamophobia, which is maintained by media and political discourses, is highly responsible for subsequent disadvantages in terms of social mobility faced by Muslims in the UK. A survey from 2014 Office for National Statistics' Labour Force demonstrated the failure percentage among men Muslims when applying for a job is relatively high 76%, and women six times more (Khattab & Jhonston, 2014). Although some are more likely than ever to succeed in their career, those who do not make it are indeed rejected probably due to the discriminative recruiting process or

recruiters' preferences which have the basis on race and religious background. It sounds so unfair already, but the barriers do not simply stop there. With the young Muslims specifically being the most disadvantaged group, Stevenson et al. (2017) warned that they may have a bigger chance to experience unemployment and other deprivations. Numbers of young Muslims find it difficult to socially incorporate themselves with public spaces where, for example, as it happens anywhere in the UK, alcohols dominate and gender expectations do not meet Islamic values. Incidences of Islamophobia may also affect young Muslims' educational aspirations. Oftentimes when teachers or school officials fail to provide interpersonal engagement thus result in the erosion of Muslims' sense of belongings. It is sad that Islamophobia is also inevitable to the UK most fancied sport, football. Some fans like to sing provocative chants that target Muslim players.

2. Mohammed Salah and His Effect on Islamophobia in the UK

Mohammed Salah Hamed Mahrous Ghaly, better-known as Mo Salah, is a professional footballer who plays for Premier League club Liverpool FC and Egypt National Team. Often considered as one of the most prolific attacking players in the world, Salah is currently enjoying a successful period in his career as a footballer with Liverpool FC. Salah started his professional football with the local club El-Mokawloon when he was very young. His hardworking and fearless determination during his early career building caught some interest from several European clubs; with Basel FC eventually won the race to sign Salah for a four-year contract in 2012. In the Swiss Super League, he developed his tactical playing as Basel FC continues to

get benefit from his impressive service, with a league title in return. Salah appeared to be on the list of most prospective young footballers at that time so Chelsea FC brought him to England in 2014. Although his move to that London club was credited as a great leap for his career, but after several attempts, Salah seemed to fail to fulfill the public's high expectations. In a winter transfer window of 2015, Chelsea confirmed the loan of Mohammed Salah to Italian club Fiorentina for the remaining season. Salah had to extend his time in Italy after As Roma signed him for a permanent deal in the summer of 2016.

Mo Salah finally regained his big name after agreeing with a transfer with Liverpool FC in summer 2017. Having received many criticisms during his first spell at the Premier League with Chelsea, Salah was highly motivated to prove them wrong. Soon onto his debut with Liverpool, Salah received plenty of prizes for his record-breaking individual success by the end of the season; scoring 44 goals in his debut season with Liverpool FC which later earned him PL Golden Boot, PFA Player's Player of the Year as well as Puskas Award for his beautiful curler against Everton FC. Salah helped Liverpool won their sixth Champions League titles – the European most prestigious competition – in his second season. His contribution in the final included a penalty smash that initiated a convincing 2-0 win over the opponent team. This season (2019/20), together with Liverpool's great attacking trio – Sadio Mané and Roberto Firmino – as well as solid collective team performance, Salah has already added two silverware to the club's trophy cabinet; UEFA Super Cup and FIFA Club World Cup. Salah keeps carrying his stellar form as Liverpool headed to

their first-ever Premier League title after 30 years drought. Liverpool has gone unbeaten after 25 matches and is currently league leader with 22 points advantage over their closest rivals, Manchester City and Leicester City.

Mo Salah quickly becomes a fan favorite. Not only due to his success on the pitch but also the personality has he shown as a Muslim. Salah never forgets to drop his knees and puts his forehead on the grass (*sujood*) whenever he scores a goal. This is considered a rare view for the majority of fans inside the stadium, though Salah is certainly not the first player to introduce that kind of celebration. Soon public in the UK understands what the celebration means for Muslim players like Mo Salah. In Islam, *sujood* is the act of utter humility before Allah. It is to express praises and glories for everything that God has given. Mohammed Salah, who was born native Egypt 27 years ago, is a moderate Muslim unlike what the public in the UK assumed in the first place. The more he puts his name on the score sheet, the more people shortly become a fan of him. In February 2018, a video viral on the internet displayed how Salah may have been one of the main factors in changing the face of Islam in the UK, at least in the sociological context, into a positive light. The video was about crowded fans who in their firing mood singing:

*“Mo Sa-la-la-lah
If he’s good enough for you
He’s good enough for me
If he scores another few
Then I’ll be moslem too
Sitting in the mosque
That’s where I wanna be”*

Mo Salah is also known for his humble and funny persona. Salah often invites his wife and daughter, Makka, to attend the stadium to watch him play. In his social media, Salah does not restrict himself from being friendly with his non-Muslim followers. In one of his Instagram posts, Salah was captured with family making a pose in front of the Christmas tree to send a warm greeting for his fans in festive. In that cumulative attitude, Salah was named one of Time magazine's 100 most influential people of 2019.

3. The Role of Mass Media

In May 2019, just a couple of weeks before Salah and Liverpool were crowned Champions League title, a new study published by Stanford University's Immigration Lab Policy became a talking point in every local pub like it was in the mainstream media. The study indicated that the level of Islamophobia in the UK may have relatively dropped since the arrival of Mo Salah in 2017. The study concluded that positive exposures toward Mo Salah have made a progressively significant contribution to the more humanizing outlooks of Islam:

"Our results suggest that positive exposure to famous members of an outgroup can mitigate prejudiced attitudes and behaviors, potentially through the provision of new information delivered in an empathy-inducing manner."
(Alrababa'h, Marble, Mousa & Siegel, 2019)

The study examined 936 county-month hate crimes data from police departments around the UK, 15 million tweets from the UK football fans pre- and post- Salah joining, then addressed experimental survey to more than 8,000 Liverpool fans. It was then further detailed in the findings that Merseyside county, where Liverpool FC

is located, experienced exactly an 18.9% reduction rate in hate crimes, and the range of anti-Islam tweets which went from 7.3% down to 3.8%. Moreover, the result from the experimental survey revealed that increased familiarity with Islam – which in this case was achieved through the observation Mo Salah's faith and his high-visible image as a tremendous footballer – may indeed have led to Islamophobic crimes drop in the UK (Alrababah et al., 2019).

Mohammed Salah, along with his on- and off-the-pitch pieces of stuff, supported by a scientific study, agree or disagree, has here and there fueled media's speculations that his role is a little more than enormous to potentially able to improve the perceptions about Islam and Muslims in the UK, even worldwide, to a higher degree and wider manner, and thus tackle Islamophobia. Roughly speaking, mainstream media seem to like to talk about Mohammed Salah and his charming personality more than any other Muslim players in the Premier League (English's first-tier football competition). Salah is, of course, not the first Muslim figure who successfully helps to communicate moderate Islam to the public in the UK. Nadiya Hussain, a British-Bangladeshi Muslim woman, famous chef, and TV presenter, is widely respected soon after she was invited to cook for Queen Elizabeth II's 90th birthday. She hosts several British popular culinary TV programs and has had vital roles that BBC News listed her among 100 most influential women in 2016 (BBC News, 2016). At roughly the same time, Sadiq Khan, a London-Pakistani born, was the first Muslim to become Mayor of London, a highly respected governmental position in the UK (Hume, 2016). The Guardian profiled 10 most influential British

Muslims back to 2002 report; Sir Anwar Pervez, Britain's richest Muslim and Naseem Hamed the then greatest boxer ever seen in a British ring, among others (Vasagar et al., 2002)

These notable Muslim achievements, though their reputation as a Muslim often put under strain, have helped a little bit redefining British Muslim's pictures in the public mind. At the same time, some media are very likely to feel responsible for spreading information about Islam and their believers, that many do not yet read. Alternative portrayals about Islam and Muslims in media are crucial due to their capability to make numerous people read, listen to and think about the same issues in some ways (Turow, 2009). In such a sense, media can be one of the most effective ways to encounter prejudices and hate crimes of larger scale since news, either online or offline, written or video, are the primary source where Britons and global readers consider the most obtainable (Abdelkader, 2017, p. 35). This could be one of the reasons behind the rise of national and international headlines that frequently expose Mo Salah in an empathy-induced manner.

From September 2017 onward, approximately eight out of ten news tend to cast Mo Salah when dealing with a Muslim footballer's potential to fight Islamophobia in the UK, not Mesut Özil nor Paul Pogba who arrived in England earlier and whose fame preceded Salah. Mo Salah is arguably the British media's favorite. Though they never officially say it, it seems like they have picked up Mo Salah as the ambassador of Islam particularly to the western society, where terrorism and immigrant issues often biased the fact that Muslims are not all bad; breaking

down generalizations and stereotypes. Stories about Mo Salah's greatness simply amplify and are constitutive to interesting discourses.

Current media's attempt to redefine Islam and Muslim by endorsing Mo Salah is really not a thing to see as in a new light. In the academic field, it is called 'media representation', that is, when media captures something/people/events/works in some way of 'reality' to produce meanings. Representation is always created based on a 'system of signs' of a culture, and it always refers to an active process with which *texts* (the product of a system of signs: articles, advertisements, TV programs, YouTube video, and many more.) are continuously produced and re-produced by media (Orgad, 2012). Hall (1997) asserts that the study of media representation cannot be separated from viewing 'works' as *texts*, and that taking their textual and discursive properties into account for comprehensive analysis is a must. Since the rise of media representation as a field of study, scholars have theorized its active process of meaning-making in two ways: reflectionist and constructionist approach. While reflectionist suggests that representation adequately functions to reflect 'the reality' of pre-existing thoughts, constructionist believes that representation always is the product of a construction; it generates some specific meanings as the result of particular and selective depiction of some elements of reality (Orgad, 2012, p. 53). It is therefore the notion of 'foregrounded' and 'backgrounded' in the hand of media representation becomes quite normal.

Constructionist approach in media representation study, moreover, has roots from several theoretical traditions, with post-structuralism being one of the most

notable (Storey, 2009). Post-structuralist argue that ‘reality’ comprises of signs or symbols that pretentiously stand for so-called reality (Orgad, 2012, p. 58). It means that representation does not grant a fixed meaning, all it recognizes is that meaning is unstable and cannot be confined to a single reality (Barker, 2003). Jacques Derrida, one of the most influential founding fathers of the post-structuralist worldview, resists the idea of centralized meaning (source of truth), rather meaning is multiples as they are drawn from a limitless number of centers of cultures, allowing any possibilities to come.

Such understanding imposes that these multiplicities provide room for constant contestation between meanings for which supreme validity becomes the main goal to achieve. It appears on the surface that today’s global media environment is the perfect instance of truths struggle; where *texts* are produced and re-produced to shape and maintain desired truths. Ahmed & Matthes (2016) tells that mass media is one of those bodies whose power and means are inscribed within and thus capable of stirring up particular frame of thinking among people – through any information they produce. It is for this reason, again, that current media probably want to achieve with Mo Salah, that is to say, a huge attempt to redefine even humanize the face of Islam as peaceful – not violent – among Western’s perceptions.

4. Problem of the Study

Although positive progress has been shown by a majority of media to fight Islamophobia through, in this case, Mo Salah, but further investigations are worth of conduct. Concerns need to be made in regard to the way media represent the

construction of Mo Salah's discourse upon the issue of Islamophobia drop rate in the UK. Every "Mo Salah word" found in media reports may not come naturally positive. Reports in the media are not natural phenomenon where the languages in productions are neutral, overt, self-evident, and pure facts.

"...a straightforward and self-evident process where professional journalists inform members of their societies about important issues. ...yet sociologists have shown us that what we call 'news' is quite an odd set of institutional practices that must be understood in terms of its social and historical development." (Machin & van Leeuwen, 2007)

This statement resurrects the previously mentioned notion of 'texts contestation' or 'truths struggle' in the theoretical tradition of post-structuralism which believes that 'work' in a discourse is open for multi-interpretations, activating diverse possibilities after interpretations. Besides, expecting mass media to faithfully commit to providing neutral news of important issues is impossible. Every produced and distributed news is regulated by media's agenda-setting, that is, when media's subjectivities play a big role in determining what information is for people (Bednarek & Caple, 2012). Machin & van Leeuwen (2007; p. 8) also explain that media's works may also be driven by business intelligence, financial brokers, even businessmen (market-oriented). The same case may happen when the media represent Mo Salah. To sum it all together, therefore, this research regards media representation on 'Mo Salah and his possible effect to Islamophobia drop in the UK' as 'suspicious activity' shown by current mass media and thus needs special attention.

In so doing, this research has specifically identified Middle East Eye (MEE) and Independent Television (ITV) special video report to be the object of the study.

Though Mo Salah has attracted a myriad of worldwide media companies' concerns – from CNN in the US, Al Jazeera in Qatar to Tempo in Indonesia, but MEE remains something interesting since the label of 'controversial media' is often addressed to them. MEE has some portions of a negative reputation in the mind of the public relative to some controversial coverage that has hurt particular groups. Despite its claim as an independent media that is devoted to properly reporting the Middle East, but its credibility is highly questioned since, unlike its brand name, MEE is surprisingly a London-based news media. Many also disagree, even accuse MEE as a fake (Alkhamis, 2019).

The ITV is also worthy of discussion since it has a long tradition of television news. Noting that the media's points of interest as well as socio-historical and aspects may potentially distort some essential elements within the event being discussed may also mean that these have the potential to result in *quasi-acceptance* of Islam. If it happens, of course, there is no guarantee that Islam can really be well accepted among global citizens for a lifelong run when Salah is not anymore at his prime. Hence, it is important to note that the roles of media in selecting what information about Mohammed Salah to include and to exclude determine how Islam, around this discourse, will be viewed, to what sense.

Since the data onset taken in this research seize not just on the linguistic aspect, so a multimodal analytical approach is necessary to make sure that all semiotic resources are accommodated. It is essential to look at how different modes of communication such as language and images work together to make meanings

meaningful (Paltridge, 2012, p. 189). In such response, some scholars have developed a distinct area of study namely Multimodal Discourse Analysis (MDA) in recent decades in which enables to discursively address the multimodality found in discourse study (O'Toole, 1994; Kress & van Leeuwen, 1996; O'Halloran, 2004). Just as what other forms in discourse analysis study function, MDA also makes it applicable to address various genres of discourse such as in politics (Lirola, 2016), media representation (Chouliaraki, 2004), education (Bower & Hedberg, 2010), and business (Alyousef, 2016), among others.

In a wide range in which MDA has been proven useful and influential to extend the scope of research concerning about discourses, however, a 'Social Semiotic Theory of Representation' proposed by Kress & van Leeuwen (2006) remains engaging to this research. It provides a useful analytical tool that explores the representational and interactive patterns reflected in different modes of semiotic resources (language, gestures, images, audios, etc.) in a moving image (video). To discuss how the media's point of interests and socio-historical (including economic) aspects possibly affect the topic being discussed later in this research, 'News Discourse' framework informed by Bednarek & Caple (2012) is adopted.

B. Research Questions

With the background presented above, this research attempts to answer the following questions:

1. How are the multimodal representations of ‘Mo Salah and his possible effect on Islamophobia drop in the UK’ as they are constructed in the Middle East Eye and ITV’s special video report?
2. How do Middle East Eye and ITV’s socio-historical and economic contexts possibly affect their representation of ‘Mo Salah and his possible effect on Islamophobia drop in the UK’?

C. Objectives of the Study

In accordance with the research questions, this research is carried out with the following objectives:

1. To find out how multimodal representations in the special video report about ‘Mo Salah and his possible effect to Islamophobia drop in the UK’ which were produced by Middle East Eye and ITV constitute such kind of representation.
2. To find out how socio-historical and economic contexts possibly influence the way Middle East Eye and ITV represent ‘Mo Salah and his possible effect to Islamophobia drop in the UK’.

D. Significances of the Study

Research on media representation is characterized by its emphasis on dismantling some fundamental assumptions which are unforcedly inscribed (Barnett, 2003). Understanding how some elements of reality are textually and discursively constructed in media representation is of importance to date. As media representation keeps producing and re-producing meanings/discourses that operate subtly through

winning consent and perseverance of common-sense, so this is where this research matters. This research is practically expected to make more numbers of people (readers) aware of what is truly happening behind Middle East Eye's and ITV's 'suspected' representation on Islamophobia rate drop in the UK following that Mo Salah's brilliant performance.

Instead of taking everything that the media say for granted, this research wants to make further investigation on how their points of interests and socio-historical and economic contexts may produce *quasi-acceptance* of Islam – the condition where something, which in this case deals with Islam as a religion of *other* in Western society, is accepted *seemingly; apparently; not really* – and therefore may reveal their real agenda to emphasize that Islam and Muslim, either in the footballing world or even broader, are now and then a mere 'second'. This research is highly concerned with possibilities that may come after media representations on Mohammed Salah's success and their long-term effect on Islamophobia worldwide.

E. Scope and Limitations

This research recognizes that in the constructionist-poststructuralist approach meanings are constructed as well as deconstructed. It means any *possibilities* that may come after interpretations are highly valued in this theoretical tradition. For that reason, therefore, this research has profound reliance on *possibilities* that contribute to the implication of the finding of this research. Moreover, this research is also limited to the role of Mohammed Salah – how his persona is construed by Middle East Eye and ITV in the attempt to fight Islamophobia in the UK, and broadly

Western society. This limitation is to make the focus clear while, at the same time, it also has no intention to ignore the fact that Islamophobia and crimes against Islam are sociologically and politically complex and thus require complex actions as well.

F. Previous Studies

Prior to the media representation of Islam through the phenomena of Mo Salah, there have been a bulk of studies in the past uncovering Islamic representation by media with regards to various themes. From worldwide newspapers coverages (Byng, 2010; Bowe & Makki, 2015; Abdeslam, 2019) to the UK media outlets in general (Hanif, 2019), Byng (2010) analyzed 72 stories about *hijab* ban and the debate around *niqab* in France, Britain, and the USA from two major US newspapers *New York Times* and *Washington Post* between 2004 and 2006. The study found that both media tend to represent *hijab* and *niqab* through the lens of each Western's identity, assimilation of Muslim minorities, and threats committed by extremists. Consequently, *hijab* and *niqab*, as well as Islam, implicitly, are viewed as negative and incompatible with the values of their nation and culture. Abdeslam (2019) did much similar way and the finding that implied to Muslimah rejection through *hijab* and *niqab* was much the same, with the specific case of French newspapers *Le Monde* and *Le Figaro*. Bowe & Makki (2015) found that American-Muslim were indiscriminately represented by US newspapers as issues arise from the existence of Islamic prayer spaces in American cities. In the UK context, Hanif (2018) analyzed more than 10.000 news articles and broadcasts and concluded that British media are

biased about Islam, with Sky News particularly has the highest rate of misleading coverages across 2018.

And just as the thing that media attempt to achieve with Mo Salah in recent times, there have also been some evident studies discovered that media representations on sports celebrities 'success story' indeed have an impulse to evoke positive messages to improve the public's understanding about underrepresented communities (Saeed, 2002; Black, 2016; Burdsey, 2007). Saeed (2002) highlighted the greatest-of-all-time Muhammad Ali and his never forgotten inspirations. The article added that Muhammad Ali's great legacies are not confined only to the ring but reach beyond boxing boundaries that later flocked many media to produce charming representations about him. In that mutual mechanism, it was found that exposure to Ali's Islamic faith, patriotism, and focal defiance against ethnical racism and injustices truly had helped related stereotyped communities (Muslim, people of color, etc.) cope with everyday prejudices directed against them. Moreover, Black (2016) found that newspaper representations of Mohamed Farah, a Somalian descendent track athlete that won the gold medal in the 2012 London Olympic Games for Great Britain, have promoted the image of Islam in Britain as well as established the image of Britain as a successful multicultural nation. Burdsey (2007) discussed the attitudes of British politicians and media shortly after boxer Amir Khan's triumph in the 2004 Olympic Games. The study, however, found that although positive portrayals of Amir Khan seem to help emancipate Khan and his affiliated ethno-faiths, but critical analysis showed the actual purpose of those politicians and media

was to obscurely reproduce and perpetuate the discourses and practices of social exclusions in Britain.

While studies on media representation have typically been explored with Framing Analysis (Bowe & Makki, 2015), CDA (Byng, 2010; Abdeslam, 2019), some scholars have also included Multimodal Discourse Analysis (MDA) as a fruitful tool to analyze the multimodality found in media representation, concerning themes such as promotional video (Yao & Zhuo, 2018), news video (Chouliaraki, 2004; Bednarek, 2012), newspapers headline (Tseronis, 2014), video blog (Surdiasis & Eriyanto, 2018). Yao & Zhuo (2018) drawn upon Visual Grammar (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006) to analyze the promotional video of Hangzhou, a city in China. The study focused on the dynamic combination of visual and verbal aspects of the video that successfully construct the image of the city as glorious in history, unique in culture, picturesque in the landscape, and many more.

From conventional to critical study, Chouliaraki (2004) instanced how the application of MDA to news video report of the aftermath (9/11) can reveal ‘the proximity’ sense to viewers, that is when the ‘viewers’ are moved to the position of ‘witnesses’ and so as if they were ‘right there’ when the event happened. Bednarek & Caple (2012) showed how BBC and ABC news programs’ points of interest influence the way they represented the Killing of Osama bin Laden. The study used multimodal analysis to understand the structure of the stories, the gaze as well as the intonation of the reporter, and visual input materials with which they later call ‘News Discourse’.

Tseronis (2014) discussed news headlines using argumentative theory within multimodal discourse analysis framework. The study found that the combination of linguistic and visual modes created by *Der Spiegel* and *Focus*, weekly German news magazines, account for their success in inviting readers to buy as well as providing effective clues for what is in the news magazine all about. Meanwhile, Surdiasis & Eriyanto (2018) investigated the use of video blogs (vlogs) to construct a political narrative by President Jokowi in social media. Drawn upon Systemic Functional Multimodal Discourse Analysis (SF-MDA), the study specifically identified the use of various semiotic resources such as participants, locative circumstance, visual collocation, and more in the vlogs. The finding said that in his vlogs, President Jokowi sought to build a kind of political narrative that pre-informed his second period of the presidency would be all about *progress* and *reformation* in one hand, and to strengthen his personality as humble, modest, and typically close-to-the-people leader on the other hand.

Finally, to the extent where numbers of selected previous studies have been cataloged in the preceded paragraphs, this research can conclude that in most of the social science research, the topic of media representations is quite studied using the Critical Discourse Approach. This is reasonable since media representation embodies a perfect environment where texts are continuously reproduced and that how the events related to the texts rise out on social practices (Fairclough, 2003) – the area where critical discourse approach is indeed meant to. Putting them all as quite the basis, this research takes the news in the form of video as the dataset which is still

relatively few and far between research trends in news discourse; meaning that news articles are still more favorable among previous scholars.

Besides, understanding that media exposure to Muslim sports celebrities may be highly influential towards the Islamic world, so this research is interesting to do similar way but with a different figure, that is Mo Salah whose popularity is sensational in the late times. The approach, moreover, follows the Social Semiotic Theory of Representation informed by Kress & van Leeuwen (2006) to analyze the semiotic resources of the representation in the video since it provides a useful analytical tool to explore the representational and interactional patterns reflected in different modes of semiotic resources (language and images). Besides, News Discourse by Bednarek & Caple (2012) is also chosen to investigate how socio-historical contexts of the media may affect the representation of 'Mo Salah and his possible effect on Islamophobia drop in the UK' since it provides a useful set of principles in analyzing socio-historical contexts of media – from how news is produced, regulated to finance.

G. Research Method

This section elaborates on the method used in this research. It consists of four main points that cover from research design, data source, data collection to data analysis.

1. Research Design

This research is generally designed in a way that follows the constructivism paradigm of qualitative research to language. It seeks to understand the multiple ways

of looking at a social event. In addition, since this research is qualitative, so this research is *exploratory* by nature – which means that the later finding does not always have to bear on new theory generation as for having the phenomena learned is sufficient (Heigham & Croker, 2009). This research also focuses on achieving particular findings which in this case will be about understanding multiple aspects that may influence the way particular media represent ‘Mo Salah effect on Islamophobia drop in the UK’, rather than imposing to generalize the finding to other contexts/cases.

More specifically, this research employs multimodal discourse analysis. This method is very useful forasmuch as it enables the researcher to investigate how various modes of semiotic resources such as language and moving images found in the data of this research contribute simultaneously to the construction of certain desired representations. Mostly rooted from Halliday’s social semiotics approach to language, multimodal discourse analysis has brought into light the understanding that language is not the only medium where meanings are made, but any available and related semiotic resources also need to be seen as an integral part since each can do specific things (Gee & Handford, 2012; Kress, 2010). It allows the researcher to answer the first question raised in this research.

In addition to multimodal discourse analysis, this research also follows the qualitative method of news discourse analysis which is characterized by its far-reaching aspects, multidisciplinary by nature. This method provides a clear guideline to the knowledge of how news (or generally media’s work) is produced, regulated,

and financed (Bednarek & Caple, 2012). It is particularly salient since the media's points of interest and socio-historical contexts have a big influence and play a heavy role in the way media represent something/social events (Machin & van Leeuwen, 2007). This method also offers useful instruction for the researcher to appropriately contextualize the interpretation of the data proposed in this research. In the end, it profoundly helps the researcher answer the second question raised in this research.

2. Research Instrument

The researcher himself is the primary research instrument. This accords with Heigham & Croker (2009) who explain that in the qualitative method the researcher has full responsibility to take all the processes from collecting, observing to interpreting the data. As all these three steps are largely done at roughly the same time during the process, so the researcher is presented with flexibility for if unanticipated things happen along the way, meaning that the researcher may, for example, modify the existing data collection for more personalized research purpose or clarify the data interpretation when the earlier attempt seems less accurate (Merriam, 2002). The researcher's subjectivities, Heigham & Croker (2009, p. 11) continue, are also a major concern in qualitative research. The researcher's background knowledge, life experiences, cultural backdrop, religious belief are highly valued and it is important that the researcher acknowledges these aspects as a virtue because distinct contributions to the research may result from the researcher's unique perspectives and personal qualities (Richardson, 2000).

3. Data Sources

While Middle East Eye and ITV have several coverages reporting ‘Mo Salah and his possible effect on Islamophobia drop in the UK’ in the form of written news articles, it is noteworthy that both media have in the form of video too. Special video reports entitled “*Is Mohamed Salah changing the way Muslims are seen in Liverpool and beyond?*” and “*The Mo Salah Effect: Islamophobia in Liverpool Falls Following Striker’s Arrival, Study Finds*” are produced by the two respective media which this research assumes as part of the media’s attempt to help redefine and humanize the face of Islam in the UK as well as emancipate Muslim from prejudices, discrimination and restriction addressed against them.

The first video is 8:45 minutes in detailed length, while the latter is 1:51 minutes. Both videos comprise several sequenced scenes that together constitute the desired discourse. The decision to choose the video rather than its written counterparts is subjected to some reasons. First, video has certain qualities which are absent from written text – pictures in motion, sounds, camera movements, and other cinematographic techniques and skills – that may add to emotional engagement by audiences. Second, research from Pew Research Center (Shearer & Mutsaers, 2018) suggests that people prefer to get themselves informed through social media such as YouTube. This is in line since Middle East Eye also has linked its video to its YouTube channel. Up to this writing (March 2020), the video has been played by more than 600.000 viewers.

Finally, the data of this research are the language and image scenes which were extracted from both MEE and ITV's video reports. The selected data were those which were indicative of the component of newsworthiness as proposed by Bednarek and Caple (2012), social actor representation (van Leeuwen, 2008), and the semiotic representations as proposed by Kress and van Leeuwen (2006).

4. Data Collections

The selected data, which in this case is special video reports s mentioned in the previous section, were obtained from the respective website of Middle East Eye (www.middleeasteye.net/video/) in the 'Video' tab or alternatively from secondary source that can be accessed on its YouTube channel (Middle East Eye), and of ITV (www.itv.com/news/) in the 'News' tab. The first video was first broadcasted on 25 May 2018, exactly a day before UEFA Champions League 2018 between Real Madrid vs. Liverpool in Kiev, but was last updated on 31 January 2019, 21:17 UTC (Universal Time Coordinated), according to the website's official note. The latter was broadcasted on 5 June 2019 at 11:22 pm local time.

To obtain the desired data, the two video reports were manually annotated on 3 June 2020 by extracting every scenes' transitions (mostly indicated by transitions from one source person to another) into **Scene 1 – Scene 7** (MEE) and **Scene 1 – Scene 6** (ITV). With the audio language being transcribed in the process, the data were then selected based on the components of newsworthiness as proposed by Bednarek and Caple (2012), social actor representation as proposed by van Leeuwen

(2008), as well as semiotic representations as proposed by Kress and van Leeuwen (2006).

5. Data Analysis

The data were analyzed using Bednarek & Caple (2012)'s News Discourse to explain how socio-historical (including economic) aspects of Middle East Eye and ITV may influence the way they represent 'Mo Salah and his possible effect on Islamophobia drop in the UK'. Then, the data were further analyzed using the Social Semiotic Theory of Representation framework informed by Kress & van Leeuwen (2006) to understand how multiple modes in the special video report about 'Mo Salah and his possible effect on Islamophobia drop in the UK' produced by Middle East Eye and ITV constitute such kind of representation. Finally, the researcher presents the conclusion resulted from the findings of the research.

H. Definition of the Key Terms

Below are the definitions of several important key terms used throughout this research:

1. Multimodal Discourse Analysis : Analytical approach to discourse which seeks to explain how meaning is made up of multiple modes of communication rather than just language.
2. Socio-historical context of media : The discursive perspectives that lead to the knowledge of how historical development, digitization, and financial source are influential

to the formation of media's principles and subjectivities

3. Media representation : Media's construction of reality
4. Quasi-acceptance of Islam : The condition where Islam is as if accepted when actually is not.



CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

From how the relationship between mass media as part of culture within society and mass media as business are defined to brief overviews of News Discourse (Bednarek and Caple, 2012), Social Actor Representation (van Leeuwen, 2008), and Social Semiotic Theory of Representation (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2006), this chapter reviews every literature related to this research.

A. Mass Media, Culture & Society

Mass media have been profoundly influential in many aspects of human life. With various arrays of content media have offered, from speaking about the most personal stuff to sharing the materials which they think is worthy of public attention, there is no other way people can escape from media influence – it is easy for media to get audiences' attachment. Turow (2009, p. 21-22) defined four broad ways in which individuals tend to adapt their use of mass media in everyday lives that include *enjoyment, companionship, surveillance, and interpretation*. Enjoyment refers to how media can entertain audiences. Companionship refers to the media's ability to act as if they were real companions for individuals in moods. Surveillance means media as a place where people can seek and get information about the world. And of course, Interpretation when people are curious about the explanation of particular events – the media provides the 'why' and the 'what', if any, actions to take.

Mass media are also known for their huge contribution to the age of globalization – the process of international integration of many aspects of lives due to the advancement in the sharing of information technology (Turow, 2009, p. 202). As the products of the media industry spread even broader, more and more people across continents receive and consume the same materials (news, music, movies, etc.) virtually within seconds. Machin & Leeuwen (2007) marked this trend as particular behavior that leads to ‘cultural homogenization’, that is, when media companies attempt to impose on standardized values to obviously diverse audiences. In more radical ways, Kissinger (1999) called it ‘cultural imperialism’ while Ritzer (2018) developed the term ‘the Mcdonaldization of society’ to refer to the domination of Western cultural values that can shape global perspectives.

Indeed, it remains debatable. Scholars such as Katz & Liebes (1986) suggested that what makes Western media so acceptable is due to their universal theme on each of their products. Therefore, the critics should not completely emphasize media products, but also on the people as consumers since it is their culturally diverse views about media products that somewhat raise the argument as if the culture was homogenized.

However, considering the media power, the strong influence that media have on society is irresistible. Often economically driven by particular political interests or ruling cultures, mass media have everything to be called the strongest and the most effective means to determine what is important to believe in, to talk and argue about, what is considered taboo or what values are acceptable and negligible (Petras, 1993).

In short, these conditions enable people from very different backgrounds living in different countries to think about the same thing, read the same news, watch the same movies, listen to the same music, or connect to the same issues and discuss it. As consequence, people's 'make sense of the world' is very dependent on what the media throw out and say.

. The notion of media as the 'reflector' or the 'creator' of a culture of society is not without criticism. Mass media are criticized for their presentation of unfortunate prejudices that further result in the creation of stereotypes against certain societies as well as political ideologies of who is more powerful to control and why. Another is that mass media is so Western-centered and, last but not least, that mass media encourage political and economic manipulations of their audiences (Turow, 2009, pp. 28).

B. Mass Media and News Business

Making sense of how mass media businesses work requires a comprehensive understanding beyond what mass media can produce and how they finance in order to survive. Normally, any media companies are concerned with six main activities: *Production, Exhibition, Finance, Distribution, Audience Research, and Government Regulation* (Turow, 2009, p. 40). It is important that media companies understand how to get success with the right audiences. They should be openly aware with whom their materials match or in how their contents perfectly fit. When these are produced, distributed, and exhibited on target, so the profit will come along the way instead of going elsewhere. Most media practitioners should be able to see audiences as an

integral part of their business, and that produce contents that do not only attract audiences but also prospective advertisers to net more than adequate revenues as they progress.

News, among the most major genres in media content, is no exception. Despite its traditional definition as the presentation of new fact-based information, but news, in fact, cannot be confined simply as single-typed. Just like the diverse ranges that other media content such as entertainment or advertisement has, news also features sub-genres to comply with audiences' different interests (Shoemaker & Cohen, 2005). For example, there is a degree to which a piece of news is categorized either *hard* or *soft*, as well as *investigative report* and *editorial*. A news is called 'hard news' when it reports international battle, great disaster, pandemic outbreak, presidential press of important event or other events which capable of attracting a million attentions. Hard news is highly concerned with timeliness, meaning that it must be updated. Moreover, hard news is also news that most people would consider unusual and close to them either geographically or emotionally.

On the other hand, 'soft news' does not have to be as critical as its opposite but still would appeal to be salient numbers of people. The writer of the news may insert their views about the particular event as when they want to share tips about what to do and not to do during the serious outbreak of novel coronavirus, or how to get the most out of iPhone 11 camera, etc. It is normally lighter to consume and more to tell about human interest story. While soft news can be written by almost anyone, from junior to senior journalist, 'editorial' is specified to professionals. They can be

out written by individuals such as experts, politicians, and other knowledgeable figures or in the name of the organization as representative to express the company's point of view towards a particular event. Most media companies hold special sections for editorials in their publication.

'Investigative report' is an in-depth investigation of reality. It is commonly similar to hard news in terms of objectivity, accuracy, deepness, exploratory but different in that it has a more relaxed deadline. In the process of making an investigative report, the journalist is ensured with more time for doing research, interview, and even writing the scripts so that the final product is well-served. The investigative report requires a journalist to act a little more like a detective. These vast arrays of news genres give some clarities about the fact that news has to go through long stops before it is consumable for the public. Understanding this complex mechanism, Bednarek & Caple (2012) classified news business that eventually leads to news discourse based on *Communicative Context* and *Socio-Historical (including Economic) Context*.

1. Communicative Context

The communicative context of news business includes the role of producers, the role of audience, as well as detailed relationship between them in the production of news.

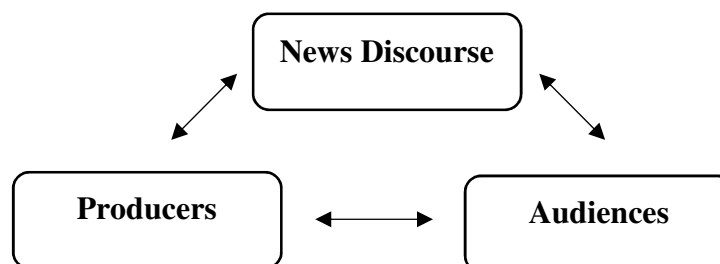


Figure 1: The circuit of news production based on communicative context

This cycle initiates news discourse. The complex relationship between the producer and the audience is construed by and mediated in the discourse as indicated by the double arrows (Bednarek & Caple, 2012, p. 20).

1.1 The Roles of Producers

The plural marker (s) in the word ‘producers’ here shows that they refer to not just one person. Instead of assuming that news is simply a solo product of a journalist, in fact, it is a work responsible for a whole team from journalist, photographer, sub-editor, editor, editorial manager to editor-in-chief (Bednarek & Caple, 2012, p. 22). Each of them has different roles during the process of news production. Bell (1991, p. 36-44) suggested the distinction as follows:

Label	Role	Producers
Principals	Originator of stance	Proprietors, editor-in-chief, news executives, etc.
Authors	Producing original drafts/images	Journalist/reporter, photographer, camera people, sound engineer, etc.
Editors	Modifying draft/images	Editor, photo editor, video editor, etc.
Animators	Transmitting the utterances/images	Digital software, technicians, etc.

Table 1: The labels and roles of producers

Those whose labels are *Principals* are the most influential figures inside media companies. With a significant role in their hands, they have responsibility and control over decisions, operations, and policies of the organization. In other words, the stances/views of the media are very much expressed in line with the stances/views of

the principals (Rau, 2010). While *Authors* are responsible to find objects worth of news and make an original draft of it, *Editors* work further with the draft and are held accountable for the final version of it. They must read carefully, do some edits, verify facts, and first and foremost ensure that the news in the draft goes along with the media stance. *Animators* are the last men roughly responsible for the technical stuff of materials transmission to the audiences (Bell, 1991, p. 37).

1.2 The Roles of Audiences

News, just like other media contents, has considerable reliance on the role of audiences (McCombs, 2014). Conboy (2002) suggested that in many cases it is fair to say the audiences are the ones who define what news, and the producers have their job to deliver. In a way that news is partly seen as a commodity, media should have a strong intuition of how their materials meet the target and solid knowledge of the marketplace to attract prospective advertisers. This imposes media to understand the characteristics of their audiences – mostly reflected in their demographics and their psychographics (Turow, 2009, pp. 43-45). The demographics represent the audiences' ages, genders, professions, religions, races, etc. Whereas, the psychographic stands for what the audiences' attitudes, motivations, lifestyle, personality types, etc. In short, the discourse in the news is achieved through the complex relationship between the producers and the audiences.

2. Socio-Historical (including Economic) Context

From the printing press to broadcast, news business had never lost any stages in the media industry throughout history. In the current age where the internet

dominates nearly all aspects of human life, the news keeps on making a successful business and has been much appreciated for its good adaptation to the digitized world. However, despite the success, the internet has undoubtedly changed the way media work. Bednarek & Caple (2012, p. 30) argued that the big advantages of the internet have made it possible for freer access to information and readership. This new dissemination of news, consequently, has forced media companies to create the online version of their products (news). While some of them keep putting a price for subscriptions to survive, some others decide to give free access and welcome the citizen journalists to write news (Craig, 2011). The implication of these changes results in, among others, audience fragmentations.

Acknowledging audience fragmentations is very vital for media companies (see 1.2 The Roles of Audiences). Gandy (2000) added further that most media are working hard on understanding each audiences' unique profiles so that media can exchange them with spaces for prospective advertisers. This remains quite reasonable since the capitals generated from advertising revenues are among the primary sources of media funding (Thompsons, 1995). Even so, media have advertisements inserted in almost their whole platforms both explicitly and implicitly. Sometimes advertisements are not overtly stated, but are 'disguised' in seemingly well-packed news that not everyone has noticed (Bednarek & Caple, 2012, p. 33). Both media and advertisers share advantages between them. While media really need advertisers not only to survive but also to get profits, advertisers need media to boost their sellings.

Despite the media's heavy concentration on commercial aspects, however, media should keep their attention to the ethics and codes of journalism as well as follow the internal regulations of their organizations. Some media have their regulation totally prescribed by the national government such as that happens in North Korea while some others have their regulation set by their values and ideologies (Campbell, Martin & Fabos, 2012, p. 165). These regulations may vary throughout countries and companies, but it is fair to say that the media attitudes are very much inclined to them which in turn also dealt with the media ownership (see 1.1 The Roles of Producers for the originator of stance). In conclusion, the irresistibility of advertisers' role in the media revenue and ownership is not without consequences. In a likely worse condition, they can be one of the many factors why media produce certain discourses – affluent to certain interests (Richardson, 2008; Barnhurst & Nerone, 2001).

C. News Values

By definition, news values are the decisive factors that make an event into the news (Bednarek & Caple, 2012; Cotter, 2010; Fowler, 1991). In other words, not all events are marketable (newsworthy) enough to be registered as 'selling' news (see B. Mass Media and News Business on the sub-genres of news). Takes an example from Prince Harry and the wife's decision to step down from the senior member of The Royal Family which is considered newsworthy due to their high visibility as an important figure, but the same action can be little to meaningless if done by ordinary

people. Bednarek & Caple (2012, p. 44) called this view as *cognitive perspective* of the news values.

In addition, the view on the news values is also distinguished by *discursive perspective*. While cognitive perspective holds the assumption of newsworthiness based on collective agreements within a culture, discursive perspective sees how newsworthiness is construed through both language and image (discourse) (Rau, 2010, p. 14). The discursive aspect allows people to critically understand why news is worthy through the investigation of certain linguistic features or image signs in use (van Dijk, 2013). For instance, the frequent employment of negative ‘adjective’ such as ‘*violent, uncivilized, backward*’ in the representation of Islam in the Western media may create an impression that Islam is not a good religion (Byng, 2010; Bowe & Makki, 2015; Abdeslam, 2019). The same rule applies to the employment of purposive images (either still or moving) to support the creation of news values (discourse). As to this case, the discursive practices of news values are categorized as Timeliness, Proximity, Prominence, Consonance, Negativity, Impact, Superlativeness, Personalization, and Aesthetic which can appear through both linguistic and visual aspects (Bednarek & Caple, 2012, p. 63-81).

1. Timeliness

Timeliness refers to the relevance of the events in terms of time (Bednarek & Caple, 2012, p. 63). As indicated by time, news is said to be newsworthy if it occurs in relevant to the most recent moments or seasonal events. In so doing, crafting the value of timeliness can be done through the use of evaluative languages which

suggest references of time (*April, this weekend, by the end of, etc.*), verb tenses (*past tense, present tense, future tense, etc.*) and aspects (*have, -ing, -ed, etc.*). Moreover, timeliness can also be exercised visually through images that suggest seasonal indicators, cultural artifacts, object gazing out to certain direction and many more depending on the news themes.

2. Proximity

Proximity refers to the geographical or cultural nearness of the events (p. 64). As indicated by place, news is said to be newsworthy if it occurs in relevant to the viewers' or readers' closest relationship with place or particular nation/community. Linguistically, it is construed through the use of evaluative languages that suggest references of place (*Big Ben, Orchard Road, this building, etc.*), references of nation/community (*Indonesian, French, feminist, etc.*), pronouns (*they, them, we, us, etc.*). Furthermore, proximity can also be construed visually through images that indicate famous landmarks, natural features or cultural symbols.

3. Prominence

Often used interchangeably with the term eliteness, prominence relates to the high status of individuals, organizations or nations involved in the events (p. 65). As stated in Bell (1991, p. 192), news that addresses the lives or incidents of well-known individuals can attract more views or readerships than ordinary ones (see *cognitive perspective* in **C. News Values**). Although prominence has a fairly strong relationship with cognitive perspective of newsworthiness, however, it can also be realized through discursive perspective by using proper names (*Prince Harry,*

Michael Jordan, Mo Salah, etc.), evaluative noun phrases (*pop star, legendary singer, best footballer, etc.*) for linguistic aspects and also by using images that clearly show the key individuals, organizations or nations (often positioned in low camera angle to provide a sense of power).

4. Consonance

Consonance means the stereotypical aspects that people in general hold over individuals, organizations or countries represented in the news (p. 67). In many cases, the worthiness of news is often determined by consonance; that is to say, people love watching or reading something that fits in with their preconceived belief about particular individuals or events. Consonance can be construed linguistically through evaluative languages that indicate repeated word combinations or visually through images that indicate stereotypical imagery of individuals or events.

5. Negativity

Basically, some negative events such as conflict, tragedy, dispute, and war can steal more attention than ones that display regular activities or events. Therefore, Bell (1991, p. 156) called negativity as 'the basic news value' while there is also famous formula among news workers saying that 'if it bleeds, it leads'. According to Bednarek & Caple (2012, p. 69), negativity is construed linguistically through evaluative languages which suggest negative emotions (*sad, heartbreaking, terrible, etc.*), negative vocabularies (*cold-blooded shooting, criminal, tremendous disaster, etc.*), and visually through images that show people's negative emotions, damaged

place – often intensified through the application of high camera angle, long shot or blurring.

6. Impact

Impact refers to the consequences or significances of the events (p. 72). News is said to be newsworthy if it reports events that affect many people's lives. Such things can be instanced through the reporting of environmental issues or global pandemic since these are among important events that imply the conditions of future life; how tomorrow will look like. Linguistically, the impact is construed in news discourse through evaluative languages that suggest intensification/quantification relating to the impact of an event (*10.000 people were killed, has increased familiarity over Islamophobia, etc.*), references to emotions caused by the event (*the flood has left the civilian in terrible grief, etc.*). Moreover, the impact can also be construed visually through images that point out to post-effect of an event, facial expressions caused by a particular event or image sequence indicating cause-effect relations.

7. Novelty

Novelty refers to the unexpected aspects of the events (p. 74). It has the element of surprise as people like something unusual that goes beyond regularities. In news discourse, novelty is often construed linguistically through a wide variety of evaluative languages such as negation, adjectives indicating unexpectedness (*rare, strange, only, just, etc.*), and visually through images that evoke contrasting objects or the depiction of shock in facial expression.

8. Superlativeness

Newsmakers like and tend to exaggerate things up to make an event more interesting and appeal to several people. According to Bednarek & Caple (2012, p. 76), it is part of news values and is termed as superlativeness. In such understanding, superlativeness refers to the maximized or intensified aspects of the events. From a linguistic perspective, the construals of superlativeness are seen through vocabularies that express intensification (*more than 70 people, most animals, rise, increase*), references to strong emotions, metaphors, and similes. Moreover, superlativeness can also be construed through images that show extreme emotions of the participants (individual in the events) and the use of wide-angle lens.

9. Personalization

Personalization refers to the personal interest aspects of the events (p. 78). Event that is personalized and addressed to particular audiences can make more news than one that is not. Personalized news puts up intriguing events which can catch people's interests. Linguistically it is often construed through references to emotions, references to individuals, quotes, etc. Visually it is often construed through images depicting emotions of the participants and the use of close-up shots.

10. Aesthetic

Aesthetic refers to the beautiful aspects of the events. What is meant by beautiful or aesthetically noteworthy here is when event is construed through second-layered languages and images that allude to something else. While the language of news is often considered literal and straightforward, sometimes, newsmakers may

also hide it through the use of allusions, metaphors, allegories, etc. (Bednarek & Caple, 2012, p. 80). As for visual aspects, the value of aesthetics can also be seen through the use of quality images (often highly edited through sophisticated software such as photoshop) that evokes beautifulness.

D. Critical Discourse and Multimodality

Gee (1990) defined discourse in two senses: one with little 'd' (discourse) and the other with big 'D' (Discourse). When he introduced the term 'discourse', he referred to the analysis of language as the medium for communication – various choices in which language is used to make everyday conversations, hold seminars, instruct others to do things, etc. 'Discourse', however, refers to the ways in which ones attempt to make sense of certain identities through complex combination of language, interactions, objects, beliefs and values in a given social and historical contexts. In other words, 'Discourse' (henceforth Discourse) sets to deal with the definition of discourse as social practices and thus tied in broader scopes of analyses. Discourse at least sees language as a tool for three things: saying, doing, and being, and therefore is interdisciplinary by nature (Gee, 1999; Wodak, 2011).

As a form of social practices, discourse is both constitutive and constituted; that is, it may dialectically happen to determine (constitute) the shapes and the structures of the social worlds, while at the same time the existing social worlds may also contribute and situate discourse (constituted). Therefore, Fairclough & Wodak (1997) mentioned the strong relationship between the social practices of discourse and the construction as well as the sustain of a particular ideology and its effect

within the social world. Analysis of discourse should further encompass the shared interest in the investigation of semiotic dimensions of power and ideology by encouraging critical questions that challenge pre-existing assumptions or prevailing ideas (Wodak & Meyer, 2009). The prevailing ideas in the production and reproduction of discourse include among others the establishment of imagined social class (Hunt & Seiver, 2017), gender (Baker, 2011), and racism (van Dijk, 2009).

The critical category of discourse is well-documented in the work of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). The label 'critical' goes somewhat hand in hand with the basic principle of 'deconstruction' in the theoretical tradition of post-structuralism. Derrida and Foucault (in Storey, 2009, pp. 126-130) argued that meanings/discourses (common sense, pre-existing assumptions, prevailing ideas) are the product of constant contestations of those in relations to power, and therefore is a growing need to expose unquestionable assumptions as alternative ways to understand the social world; that it often seems problematic and injustice. As a result, the critical approach posed by CDA has implication on it as a typically problem-oriented as well as emancipatory – committed to social change – research program (Wodak, 2011, p. 38).

To this problem-oriented, CDA does not have with it a fixed theoretical frameworks and methodologies consequently. Fairclough (1995a) explained that the approach of CDA consists of manifold philosophical premises, theoretical frameworks, methodological guidelines, and techniques for analysis. The choice of what is a more appropriate method to what is very much dependent on the phenomena being investigated and the data being collected (Titscher et al., 2000). For

example, it is not possible to use gender theory to investigate biopolitical discourse. Therefore, Fairclough (1995a; 1995b) further suggested that he used the term ‘critical discourse analysis’ to describe both the approach that always is context-specific and the broader movement within the umbrella of discourse analysis as one category of linguistic research in social sciences.

Historically, the early establishment of CDA as one of the most prominent linguistic research cannot be separated from Critical Linguistics (CL) as its stepping stone back in the 1970s (Wodak, 2011, p. 41). The root of CL itself lies in Systemic Functional Grammar (SFG) whose emphasis is on the role of grammar (grammatical constructions) as a tool for realizing certain ideological potentials. Developed by Halliday (1978), SFG sees how nominalizations, agentless passives, and transitivity as well as other forms such as metaphors and rhetorical devices may point out to particular interests or even discrete agendas. It is this approach which was further combined with other critical interpretations related to socio-historical context by latter scholars to initiate Fairclough’s CDA (Fairclough, 1995a), Social Semiotic Approach (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006), Socio-Cognitive Approach (van Dijk, 2008) and Discourse-Historical Approach (Wodak & Meyer, 2009).

Taking Social Semiotic Approach into account, it highlights not only textual grammar but also the grammar of visual. From this to go, scholars have expanded Critical Linguistic into Critical Semiotic Analysis which is also often used interchangeably with (Critical) Multimodal Discourse Analysis (MDA/CMDA) (Kress, 2012). The term MDA evolves from the emergence to make it a distinctively

new branch of discourse analysis and remains preferred up to now. This firstly is due to increasing awareness to regard other semiotic resources as hugely prominent as a language in the production of discourse. MDA can also be a good answer to the era of interdisciplinary research which asks various scientists from various disciplines to solve similar problems (Halliday, 1991). Moreover, the birth of new media has brought diverse means and techniques of communication that in turn makes MDA becomes more and more relevant for research tools (O'Halloran, 2011).

Among the pioneers of MDA were O'Toole (1994; 2010) that focused on relatively three-dimensional objects such as paintings, sculptures, and architectures and Kress & van Leeuwen (1996; 2006) on visual designs. To be specific, Kress & van Leeuwen applied in their study a contextual approach to derive general principles of visual design to the orientation of a particular ideology. By contextual approach it means that their study does not put aside the integration of text (any signs including image), society and culture when analyzing discourse as social practices (Iedema, 2003). The importance to include social practices in MDA discussion is also reinforced by O'Halloran (2011, p. 124) in his three fundamental theoretical and analytical issues in MDA:

1. Modeling other semiotic resources that radically differ from language.
2. Modeling and analyzing the meaning expansions found in multimodal phenomena based on ideational (representational), interpersonal (interactional), and textual (compositional) metafunctions.

3. Modeling and analyzing the resemioticization (the reconstrual of meanings as semiotic choices constantly change based on certain contexts) as social practices unfold.

By the early 2000s, several new domains in MDA had been developed upon a contextual approach. For instance, Lemke (1998) made use of a contextual approach to explore the visual and verbal semiotics in scientific text, whereas van Leeuwen (2005) investigated how noises like those in everyday sounds (music rhyme, phone ringing) can evoke meanings. In addition, the new domains of MDA inquiry also include the study on the complexity of hypermodality in websites (Lemke, 2002), gestures and actions (Martinec, 2002; 2004) as well as technology, literacy, and learning (Jewitt, 2006).

E. Social Actors Representation

According to van Leeuwen (2008), the roles of social actors can be discursively drawn up from socio-semantic inventory. In that way, social actors can be represented and establish particular sociological relevance in which social practices occur. Among many ways of the framework's features are that social actors can be purposefully included/excluded to achieve a particular sense of representation. Moreover, social actors can also be represented through the process of activation and passivation which is called Role Allocation (van Leeuwen, 2008, pp. 32 – 34). In addition, there is also Personalization which refers to the representation of social actors by determining their prominent ranks or honorifications, and also Nomination, Categorization, Assimilation, Association, and many more (pp. 36 – 50).

F. Social Semiotic Theory of Representation

Kress & van Leeuwen (2006) suggested the development of ‘semiotics’ study has at least been marked by three major schools over the past century. The first was the Russian Formalists of the Prague School in the 1930s who had a significant legacy through the foundation of semiotics concept as a new rich field for critical examination on a wide range of artworks (poetry, folk, painting, theater, film, etc.). Subsequent vital force to widen Semiotics was the Paris School in the 1960s and 1970s who drew their ideas from Ferdinand de Saussure (relatively the most important figure whose principles are still taught everywhere today in language and media courses) under the term ‘semiology’. The third, furthermore, was developed from Michael Halliday whose ideas to incorporate linguistic insights with other semiotic modes for more complex analysis.

Despite constant development, the core principle of any semiotics lies foremost in how ‘sign’ is defined. To use ‘semiology’, for example, sign is arbitrary; the making of meaning is not achieved through the process of putting together the signifier and the signified as formerly independent of each other, but as ready-made to be recognized, chosen and used (Fiske, 1982). For Kress & van Leeuwen (2006, p. 8), however, sign is motivated – never arbitrary – in a way that the process of sign-making is always governed by the ‘interest’ of the sign makers (their cultural, social and psychological background) toward the object. In this concept of social semiotic, they continued, the ‘interest’ is what is seen as the criteria aspects of the object which are subjectively the aptest and plausible form to resemble the real object.

To make sense of Kress & van Leeuwen's social semiotic theory (2006), consider a five-year-old kid who draws *one big box with imperfect trapezium on top* and calls it *a house*. When the mother comes and looks at what his kid says as *a house*, the mother may at first be puzzled and think of how come it is *a house* since it is by shape definitely far from the real house. However, *one big box* and *imperfect trapezium* are, by the kid, regarded the 'most apt' and 'plausible form' to represent a 'real house'. Both of them are the 'most outstanding criterial aspects' and therefore become the 'interest' of the kid when drawing a house based on 'his cultural, social and psychological background'. Moreover, both the kid and the mother have their concept of how a house looks like – ready-made to each. But the 'ready-made' is again not the issue. The focus is on how the kid's sign-making process is 'motivated' by his interest.

In other words, it is never the whole object which is represented, but only the criterial aspects which are regarded as the most representative of the object. Representation is an active process of making meanings of only 'some elements' of reality. To go a little further, this is no less different from what social institutions such as media do when representing something – they capture based on their criterial aspects (interest). Orgad (2012, pp. 53-58) suggested that scholars have theorized the active process in two ways: reflectionist and constructionist. Although reflectionist suggests that representation adequately functions to reflect 'the reality' of pre-existing thoughts, constructionist believes that representation always is the product of

a construction; it generates some specific meanings as the result of a particular and selective depiction of some elements of reality.

Kress & van Leeuwen (2006, p. 15) believed that visual communication, like language, also complies with three metafunctions. While Halliday (1989) used the term *ideational*, *interpersonal*, and *textual* functions to refer to the three, Kress & van Leeuwen recontextualizes with *representational*, *interactional*, and *compositional*².

1. Representational Function

Representational function deals with the identification of ‘participants’, ‘processes’ and ‘circumstances’ in visual communication analysis (Royce, 2007). It is analogous to the ‘ideational function’ in SFG analysis which points out that “any semiotic modes have to be able to represent aspects of the world as it is experienced by human” (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006, p. 41). In visual grammar, any objects or elements that correspond to do acts of communication are termed as ‘Participants’. ‘Participants’ are, in addition, described into two types, one that refers to *people*, *places*, and *things* represented in images and is called ‘represented participant’, and the other that refers to *the producers* of the images (photographer, video maker) as well as *the viewers* of them and so is called ‘interactive participant’.

Just like ideational function which is sub-divided into two further categories: ‘experiential’ and ‘logical’, representational function in visual communication is also

² Although Compositional Function is suggested by Kress & van Leeuwen (2006) as analogous to Textual Function in the three metafunctions, however, it will not be used in this research considering that it is more applicable to still images than to moving images.

marked similarly with two other subsidiaries respectively: ‘narrative’ and ‘conceptual’.

a. Narrative Representation

Representation is ‘narrative’ when ‘represented participants’ (henceforth: participants) are concerned with as *doing* something (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006, p. 59). To this, the narrative ‘processes’ are therefore detailed into ‘action process’, ‘reactional process’ and/or ‘circumstances’.

1) Action Process

In action process, participants who do the deed are called ‘actor’ while participants to whom the deed is done are called ‘goal’ – realized by ‘vectors’ (p. 63). To make it simple, the actor-goal term is analogous to the role of subject-object in language. On the condition that verbs always remain necessary in language communication to make sentence structure meaningful, and so do visual. Actor and goal are engaged in ‘transactional’ or ‘non-transactional’ structure. Transactional structure requires the presence of both actor and goal as in ‘transitive verb’ fashion, while non-transactional has no goal just like ‘intransitive verb’. Their analogies are best summarized in the following table:

Visual	Language
Actor	Subject
Goal	Object
Transactional	Transitive verb
Non-transactional	Intransitive verb

Table 2: The analogies between visual and language

2) Reactional Process

Similar terms apply to reactional process in that it has transactional and non-transactional structure, but with the vectors being realized by ‘eyeline’ or ‘gaze’ between participants (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006, p. 67). Participants who do the looking are called ‘reactor’. Those at whom or which the reactor is looking are called ‘phenomena’. In other words, they can be concluded as follow:

Visual	Language
Reactor	Subject
Phenomena	Object

Table 3: The analogies between visual and language terms

The rest processes in narrative representation also contain speech and mental process, conversion process and geometrical symbolism (pp. 68-72). However, they are not considered any further here since they do not really suit the characteristics of the data in this research. Speech and mental process specially observes the oblique projection of thoughts and dialogues in comic strips, which are mostly represented with text balloon. In moving images, however, dialogues are directly restored in speech. Conversion process is useful when it comes to read the communication model in diagrams (food chain diagram, rain process diagram, etc.). Geometrical symbolism, meanwhile, is more used to understand the meaning of ‘arrow’ in geometrical model of communication such as what it means when an arrow has two arrowheads, or one, even headless. Finally, from the model that they offer, these processes have bigger

tone with still images than with moving ones and so confirm the reason of their absence from the discussion here.

3) Circumstances

Circumstances refer to the 'locative' (camera focus) aspect of visual images as alternatives to vectors or eyelines. Sometimes, the making of meaning in visual communication is not achieved through participants engaged in *doing* something as it is instanced in action and reactional processes, rather externally constructed by employing some techniques in videography such as camera focus or video editing such as color grading (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006, p. 67).

b. Conceptual Representation

Meanwhile, representations are 'conceptual' when 'participants' are defined not through vectors or circumstances, but in terms of their more generalized essence; their class, structure or meaning (p. 79). The process is broken down into three kinds: 'classificational', 'analytical' and 'symbolic'.

1) Classificational Process

In classificational process, the role of participants is way interpreted based on their taxonomical relations (p. 79). Therefore, the terms 'superordinate' and 'subordinate' are introduced here to reflect participants' classification in accordance to their visual similarities (shape, distance, etc.). This is analogous to the notion of 'hypernymy' and 'hyponymy' in the semantic relations of language. It is important that visual analysts catch up with classificational process too since it can be used to analyze anaphora.

2) Analytical Process

Analytical process sees how participants correspond to each other in a part-whole structure (p. 87). This structure has what it calls 'carrier' (the whole) and 'possessive attributes' (the parts). The whole and the parts usually represent diverse actions such as changes, grow, reduce as well as the spatial and temporal structures of visual communication and thus are tightly bonded to analysis of charts, graphs, diagram, maps, etc.

Few sections (eg. classificational process, analytical process) have only little to no relation with the data in this research. Classificational process becomes more useful when it comes to analyze and interpret the pictures that show classification of class, taxonomical, relation, structures, diagram, etc. Meanwhile, analytical process becomes more useful if it deals with the analysis of maps. In other words, they correlate more with still image than with moving image. For these reasons, the rest topics such as 'structured/unstructured', 'temporal', 'exclusive/inclusive' in analytical and classificational process are not written here.

3) Symbolic Process

In symbolic process, participants are interpreted through their embedded meanings in certain cultural spaces (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006, p. 106). It is more or less the extensions of 'mythologies' by Barthes (1972). Symbolic process is divided again into two: 'suggestive' and 'attributive'. When a meaning can be derived from within the qualities of the image, it is suggestive symbolic process. It does not

represent things other than participant (the carrier) itself – literally the features of the carrier – such as the color, focus, lightning, etc.

In the other hand, attributive symbolic process gives attention to some objects that accompany the participant (possessive attributes) to process meaning. Therefore, it comes to represent something greater than the participant itself. In such, meanings are not static, rather dynamic because once it finds its first signification, it goes down forever and thus leads to connotatively diverse interpretations. For example, the symbol of 'lion' does indeed literally represent the real lion to one's cognitive. But there are also many ways in which 'lion' is not merely lion since it may further indicate the symbol of 'king', 'king' guides to 'power', 'power' to 'empire', 'empire' to 'colonialization' and so forth.

2. Representation and Interactional Function

Visual communication also discusses the interaction between *the producers* and *the viewers* (interactive participants) (p. 114). In other words, images can mediate, maintain and constitute communication for or to the interactive participants. In such context, these interactions may be direct or indirect. However, in most cases, indirect interactions are found more often due to the physical absence of both the producers and the viewers from one another. In a widely viewed and recognized photography or digital artwork, for example, it is difficult for the viewers to know who the producer is, who the one working to make it, who the editor determining the appropriateness and worthiness, etc. The same problem also haunts the producers since they do not know who will view their works, who exactly will appreciate and

who exactly will diminish their works, except for the hazy target audiences they make in their production process. This disjunction has of course left both the producers and the viewers in a question.

Therefore, Kress & van Leeuwen suggested that visual communication has three kinds of relations: “(1) relations between represented participants; (2) relations between interactive and represented participants (the interactive participants’ attitudes towards the represented participants); and (3) relations between interactive participants (the things interactive participants do to or for each other through images)” (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006, p. 114). The first relation belongs to representational function (see 1. Representational Function), while the other two are elaborated below.

a. Relations between Interactive and Represented Participants

When it comes to talk about the relation between interactive and represented participants, it is actually about the interactive participants’ attitudes towards the represented participants. In other simpler words, what kind of impression images can give to viewers. Things like these highly depend on ‘the act’, ‘the distance’ and ‘the angle’ of images.

Images with certain acts (images acts) can appeal to give the sense of ‘direct address’. It is as if the images had the capacity to make the viewers do something. There is special term to name this image acts as ‘demand’ as for its imperative likeness in language communication which is realized with plain verb in the beginning of the sentence. In visual communication, however, the ‘demand’ can be

realized through ‘the gaze’, ‘facial expression’, ‘gestures’ of the represented participants. Besides, also there is another way in which contacts are made in images through ‘offer’. The difference is that it gives ‘indirect address’ by impersonally offering ‘information’ or ‘objects of contemplation’ to viewers to scrutinize.

In addition, the dimension of ‘distance’ relates with ‘the size of frame’ of the images (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006, p. 124). Under specific circumstances, sometimes, close-up shots are preferred to long shots because they are capable of producing more details of the object than when it has with long ones. It is this choice that eventually suggests different meanings of distance to the viewers. These techniques take the viewers’ vision to ‘intimate’, ‘social’ or ‘impersonal’ distance. Each yield on particular purposes – what kind of message carried by images.

Finally, the relation between interactive and represented participants can also be mediated by ‘the angel’ of images. For example, frontal angel (horizontal) may provide the sense of ‘involvement’, while oblique angel may be stitched with the sense of ‘detachment’. Furthermore, there are high angel which may dwarf the value of represented participants and thus gives ‘the sense of superiority and power for the interactive participants (viewers)’, low angel which works the opposite – ‘the sense of power emanates from the represented participants over the interactive participants’, or that with eye-level angel whose sense to eliminate power difference and therefore indicate ‘equality’ (pp. 129-147).

b. Relation between Interactive Participants

Whilst it seems in the surface that the represented participants take the most role in building communication with the viewers, its ability, however, will only be possible thanks to their producers. Whatever the act, the distance, the angle is the result of the producers' configurations to the images. In other words, interactive participants also make each-other contacts through images they create.

“The photo seeks above all to bring about imaginary relation between the represented explorer and the children for whom the book is written, a relation perhaps of admiration for, and identification with, a national hero. And this means also that the image-producer (the institution of educational publishing) addresses the children in the voice of the national hero and makes that national hero an ‘educational’ voice.” (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006, p. 117)

The excerpt above depicts a photo of an explorer in a children's book. While the gaze and the photo angle of the represented explorer may itself give the children who look it a sense of admiration for a figure that symbolizes a national hero, in the same time it also means that the producer of the image, publisher of educational book for children, projects the photo in the voice of national hero and therefore makes that national hero an 'educational' tool for educational purpose for the children.

c. Modality

“The term ‘modality’ comes from linguistics and refers to the truth value or credibility of (linguistically realized) statements about the world” (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006, p. 155). Modality devices in language such as ‘can’, ‘must’, ‘may’ replicate various degree of certainty and reliability. Like sentences, therefore, the

system of visual modality is also incorporated into three meta-functions; ideational (a function that represents the world around and inside us), interpersonal (a function that enacts social interactions as social relations) and textual (a function that engages the ideational and interpersonal functions in concrete form) The issue of modality is also crucial in visual communication as to question whether the images stand for factuality or fiction. It is impossible to claim the absolute factuality (truths) of the images, indeed, but what is done in here is the deal on the motivation of the images – whether they represent truth or not, and if yes, to what degree.

Investigating modality in images can be achieved through colors (modality markers), which are configured in a way by producers to describe the level of factuality of images. The configuration of these markers can be identified in terms of three scales: ‘color saturation’, ‘color differentiation’ and ‘color modulation’. Moreover, modality can also be achieved by scrutinizing the ‘movement’ of the represented participants like those in moving images. Kress & van Leeuwen (2006, p. 264) gave an example of how characters in animated film walk can represent the degree of realism or abstraction. In real life, walking of course is an activity that involves many muscles to ripple. The more the characters show the dynamic movement when walking, the more it represents reality and vice versa.

CHAPTER III

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter consists of the findings and the discussion of this research. While the findings present the analysis of the data based on News Discourse (Bednarek and Caple, 2012), Social Actor Representation (van Leeuwen, 2008), and Social Semiotic Theory of Representation (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2006), the discussion highlights the differences and similarities between the findings and the previous studies to identify the novelties of this research.

A. Findings

This research is concerned with the way media represent the Mo Salah phenomenon. Since Salah signed for Liverpool FC in summer 2017, the anti-Muslim crimes in the UK were reportedly dropped by 18,9% while the familiarity towards Islam and Muslims increases (Alrababa'h, Marble, Mousa & Siegel, 2019). This staggering information, which is based on the finding of a thorough study by Stanford University's Immigration Lab Policy, is sniffed by many media which then forward it to international audiences. Middle East Eye and Independent Television are only a few among numbers of media that shows interest in covering this rare phenomenon involving the footballer from Egypt and whose religion is Islam. Two videos, respectively produced by two aforementioned media, aimed at reporting the effect that Mo Salah has had on Islamophobia are chosen as the data in this research.

In doing so, this research employs Multimodal Discourse Analysis (MDA) on media studies whose agenda includes not only systematic and critical exploration on linguistic and semiotic resources, but also extensive processes of investigation on even wider contexts from where the discourse develops and is socially, historically and economically shaped by media institutions (Barnhurst & Nerone, 2001; Conboy, 2010; Bednarek & Caple, 2012). In a way that media's presentation of reality (social phenomena) is only generated through selective portrayals of some elements of 'reality' and that the selections are always governed by 'interests' (Harley, 1982; Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006; Orgad, 2012), therefore, the socio-historical and economic contexts are also considered here to make conscious of and understand in more details about the factors that influence the journalistic representations of Mo Salah and his possible effect on Islamophobia drop rates by Middle East Eye and Independent Television.

In the paragraphs that follow bring forth the socio-historical and economic contexts of both media companies, followed by the details of the videos which have each been annotated manually, as well as the analysis based on Bednarek & Caple's News Discourses (2012) and Kress & van Leeuwen's Social Semiotic Theory of Representation (2006).

1. Middle East Eye

a. Socio-Historical and Economic Context

Middle East Eye (henceforth: MEE) is a media company that was established in April 2014. In its website statement, MEE commits to present issues evolving

around the Middle East in the true voices of local perspectives. All its news contents are not written except by experts, influential writers, sharp analysts, and thoughtful leaders who hold reliable knowledge in their hands to create accurate and balanced coverages about countries in the Middle East, the people, and others associated to them. MEE also commits to producing coverages and analyses that do not suit certain political interests or financial agendas by claiming that its body organization is independently funded. MEE focuses to make its presence felt on an online platform like website and social media rather than physical or free-to-air broadcast as its strategy to engage its audiences and drive far-ranging discussions (Middle East Eye, 2020).

Despite those claims on its website, however, the existence of MEE as relatively newcomer media is always sparked with prolonged disagreements and thus attracts adverse criticism. Many believe that MEE is the extension of Qatari state-owned media, Al Jazeera (Alkhamis, 2019) whose reputation as credible and independent media crumbled in the West following the allegation of anti-Semitism reports and manipulative coverages that consistently serve to suit Qatar's political interests (Booth, 2010). The government intervention was so direct that they had changed the attitude of Al Jazeera and used them as a bargaining diplomatic tool especially for maintaining and restoring bilateral discussions and interests with other countries in relations (Rubin, 2017).

Langton (2014) also reports that apparently MEE has deep connection to transnational Islamist organization the Muslim Brotherhood (*al-Ikhwan al-*

Muslimun), where enormous numbers of fundamentalist groups, jihadist movements, and terrorism acts are presumed to have originated from and greatly inspired by the Brotherhood's tenets and trajectory (Obaid, 2017). The sympathetic affiliation can primarily be seen from several key individuals working behind MEE such as Adlin Adnan³, Jamal⁴ Bassasso, Rory Donaghy⁵ who also have strong ties to Hamas (The Global Muslim Brotherhood Daily Watch, 2019). To go further is the fact that MEE is currently edited by David Hearst, a former foreign correspondent for The Guardian, who was well-known throughout his career in journalism for his dubious and cynical claims against Qatar's geopolitical enemy states (Alkhamis, 2019).

This early indication of MEE's link to Qatar and Islamist group leads to the question of the company's finance system. As far as it goes, no clear and concrete information can be found regarding the funding of MEE. The financial supports of the company are scrubbed off from public knowledge by insisting that MEE is sponsored by 'individual private donors' (Middle East Eye, 2017). This is reinforced by David Hearst's reluctance to provide sufficient explanation about the mogul (Langton, 2014). However, taking the affiliates and political tendency into account, it appears that MEE is very likely to receive fundings from the same individuals who also finance Al Jazeera and Muslim Brotherhood, which in this case is Qatar royal family (El-Ibiary, 2011; Breitbart, 2014; Rubin, 2017).

³ Adlin Adnan is former head of policy development at Interpal who registered the web domain of Middle East Eye's online portal.

⁴ Jamal Bassasso is former director of Al Jazeera and Al Quds TV who currently serves as the only director of Middle East Eye Ltd, a company that owns Middle East Eye media outlet.

⁵ Rory Donaghy is previously one of the journalists in Middle East Eye who also once worked with a Hamas think-tank.

Consequently, the independency and reliability that MEE has declared are very much at stake. Since MEE is based in London, it seems that MEE is Qatar's covert media arm and loyal propaganda machine whose mission is to influence the Western media environment and global discourse concerning the conflicts of interests in the Middle East in Qatari perspective (Rubin, 2017; Benkler, Faris, & Roberts, 2018; Alkhamis, 2019). This situation could alarmingly go from bad to worse considering that the news, reports, and articles produced by MEE have been used as references by bigger news providers such as the New York Times, Washington Post, and Deutsche Welle (DW)⁶ as well as some human rights organizations such as Human Rights Watch (HRW)⁷ and Amnesty International (Alkhamis, 2019). Finally, it implies on MEE's agenda-setting as part of Qatari media's diversification and that they conveniently become a new weapon for Qatar's diplomacy⁸.

b. Annotation of the MEE's Video Report

Among diverse topics and issues that become the concern of Middle East Eye (henceforth: MEE) is the possible effect Mo Salah has had on Islamophobia in THE UK. Mo Salah, an Egyptian and Muslim football star, has successfully stolen the public's attention with his stunning performance in Premier League and good personality beyond the football pitch. Mo Salah might have helped change the perceptions about Islam and Muslims in a community where Islam and its believers are often insulted and discriminated as in the UK, and this consensus has quite often

⁶ <https://www.dw.com/en/death-penalties-are-the-norm-in-saudi-arabia/a-48854174>

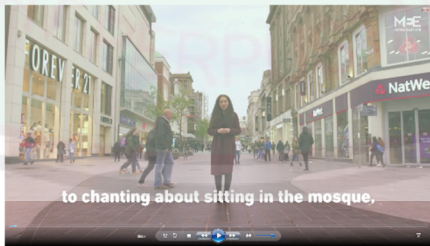
⁷ <https://www.hrw.org/news/2019/01/24/saudi-arabia-let-outside-monitors-see-detainees>

⁸ The researcher cannot say more if what happen in MEE (state-sponsored media, connection with Ikhwanul Muslimin, etc.) also happen in ITV because there are no enough data or references that the researcher can use as evidences.

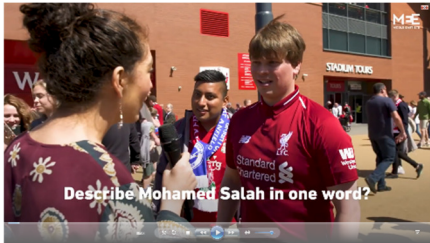
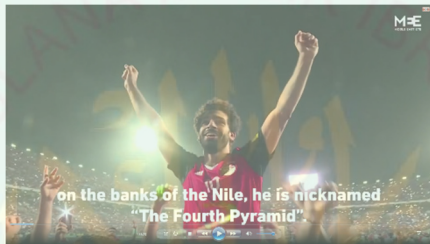


been approved by many (O'Brien, 2019; Marcin, 2019; Bird, 2019). On 31 January 2019, MEE released an interesting special video report covering this phenomenon on its website www.middleeasteye.net/video/ entitled “Is Mohammed Salah changing the way Muslims are seen in Liverpool and beyond?”. The story can also be found on its YouTube channel ‘Middle East Eye’. MEE sent its team to investigate the issue, to hear about opinions directly from various elements of local residents.



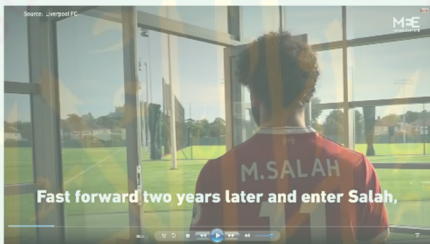
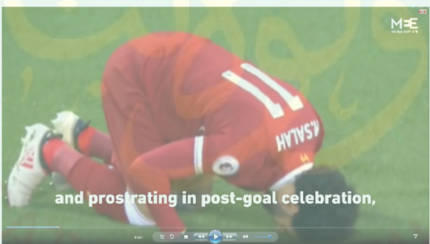

1) Scene 1

Scene 1 displays the opening of the video. It features Osha Mahmoud⁹ and her short introduction to Mo Salah. In this scene, Osha Mahmoud is captured in the middle of a crowd town telling her audiences about who Mo Salah is. In her words, Osha mentions several points that explain admiration towards Mo Salah such as “the gift from Allah”, “The Fourth Pyramid”, “The Egyptian King”, etc. Besides, this scene also sees Osha giving the microphone to random fans who flock around Anfield Stadium and having them describe Mo Salah in one word.

Scene 1			
No.	Length	Scene preview	Verbal inputs
1	7 sec.		Reporter: From singing about “the gift from Allah” to chanting about sitting in the mosque, Liverpool fans can’t seem to get enough of their team’s forward, Mohammed Salah.

⁹ Osha Mahmoud is the correspondent who concurrently serves as the producer of “Is Mohamed Salah changing the way Muslims are seen in Liverpool and beyond?”

2	10 sec.		<p>Reporter: Describe Mohammed Salah in one word?</p> <p>Fan 1: Excellent</p> <p>Fan 2: He's awesome</p> <p>Fan 3: Amazing</p> <p>Fan 4: Egyptian King</p> <p>Fan 5: Handsome</p> <p>Fan 6: We love him, we could take him home tomorrow</p>
3	8 sec.		<p>Reporter: Having sent Egypt to the World Cup Finals after a 28-year-absence, on the banks of the Nile, he is nicknamed "The Fourth Pyramid".</p>
4	5 sec.		<p>Reporter: And having scored 43 goals in 51 games, putting himself on par with the world's best.</p>
5	5 sec.		<p>Reporter: In Merseyside's Liverpool, Salah is known as "The Egyptian King".</p>

6	8 sec.		Reporter: The footballer's talents are universally admired especially at a time when Islamophobia and anti-immigrant sentiments have been on the rise in Britain.
7	7 sec.		Reporter: Afterall, it was only in 2015 that Muslim Liverpool fans were labelled a "disgraced" for praying at halftime in Anfield stadium.
8	5 sec.		Reporter: Fast forward two years later and enter Salah, an unashamedly proud Muslim from the Middle East.
9	10 sec.		Reporter: Salah can be seen cupping his hands in pre-kick-off prayer and prostrating in post-goal celebration, and all to the backdrop of thousands of fans singing about being Muslim too.
10	10 sec.		Reporter: To him, faith and football go hand in hand. So, is Salah changing the way Muslims are seen here in Liverpool and beyond?

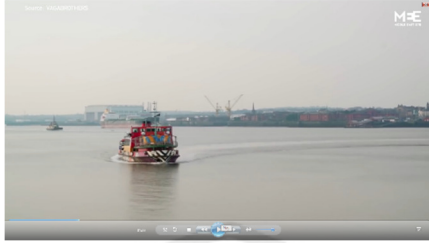

11	15 sec.		[Pictures of landmarks in Liverpool city]
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Table 4: The annotation of Scene 1

2) Scene 2

In the next scene, Osha Mahmoud visits two lifelong LFC fans, Abubakar Bhula and Asif Bodi, who unpleasantly received disapproval from the public on social media back in 2015. The story began when their worshiping activities in Anfield's stairwell were pictured and exposed by a reckless fan that quickly invited widespread criticism. Both Abubakar Bhula and Asif Bodi are so thankful that years after their nasty situation, then there comes Mo Salah whom they think successfully makes more and more people start to accept Muslim behavior. Many people who formerly condemned Islamic prayer are now seen mimicking prostration (*sujood*) as it is inspired by Mo Salah's post-goal celebration.

Scene 2			
No.	Length	Scene preview	Verbal inputs
1	10 sec.		Presenter: It's 2015, lawyers and Liverpool FC fans Abubakar Bhula and Asif Bodi are at Anfield watching a game when they decide to go pray at the bottom of a stairwell.

2	10 sec.		<p>[Interview]</p> <p>Abubakar Bhula: Unfortunately there was another supporter who had a phone and he took a picture and then put that on social media, on Twitter, labelling it as a disgrace.</p>
3	10 sec.		<p>Presenter: Both Liverpool Football Club and its fans were quick to condemn the tweet, with the club releasing a statement saying it would "... not tolerate any form of discrimination". And the coming years would tell a different story.</p>
4	30 sec.		<p>[interview]</p> <p>Osha Mahmoud: Now we're seeing Liverpool fans mimicking prayer, do you think Salah has changed and challenged perceptions of fans towards Muslims and Islam?</p> <p>Abubakar Bhula: I think, to an extent, he has because a lot of the other supporters are more accepting of our praying and our behavior.</p> <p>Asif Bodi: Sometimes we don't go to pray in the prayer room, we might just pray like we did last time under the stairwell or something and people don't seem to bat an eyelid. So I think it really helps having Mohammed Salah.</p>


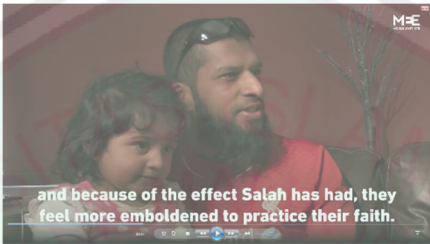
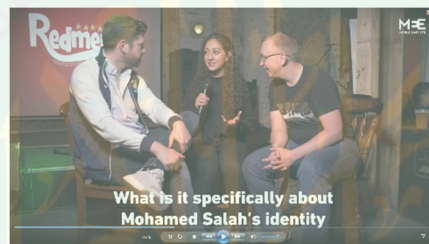
5	10 sec.		Presenter: In 2016, the new main stand at Anfield included a multi-faith prayer room for its fans as part of the redevelopment.
6	10 sec.		[Interview] Asif Bodi: Some people might have been more reserved and a bit more afraid to show their faith and because of the effect Salah has had, they feel more emboldened to practice their faith.

Table 5: The annotation of Scene 2

3) Scene 3

In the following scene, Osha Mahmoud visits The Redmen TV studio. On that occasion, Osha is hosted by The Redmen TV duo, Chris Pajak and Paul Machin, who talk a lot about the significance of Mo Salah for LFC on and off the pitch. Although Chris and Paul do not deny the fact that Mo Salah's enchanting performances are what make him so well hailed first and foremost, but they really appreciate that Mo Salah has been standing for something which Liverpool city has not had for such a long time. To some extent, he has put out the fear of xenophobia (or specifically islamophobia) in a nation that chooses to withdraw themselves from people outside.

Scene 3			
No.	Length	Scene preview	Verbal inputs



1	5 sec.		[Fans singing Mo Salah chant]
2	10 sec.		Presenter: We're here at an event for The Redmen TV, the first platform dedicated to giving football fans a voice. And in this case, it's Liverpool supporters. And we're about to speak to the Redmen themselves, Paul and Chris.
3	120 sec.		<p>[Interview]</p> <p>Osha Mahmoud: What is it specifically about Mohammed Salah's identity that Liverpool fans seem to love so much?</p> <p>Chris Pajak: It's his goals, first and foremost. (laughing)</p> <p>Osha Mahmoud: Other than his goals?</p> <p>Chris Pajak: Other than his goals, it's the fact that he's a nice guy. It's the fact that he stands for something that we haven't had at Liverpool for a long time. And he's proving people wrong each and every single day. He's changing how people think of Muslims in the the UK and probably in a wider audience as well. You know, there's an acceptance in Liverpool anyway because we're a port city so we've always had different influences from all around the world but, you know, the fact that Mohammed Salah has come over here and the way he's dealt with the media and the way he's dealt with</p>

			<p>everything else has just been – it's been unbelievable to watch. It's a real pleasure to see him changing perceptions.</p> <p>Paul Machin: Well listen, we live in Brexit Britain. We live in a country now that has chosen isolationism, it's chosen to cut itself off from Europe, from the rest of the world in some regards. There's a fear of xenophobia that comes with that and I think the best thing about this is that it shows Mohammed Salah transcends all of that. You know, particularly it's not that his faith is important, it's that his faith isn't important. You know, we live in a world where the mainstream media, the mainstream newspapers that promote anti-Muslim sentiments and then you come over to this and Liverpool fans and the city of Liverpool gets tarred by those same institutions. They don't like us and you know what, we don't care because we are an open city, we're a multicultural city, we're a caring city and we bring people in and we love them regardless of their race, creed or religion. And also it helps, the fact that Mohammed Salah is incredible at football.</p>
4	5 sec.		[Fans singing Mo Salah chant]

Table 6: The annotation of Scene 3

4) Scene 4

Osha Mahmoud continues to call on Albert Thaci, the staff of one restaurant in the city, Panny's Place. Previously, Albert was snapped serving Mo Salah with some fish and chips in the restaurant for an advert project. That moment allowed Albert to know Mo Salah closer. Albert does not see that his origin or religion really matters. To him, Mo Salah outside football is just the same nice guy like he is inside football, and this is simply a plus point that becomes his recent acknowledgments.

Scene 4			
No.	Length	Scene preview	Verbal inputs
1	10 sec.		Presenter: For many in this city, it seems no surprise that Mohammed Salah is so well loved by Liverpoolians, wherever he goes, attention follows.
2	10 sec.		Presenter: And Albert, the owner of this fish and chip shop, discovered just that when he found himself in the centre of attention after Mohammed Salah was filmed inside for an advert.

3	25 sec.		<p>[Interview]</p> <p>Albert: When he came in, he was just a normal guy. Even though he's got football status and he's the best footballer this season, in my opinion, in Europe. He's been doing brilliant. People just look at him as a footballer, a perfect footballer, and it's just humble and it's just nice. People don't look at him where he's from or whatever, he fits in.</p>
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Table 7: The annotation of Scene 4

5) Scene 5

The next is Stephen, the owner of one LFC merchandise store in the city. He admits to Osha Mahmoud that any merchandise related to Mo Salah is automatically a most-wanted item for fans. With this being a normal view inside his store, Stephen just realizes how big the love for Mo Salah as it is reflected in the way fans discover a different kind of excitement with the player's merchandise. They are often gone in minutes, like a hot cake.

Scene 5			
No.	Length	Scene preview	Verbal inputs
1	10 sec.		<p>Presenter: The hype for Mohammed Salah is perhaps best showcased by this shop behind me. And the owner Stephen, who can't keep up with the demand for Salah merchandise, has seen first hand how big the love for the footballer is.</p>


2	35 sec.		<p>[Interview]</p> <p>Stephen: Everybody, as they walk through the door, they always say, “have you got Mo Salah?” It’s always Mo Salah.</p> <p>Osha Mahmoud: And how does this cardboard cutout do?</p> <p>Stephen: This cardboard, I can’t get enough of them. As I get them in, they’re gone, like hot cakes. There’s no tomorrow with these. Everybody loves him. Everybody talks about him. Nobody mentions anybody like him. I’ve never known a player that’s come to Liverpool and got a mention like he does.</p>
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Table 8: The annotation of Scene 5

6) Scene 6

In her last visit, Osha Mahmoud meets people from Abdullah Quilliam Mosque, the first Islamic site to firmly stand in the UK. It can be seen that the community there, from Mosque attendee, cleric to the chief executive, welcome Mo Salah with arms wide-open. They are very delighted that Mo Salah can help combat stereotypes about Islam and Muslims in his own right, turning hates into loves, while keeps promoting the value of moderate Islam. Sheikh Waddah Saleh, for instance, sees the new “I’ll be Muslim too” chant that always roams around Anfield Stadium as a positive sign of public acceptance towards Muslims. The Egyptian superstar has been the subject of talks among fans day and night. Some of them even consider converting to Islam.

Scene 6			
No.	Length	Scene preview	Verbal inputs
1	15 sec.		<p>Presenter: Liverpool is in fact home to the the UK's first mosque and Islamic centre, the Abdullah Quilliam society. It was opened by William Henry Quilliam, the first English Muslim convert to Islam in 1887.</p>
2	60 sec.		<p>[Interview]</p> <p>Presenter: Do you think that Mohammed Salah has changed or challenged any of the perceptions towards Muslims?</p> <p>Sheikh Waddah Saleh: Normally all you'll hear through the media is the bad things about Islam. But Mohammed Salah just projects a whole different thing, on the other side. But when you see even the Liverpool fans now with their new song, I don't know if you've heard it before, they're saying that (as) he's Muslim, they'll be Muslim too.</p> <p>Mumin Khan: Mo Salah is a positive role model for the Muslims and non-Muslims. I just hope that more of the Muslim players do become a positive role model like Mo Salah. We need them, in this day and age, to be able to break the barriers about how people have negative perceptions about Islam and the Muslim community here in the United Kingdom and elsewhere in the world.</p> <p>Amer: I've got a business myself – all they do, day and night, they talk about Mo Salah. They just come in, "Mo Salah's great." "We love you,</p>

			Muslims.” I’m thinking what’s happening to the world?
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Table 9: The annotation of Scene 6

7) Scene 7

Scene 7 marks the end of the video. This scene displays Osha Mahmoud in the famous tribune of Anfield Stadium watching LFC's last game in the 2017/2018 season. She witnesses herself the hysteria as Mo Salah scored his 31st goals to send the fans wild, breaking another individual record for the highest scoring in a single-season of Premier League. The last minutes in the video also show Osha Mahmoud having random fans describe Mo Salah in one word, like she did in the opening. It just confirms how the character of Mo Salah is so well-loved by fans and Liverpool city. Not only because he is incredible in football but also the fact that he has been presumed to have challenged the negative perceptions about Islam and turned them down the other way.

Scene 7			
No.	Length	Scene preview	Verbal inputs
1	10 sec.		Presenter: If you're wondering where the heart of Liverpool Football Club is, think no further than the Legendary Anfield Stadium.


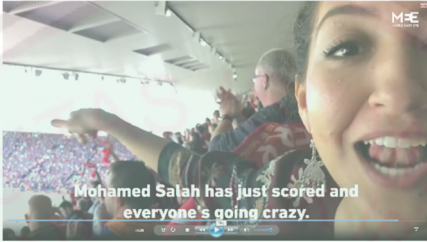


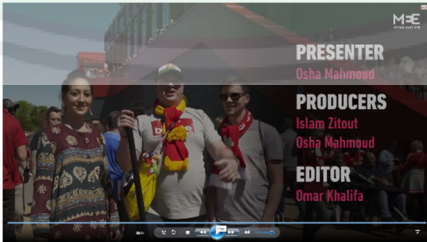
2	15 sec.		<p>Presenter: It's the last home game of the season, Mohammed Salah needs to score one more goal to break the record in the English Premier League and cement his place as a Liverpool legend. And it only takes 26 minutes.</p>
3	3 sec.		<p>Presenter: Mohammed Salah has just scored and everyone's going crazy.</p>
4	15 sec.		<p>Presenter: This final home game not only shows how Liverpoolians have embraced Salah but also that for "The Egyptian King", Liverpool is now home.</p>
5	4 sec.		<p>[Interview]</p> <p>Presenter: Describe Mohammed Salah in one word?</p> <p>Fan 1: <i>We never gonna stop (singing)</i></p> <p>Fan 2: It's a God's gift</p>
6	1 sec.		<p>[Credits]</p>

Table 10: The annotation of Scene 7

c. News Values

News values are the decisive factors that make an event into the news (Cotter, 2010; Fowler, 1991; Bednarek & Caple, 2012;) (See C. News Values, **Chapter II**). For the purpose of critical investigation, the observation of values in the news is done discursively by paying full attention to the use of evaluative language features such as verbs indicating positive connotation, noun phrase and intensification and images (Rau, 2010; Bednarek & Caple, 2012; van Dijk, 2013).

1) Representation of Social Actor

This research identifies three among ten aspects of news values from the perspective of social actors' representation in the MEE's report as it is drawn from van Leeuwen's (2008) socio-semantic framework. They are Role Allocation, Personalization and Impact.

a) Role Allocation

In addition, Mo Salah is also construed through the way MEE has repeatedly linked his figure with positively-connotated verbs through the processes of both activation and passivation:

- 1.1) This final home game not only shows how **Liverpudlians have embraced Salah** but also that for "The Egyptian King", Liverpool is now home
- 1.2) For many in this city it seems no surprise that **Mohammed Salah is so well loved by Liverpudlians**, wherever he goes, attention follows.

Throughout the report, MEE attempts to describe what kind of receptions which Mo Salah has got from Liverpoolians¹⁰. However, when it comes to responsibility for hate crimes plummet, MEE does not think that it is his Muslim identity that likely seems to take the most job. It can be seen chiefly in the way MEE articulate its expressions in the form of agentless passivation:

1.3) **The footballer's talents are universally admired** especially at a time when Islamophobia and anti-immigrant sentiments have been on the rise in Britain

It emphasizes the person or thing acted on, shifting audiences' attention to the object, which in this case is Mo Salah's talents, not Muslim identity.

b) Personalization

MEE is seen to use several evaluative languages to construe Mo Salah's prominent roles in LFC, the Muslim community, and even Middle East:

1.4) Having sent Egypt to the World Cup Finals after a 28-year-absence, on the banks of the Nile, he is nicknamed **"The Fourth Pyramid"**

1.5) In Merseyside's Liverpool, Salah is known as **"The Egyptian King"**

These attributions are chosen by MEE to give their viewers with similar geographical and cultural backgrounds to Mo Salah's a sense of nearness. 'The Egyptian King' is the label that MEE has pinned to Mo Salah to demonstrate how he has transformed himself from nothing to become a national icon and hero for Egypt, comparing him to the famous Pharaoh. Intertextually, MEE, via 'The Fourth Pyramid', assess that he is an allusion to the missing 'fourth' pyramid from Dynasty IV which is described as

¹⁰ Liverpoolian is the term not just for Liverpool FC fans but also for the native residents of Liverpool city in a whole.

‘golden era’ of ancient Egypt, where it brought a lot of happiness to millions of Egyptians just like what Mo Salah does now. These elements of proximity are effective to attract more views, particularly those from Egypt, since the discussions that revolve around Mo Salah are at the same time everything which can more or less, as they might think of, represent the Egyptians in general, and thus regard him with the finest possible modern model who is capable of making nation proud.

1.6) Fast forward two years later and enter Salah, **an unashamedly proud Muslim** from the Middle East

1.7) Mohammed Salah needs to score one more goal to break the record in the English Premier League and cement his place as **a Liverpool legend**

There can also be seen that MEE tags Mo Salah with ‘club legend’ attribution even though he has just joined Liverpool FC in less than 2 years (as of MEE’s report was published). MEE also suggests Mo Salah as a proud individual who fully embraces his identity despite being in a minority group. The adulations that MEE has made to Mo Salah, which are done via intensification, very likely become the reason why this report is worth of every view. While Muslims and Middle Eastern are treated quite terribly in other parts of the world, here comes MEE that attempts to inform the West that Mo Salah is bringing the whole different ideas of his religion and ethnicity that the West might have skipped out.

c) Impact

Mo Salah’s representation is also depicted through languages that construe his impacts on the community which, again, are surprisingly predominantly prompted by

his on-turf statistics instead of his identity. MEE portrays him with intensification such as

- 1.8) **Having sent Egypt to the World Cup Finals after a 28-year-absence**, on the bank of the Nile, he is nicknamed “The Fourth Pyramid”
- 1.9) **And having scored 43 goals in 51 games**, putting himself on par with the world’s best, in Merseyside’s Liverpool, Salah is known as “The Egyptian King”
- 1.10) Salah can be seen cupping his hands in pre-kick-off prayer and prostrating in post-goal celebration, **and all to the backdrop of thousands of fans singing about being Muslim too**
- 1.11) Mohammed Salah **has just scored** and **everyone’s going crazy**

MEE does not seem to include the aspect of his religious identity as the factor which might have helped change the West’s perception of Muslims and Islam. Rather, MEE does more with numbers and keeps imposing on his technical aspects as the main factor which able to give tremendous impacts on the improvement of perceptions towards Muslim and Islam.

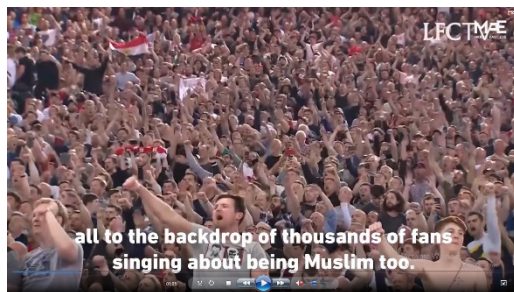
While the decision to put aside the religious aspects from Mo Salah’s representation might be a sign of a growing sentiment over Islam and Muslims, other possible interpretation might also see it as perhaps a reflection of the secularism value which becomes quite popular among recent Westerns, especially Britons (Phillips et al., 2018). According to the report, the UK’s religious groups have experienced a steady decline through the years and have seen new confidence among the non-religious to declare that they do not believe in religious institutions. With this logical way of thinking, it might sound rationale that MEE represents Mo Salah in such a way because of their belief in the rejection of religion; that religion should have no place in civic affairs, including in the media environments.

2) News Values and Images

In addition to linguistic construal, this research also identifies four among other ten aspects of news values from the perspective of images in the MEE's report as they are drawn from Bednarek & Caple's News Values (2012, 63 – 81). They are Prominence, Proximity, Consonance, and Impact.

a) Prominence

The prominence of Mo Salah's figure is also depicted via images portraying his high profile as a football player. Two of which, for instance, are displaying the scenes of Mo Salah's success. The first image (left-up) is the goosebumps moment when Mo Salah was celebrated like the nation's hero after he secured Egypt's spot in the 2018 World Cup. The second image (right-up) is the moment when Mo Salah was held the 2017/2018 Premier League Golden Boot. These first two images put Mo Salah in low camera angle which gives an impression of triumph, superiority, and prominence (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006, p. 140). Moreover, the last two images (left-bottom) display thousands of fans cheering and is described as singing about 'being Muslim too' famous chant, while (right-bottom) is a giant flag with the picture of Mo Salah in it showing how he has been hero-worshipped by his fans. All of these clips add the elements of prominence in MEE's report about the Mo Salah phenomenon.



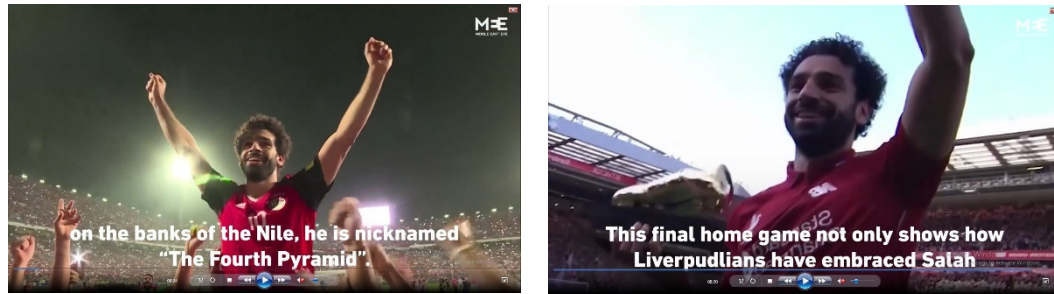


Figure 2: Mo Salah after sending Egypt to the 2018 World Cup (left-up), The Mo Salah flag (right-up), Thousands of fans chanting about 'Mo Salah and being Muslim too' (left-bottom), Mo Salah receiving the 2017/2018 Premier League Golden Boot Awards (right-bottom)

b) Consonance

There can be seen as well that MEE put several clips that demonstrate the religious side of Mo Salah quite often. It seems that MEE very likely wants to emphasize on viewers' particular identity that characterizes Mo Salah. These are all, by which, able to construe an association of Mo Salah's behavior as a devoted Muslim who never kick-starts the games without first cupping his hand in a way of Islamic pray and who always performs *sujood* every time he scores.



Figure 4: Mo Salah doing *sujood* in post-goal celebration (left-up & right-up), Mo Salah performing the gesture of Islamic pray before kick-off (bottom)

c) Impact

The value of impact in the MEE's report is visually depicted through a clip that shows two underaged fans performing prostration (*sujood*) the way Mo Salah does in his post-goal celebrations. This clip represents the effect that Mo Salah has had on the issue of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim hate crimes in the UK – how people are now not only accepting Islam and Muslims, but beyond that, they start to get familiarized with one of the essential gestures in Islamic prayer and even has it mimicked. It turns out that Mo Salah is positioned by MEE's report as someone who seems to be able to educate more and more people at any ages that Islam and Muslims are not harmful, and that they are just like others who deserve equal treatments in term of social life, education, health and so forth.

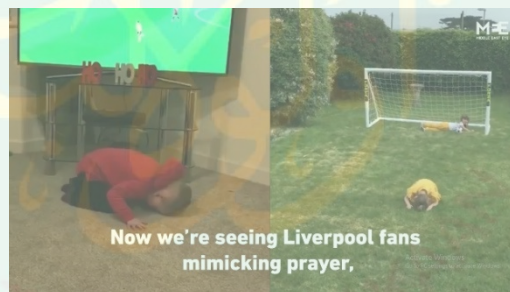


Figure 5: Fans mimicking *sujood* the way Mo Salah does in his post-goal celebrations

d. Social Semiotic Theory of Representation

Principally drawn from Kress & van Leeuwen's Visual Grammar (2006), the social semiotic representation of the MEE's video report is closely looked based on its representational and interactional meanings.

1) Representational Meaning

Representational meaning is further developed into narrative and conceptual representations.

a) Narrative Representation

In each scene, the MEE's video report is filled with various represented participants which are primarily showcased by the reporter and source persons, respectively. They are engaged in structured conversations, and therefore taking the role of 'actors' and 'goals' interchangeably as they are interacting along with the scenes. This event refers to 'action process' which constantly represents 'transactional' relation between them. There can be seen the reporter attempts to be as open as possible and bias-free about the possible effect of Mo Salah by conducting in-person interviews with several different sources.

No.	Media Institutions	Source Persons	Locative Circumstances
1	MEE	Abubakar Bhula & Asif Bodi	Their residence
2		The Redmen TV	The Redmen TV studio
3		Albert Tachi	Panny's Place restaurant
4		Stephen	His merchandise store
5		Muslim community	Abdullah Quilliam Mosque

Table 11: The summary of Narrative Process

As pointed out inside the video, Osha Mahmoud is actively wandering around the city of Liverpool to physically meet and hold direct dialogues with the sources. At exactly the same time, several different locations can be identified appearing as she jumps into different sources. Those locations are referred to 'circumstances', particularly one that displays places at which the process of filming is taken (locative

circumstances). The decision to conduct on-field interviews brings a kind of impression which shows MEE's seriousness in setting up quality investigations by prowling down to places only for reliable information. It is likely used to mark the attitude of MEE that does not compromise a rumor. Instead, MEE leaves some times to experience first-hand how people really feel about the changes which have been brought by Mo Salah.

In addition to action process and circumstances, there is also 'transactional reactional process' which is best reflected in the way those represented participants improve their communications through gazes. Most of them are showing beatific gazes during conversations – straight face, eyebrows knitted like in **Shot 1 & 6 (Scene 2); Shot 6 (Scene 3); Shot 2 (Scene 5); Shot 2 (Scene 6)**. Those eyes' expressions provide a clue, perhaps, to the degree of their convincement towards what they are up to while at the same time this also explains how delightful they are being held to share the importance of Mo Salah in their surroundings. Besides, a few of them such as Abubakar Bhula & Asif Bodi, people from Abdullah Quilliam Mosque, Abu Usamah at-Thahabi, Hamzah Khalique-Loonat are caught in several times to have their eyes peacefully blinked while speaking. This probably demonstrates their gratitude because of the effect Mo Salah has had on them as part of the Muslim community in the UK.

b) Conceptual Representation

In the 'classificational process', the relation between represented participants in the video can generally be classified into 'covert taxonomy'. In Kress & van

Leeuwen's Visual Grammar (2006), covert taxonomy does not have its overarching category of name explicitly shown and therefore the existence of 'superordinate' is only perceived by similarities that characterize between 'subordinates'. Here all of the source persons (subordinate) are indirectly connected to each other by the questions (superordinate) proposed by Osha Mahmoud respectively. Despite their very different background, but there can be seen that principally nearly all of the source persons seem to be unified in perceptions by the idea that Mo Salah is capable enough to improve public viewpoints especially about Islam and Muslims in the UK.

This is also to say that the selected source persons represent the part-whole relation in 'analytical process'. In MEE's report, Osha Mahmoud picks up people that to them can stand for a larger and wider community. As has been understood before, the video report (carrier) has various source persons (possessive attribute) included. While millions of people living across Liverpool city and the UK is something that needs no proof, only five groups of them¹¹ are opted since they are probably the most representatives of all elements.

The first group, Abu Bakar Bhula and Asif Bodi, specifically represent (possibly) mixed race and multi-heritage populations who frequently reported to get abusive treatments. The second group, Chris Pajak and Paul Machin from The Redmen TV, speak in the name of fanatic supporters, particularly the whites (native residents), who consistently support the club in whatever conditions. The third group,

¹¹ Even though the total individuals of all the source persons show more than five, but they are collectively clustered into five main groups to keep the analysis focused. The grouping is based on what larger community they are likely to stand for.

Albert Tachi, stands for those who label themselves a commoner about the footballing world but still feel the benefits from the presence of Mo Salah. The fourth group, the owner of one LFC merchandise store represents people of his same profession as a club merchandise seller. The last group, people from Abdullah Quilliam Mosque, primarily stand for the Muslim community as a minority in the UK and even Western society. To put it together, it attributively symbolizes MEE's acknowledgment of the UK's diverse populations and the need to hear their voices equally.

2) Representation and Interactional Meaning

a) Relations between Interactive and Represented Participants

There are some occasions in which Osha Mahmoud makes a contact with the viewers as if they were in place when she carried her report during the video. This can be found chiefly in the very beginning and ending of the video (**Scene 1 & Scene 7**), and also in every transition of each scene (**Scene 2, 3, 4, 5 & 6**). In such, the relation between Osha Mahmoud (represented participant) and the viewers (interactive participants) is mediated through the act (which in this context is represented by gaze), the distance, and the angel of the represented participant and is called 'offer'. Osha Mahmoud's straight gazes at the viewers create a sense of engagement. In addition, these scenic parts of Osha Mahmoud also have medium-long shot that can take the viewer's vision to social imaginary distance, and a medium-low angel that can catch viewers' full attention.

b) Relations between Interactive Participants

All kinds of communications that occur inside the video, whatever semiotic modes that signify them, and such everything which has been built by the represented participants to the viewers, are concurrently everything which has been set up by the producers of the video report, which in this case is MEE. There are messages inserted in every scene in the video which MEE desire to project and communicate with its viewers. When Osha Mahmoud makes a straight gaze to viewers to create a sense of engagement in the social imaginary distance, as it is identified in the above section, for instance, the communication is not solely between Osha Mahmoud and the viewers, but more than that, it is between MEE and its viewers. It means that all the processes, which have been analyzed above, belong to the institutional goals that MEE attempts to achieve.

Moreover, from the selection of its source persons, MEE seems to look more democratic as they encompass the importance of hearing both sides – the White community as a group from whom anti-Muslim hate crimes might come, and the Muslim community as a victim. However, when it comes to talk about the way MEE represents the construction of Mo Salah's discourse, they tend to have disproportionate weight in assessing the main factor which influences the Islamophobia drop rate. It can primarily be seen from their choice of languages (see **Consonance & Impact in 1.3.1 Language Resources**) which implicitly say that it is *actually* not Mo Salah's Muslim identity that can drag public attention and have the most influences upon this issue. Instead, it is his astronomic statistics as footballer

which remain more reasonable to earn current trend such as “I’ll be Muslim too” chant. In other words, when, for example, there is any viewers who does not aware of this detail selection, people may get distorted and therefore bear on the quasi-acceptance of Islam and Muslim.

While the funding system and the agenda-setting of MEE is a subject of controversy, there might be a handful of evidence that the controversy seems to be one of the factors which influence such kind of pseudo in the MEE’s portrayals. As the state of Qatar is assumed to have continued its loyal support for Muslim Brotherhood until recent years, a number of Arab countries like Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Uni Emirate Arab and Bahrain have considered Qatar as an outlaw. Egypt, in particular, has broken off its diplomatic relations with Qatar since 2017 because the government has seen Qatar as a source of instability. Indeed, there is relatively hard to confirm if Qatar uses the issue of Mo Salah and his relation to Islamophobia drop rate as one of their many ways in achieving their foreign policy goals. However, since this analysis on the MEE’s video report suggests that there is an implicit idea about opposite interpretation of the Islamophobia drop rate, which could irritate Qatar’s enemies and even Islam itself, therefore, a careful reading of MEE’s motive as internalized in this video report is highly needed.

c) Modality

Turning now to visual ‘modality’, from the first minute to the last, MEE shows *real* people, *real* locations, and also *real* events with great pictorial details of colors, illuminations, depths, brightness in their video reports thanks to modern

videography. Thus, the video can be counted as owning a high degree of factuality since they are maximally articulated in naturalistic (hyper-reality) modality markers and is therefore 'ideational' rather than 'interpersonal' as these aim to construe our experience of the world around and inside us. The viewers can obviously look at dynamic movements of all the represented participants just like what *real* world are normally seen, and also check their existence in *real* life. Therefore, as long as it can go, this provides the viewers with the impression that all the visits, interviews, everything that happens inside the video is based on *real*, non-fabricated situations. Of course, there might be little briefings before the filming sessions, but it cannot be a defining point to justify if something is *totally* manipulated.

2. Independent Television

a. Socio-Historical and Economic Context

Independent Television (henceforth: ITV) is the first commercial broadcaster in the UK. Founded in 1955 under the Television Act 1954, ITV was designed to regulate the television industry and to break the monopoly held by BBC Television Service at the time. By 2016, ITV as a television network is owned and operated largely by ITV plc and minimally by STV Group plc¹² which holds a number of licenses for programs broadcasted across ITV franchises. Provided that the services are of public importance, the ITV network's main content must be intended for public benefits instead of purely profit-oriented. Serving under Ofcom's regulation¹³, the

¹² STV Group plc is a media company that owns STV, a free-to-air Scottish television channel. STV holds ITV network licenses that solely serve in northern and central Scotland.

¹³ Ofcom is government-approved communication regulator in the UK.

mandatory programs must include current affairs, politics, education, religion, and also news programs. The last mention is the program in which ITV is most recognized, with ITV News being the second-largest news program only after BBC News (Wikipedia, 2020) and is where this video report is broadcasted.

ITV plc, which holds a larger portion of ownership, is an integrated producer broadcaster (IPB). It means that the company, through ITV Studios¹⁴, also creates, owns and distributes content to third parties aside from their linear channels. This business model has contributed main revenues for ITV. Kanter (2020) reports that the commissions from third parties experience significant proliferation every year, and that even outstrips ITV's other funding source from advertising in the first quarter of 2020 amid the Coronavirus crisis. Other than selling programs and advertising, ITV expands its business by engaging directly with its audiences through paid subscriptions on ITV Hub+¹⁵ and other products that span from brand's merchandises, live events, gaming apps, competitions, etc (Reuters, 2020). These far-ranging and complex fundings systems make ITV the largest commercial family of channels in the UK and among worldwide (Royal Television Society, 2020).

As a public company, the interests of ITV plc cannot be separated from the major holder of its shares, which currently is held by Liberty Global, Inc¹⁶. with 9.90% possession (Liberty Global, 2015). Meanwhile, the largest international cable

¹⁴ ITV Studios is a television production company owned by ITV plc. ITV Studios creates, produces and distributes programming such as drama and entertainment across channels in the UK and overseas.

¹⁵ ITV Hub+ is an online video-on-demand service launched by ITV. It seeks to offer audiences with wide variety of programs brought on paid subscription.

¹⁶ Liberty Global, Inc. is the largest international telecommunication company with services reach over six European countries and others worldwide.

company is now chaired by John Malone – a multi-billionaire businessman, landowner and philanthropist from the US – who concurrently also holds a number of high and vital positions in other broadcasting companies and retail such as Charter Communications, Inc., GCI Liberty, Inc., Discovery, Inc., and Qurate Retail, Inc. (MarketScreener, 2020). Further investigation on John Malone’s political tendencies shows that he was a supporter of the Republican political campaign after his donation to Donald Trump’s 2016 presidential inauguration festive popped up to the public (Rapier, 2017). John Malone’s affiliation with Republicans leads to the question of whether ITV’s report on Mo Salah is in accordance with or gets influenced by the values held by the American conservative party¹⁷ (see **b) Relations between Interactive Participants in 2.4.2 Representation and Interactional Meaning**).

b. Annotation of the ITV’s report

In June 2019, Independent Television (henceforth: ITV), via its correspondent Damon Green¹⁸, made a video report covering the Mo Salah effect on Islamophobia under the title “The Mo Salah effect: Islamophobia in Liverpool falls following striker’s arrival, study finds” after a study from America’s Stanford University reveals so. The video arrived at audiences not only through its free-to-air television channel but also online website www.itv.com/news/. Just like MEE, ITV is also shown in the video to take the local residents in Liverpool on the interview to speak

¹⁷ The researcher cannot say more if what happen in ITV (the possible funding donors’ ideology, etc.) also happen in ITV because there are no enough data or references that the researcher can use as evidences.

¹⁸ Damon Green is a news correspondent for ITV and the one who reports “The Mo Salah effect: Islamophobia in Liverpool falls following striker’s arrival, study finds”.

for itself regarding the hate crimes plummet and improved perceptions about Islam and Muslims since Mo Salah's presence.

1) Scene 1

An interview with Abu Usamah at-Thahabi, Imam of Green Lane Masjid in Birmingham city, starts as the opening of the video. In his opinion, Muslims as relatively the most misunderstood community in Western countries needs more players like Mo Salah who can spread positive influence through his footballing career. He also mentions Salah's teammate who is also a Muslim, Sadio Mané, as their stellar combination has made one of the best duos in any football competition, sending a real threat to all defenders. The Imam further underlines that Muslims is like everybody else.


Scene 1			
No.	Length	Scene preview	Verbal inputs
1	10 sec.		<p>[Interview]</p> <p>Abu Usamah at-Thahabi: Guys like Mo Salah and Sadio Mane, these guys playing at the level that they're playing football and it gives the world an opportunity to say 'Ey, Muslims are like everybody else'.</p>

Table 12: The annotation of Scene 1

2) Scene 2

The next scene sees a monologue from the reporter with background clips that shows the ocean of fans lining in the street of Liverpool city to welcome back the LFC squads after being crowned 2019 UEFA Champions League title in Madrid. As the open-top buses carrying the players and coaching staffs amble along the route, many fans can be heard tirelessly roaring up Mo Salah's name. There can be seen as well the diverse ethnicities and beliefs who attend the celebration including Muslim. By the end of this scene, the reporter cites a study from Stanford University that reports anti-Muslim hate crimes drop due to Mo Salah's effect and says it is no surprise.

Scene 2			
No.	Length	Scene preview	Verbal inputs
1	5 sec.		Reporter: You could see yourself for the homecoming celebration of the new European champions.





2	3 sec.		Reporter: The way that Liverpool fans idolize their striker who is Muslim.
3	5 sec.		[Crowd fans singing Mo Salah chant]
4	5 sec.		Reporter: The way the team now enjoys the support of its football fans from all background and all beliefs.
5	12 sec.		Reporter: The study from American Stanford University says anti-Muslim hate crimes on Merseyside have dropped by almost 20% since Salah arrival. Those who studied his effect on the team say it's no surprise.

Table 13: The annotation of Scene 2

3) Scene 3

In Scene 3, the reporter speaks to Hamzah Khalique-Loonat, a famous football presenter in the UK, who says it is no surprise that Mo Salah gets warm reception not only from the fans but also from the city. The character of Mo Salah has unlocked the different colors of Muslims and Islam that the white community does not come across

and vice versa. Consequently, it gives both sides a room to know each other more in hope that they can live in harmony without any negative perceptions separating between them.


Scene 3			
No.	Length	Scene preview	Verbal inputs
1	15 sec.		<p>[Interview]</p> <p>Hamzah Khalique-Loonat: In that moment, you just don't feel that Salah is welcomed, you feel welcomed too. It opens up who you believe your friends could be, who you believe your family could be, you become a lot more accessible to others, and they're more accessible to you.</p>

Table 14: The annotation of Scene 3

4) Scene 4

In Scene 4, the reporter continues his monologue to express admiration towards Mo Salah who is not only skillful as a football player, but also a family man and devoted Muslim. This is accompanied by the scene which shows Mo Salah brings his wife and daughter to complete the lap of honor tradition around Anfield stadium at the end of the 2017/2018 season. Another scene displays Mo Salah prostrating after he scored at the 2019 UEFA Champions League final.



Scene 4			
No.	Length	Scene preview	Verbal inputs
1	10 sec.		Reporter: Salah is not just a talented player, he has made his own wife and daughter part of the Liverpool family. And makes his religion just an aspect to his personality.
2	2 sec.		Reporter: On and off the pitch he is Muslim.

Table 15: The annotation of Scene 4

5) Scene 5

When the reporter asks for an opinion from Omar, one of the local Muslim residents in Liverpool, however, he argues that even before Mo Salah's presence Liverpool was already the friendliest city in his eyes. He personally never finds racism directed against Muslims.

Scene 5			
No.	Length	Scene preview	Verbal inputs
1	5 sec.		Reporter: Omar who has always supported Liverpool says he has never felt threatened in his home city.

2	10 sec.		<p>[Interview]</p> <p>Omar: The people in Liverpool are probably the most friendliest people in my life. Me personally have never known they're saying a racist towards Muslims.</p>
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Table 16: The annotation of Scene 5

6) Scene 6

The reporter argues that as a city with a long history of football, Liverpool city always can feel the benefit every time LFC plays well. Not for that Mo Salah's hype which contributes to the joyful and united look of the city, but more exactly it is because the collective work from the LFC squad as a result of a good combination of people with diverse backgrounds and beliefs. Finally, the reporter mentions his name, the news program to where the video will be broadcasted as well as the place where he and the team made the report to mark the end of the video.

Scene 6			
No.	Length	Scene preview	Verbal inputs
1	10 sec.		<p>Reporter: When the team is playing well, the whole city can feel the benefit. Liverpool's success has been so joyful and it feels just no place here for hates.</p>



2	13 sec.	 	<p>[Closing]</p> <p>Reporter: Damon Green. News at Ten. Liverpool.</p>
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Table 17: The annotation of Scene 6

c. News Values

News values are the decisive factors that make an event into the news (Cotter, 2010; Fowler, 1991; Bednarek & Caple, 2012;) (See C. News Values, **Chapter II**). For the purpose of critical investigation, the observation of values in the news is done discursively by paying full attention to the use of evaluative language features such as verbs indicating possitive connotation, noun phrase and intensification or images (Rau, 2010; Bednarek & Caple, 2012; van Dijk, 2013).

1) Representation of Social Actor

With shorter duration in comparison to MEE's report, this research also identifies three aspects of news values from the perspective of social actors representation in the ITV's report as it is drawn from van Leeuwen's (2008) socio-semantic framework. They are Role Allocation, Personalization, and Impact.

a) Role Allocation & Personalization

ITV personalizes Mo Salah as a talented player as well as characterizes him as a family man and faithful Muslim through the processes of activation:

- 2.1) Salah is not just a **talented player**
- 2.2) he **has made his own wife and daughter part of the Liverpool family and makes his religion just an aspect to his personality**

It is as though Mo Salah embodied a 'perfect' footballer. Some other best footballers crumble at their peak careers due to the inability to manage fame and glamorous lives, but Mo Salah, as he is described here, keeps living his humble life despite his current skyrocketed profile. He places his family above all as it is instructed by Islam, avoids nightclubs and alcohols. Moreover, ITV also describes Mo Salah with positive verb through the process of objectivation:

- 2.3) The way that Liverpool fans **idolize their striker who is Muslim**

Mo Salah has been a new idol in the city and for Liverpool fans at a larger scale. On and off the pitch, he is a picture of a real Muslim where the virtues and morality of love are what he accounts for most. In all, ITV construes Mo Salah's personality in a very positive light.

b) Impact

ITV also uses intensification but remains slightly different as it is evoked by introducing a cited study:

- 2.4) The study from American Stanford University says anti-Muslim hate crimes on Merseyside **have dropped by almost 20% since Salah arrival**

At first, there can be seen that ITV attempts to illustrate the impact that Mo Salah has brought in a percentage. However, ITV's true stance on impact is articulated through its concluding remark which overtly says that Muslim hates drop is possible not because Mo Salah has fought it single-headedly, but more because of Liverpool FC's turnaround in the recent years thanks to great collective works from all the players, the staffs and incredible stewardship from the club's owners

2.5) **When the team is playing well, the whole city can feel the benefit**

2.6) **Liverpool's success has been so joyful and it feels just no place here for hates**

2) News Values and Images

In addition to linguistic construal, this research also identifies four among ten aspects of news values from the perspective of images in the ITV's report as it is drawn from Bednarek & Caple (2012, 63 – 81). They are Prominence, Proximity, Consonance, and Impact.

a) Prominence

There can be seen that ITV construes the prominence of Mo Salah with two clips taken from the victory parade scene after Liverpool FC won their sixth UEFA Champions League trophy. In the first image (left) Mo Salah is shown in the video report as he lifts that most-wanted UCL silverware with pride.

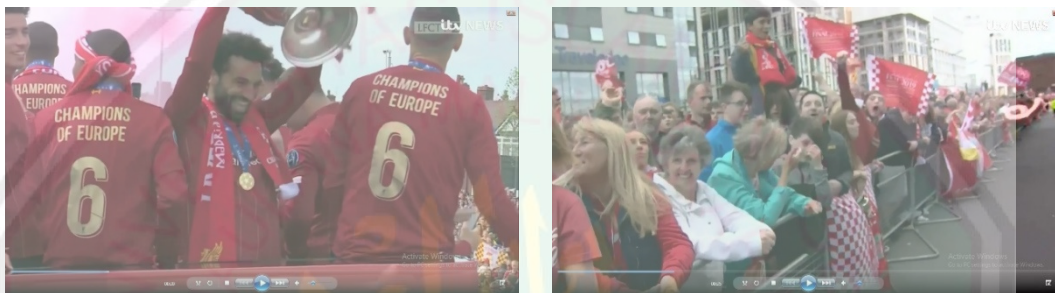


Figure 6: Mo Salah lifting the UCL trophy (left). Sea of fans chanting about Mo Salah (right)

With him being in the center among other players, and is pictured with a relatively low angle, it can be perceived that ITV wants to direct viewers' focus as well as to put some impressions of superiority and prominence to the figure of Mo Salah (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006, p. 140). The second image (right), meanwhile, is the clip when a sea of fans was roaring up Mo Salah's name with so much passion. It represents how he has been extremely idolized by everyone regardless of their race and religion.

b) Consonance

In terms of consonance, ITV shows the clip when Mo Salah brings his wife and daughter together to celebrate the Lap of Honor tradition in Anfield Stadium.

Despite his status as part of a minority group in the UK, but that does not stop Mo Salah to keep being confident with his identity. The headscarf that his wife wears, of which is often rejected by most countries in the West, moreover, might be another effective way through which Islam can be more widely introduced to the public. Meanwhile, another clip also shows Mo Salah's iconic post-goal celebration which means an utter of humiliation to the God for being able to complete goals after goals. These clips can visually associate Mo Salah with a figure of a family man and faithful Muslim.



Figure 7: Mo Salah celebrated the Lap of Honor tradition with family (left). Mo Salah performing *sujud* after scoring against Tottenham Hostspurs in the 2018/2019 UCL final (right)

d. Social Semiotic Theory of Representation

Principally drawn from Kress & van Leeuwen (2006), the visual aspects of both videos are closely looked based on its representational and interactional meanings.

1) Representational Meaning

Representational meaning is further developed into narrative and conceptual processes.

a) Narrative Processes

In nearly the same way, ITV is also filled with various represented participants which are primarily showcased by the reporters and source persons, respectively. The role of ‘actors’ and ‘goals’ is held interchangeably by the reporter and source persons while they are engaged in structured conversations throughout the scenes. And so to speak, the relation between them is also ‘transactional’.

No.	Media Institutions	Source Persons	Locative Circumstances
1	ITV	Abu Usamah at-Thahabi	(Probably) his residence
2		Hamzah Khalique-Loonat	(Probably) his residence
3		Omar	In a street

Table 18: The summary of Narrative Process

Just like MEE, the ITV’s video report also put some places which are indicated to be situated in the city of Liverpool on display. As they are specifically described above, those mentioned locations also refer to ‘circumstance’. While there is no big contrast between ITV and MEE in terms of narrative processes, thus the meaning of this video’s elements are, in this research, interpreted quite identically to MEE’s, which means that ITV, as an institution, is determined to give its viewers reliable information over highly-claimed of Islamophobia drop rates brought by Mo Salah through serious investigation that involves a lot of trusted individuals from various backgrounds.

For ‘reactional process’, the eyeline of the represented participants in the ITV’s video report can also be identified as showing beatific gazes which also demonstrate their enthusiasms in bringing down the Mo Salah phenomenon from

their perspectives and therefore is categorized as ‘transactional’. It can primarily be seen in **Shot 1 (Scene 1)**; **Shot 1 (Scene 3)**; **Shot 2 (Scene 5)**. Some Muslim representatives in the video, like Abu Usamah at-Thahabi, Hamzah Khalique-Loonat, also show peaceful gazes which could be explained as their gratitude because of the effect Mo Salah has had on them as part of the Muslim community in the UK, let them be more observable than not.

In so doing, both ITV and MEE mostly employ the technique of disconnected shots to realize the narrative processes between participants. Instead of displaying the represented participants simultaneously in a single frame, the videos subsequently separate them into different frames. This technique particularly relates more with reactional process in which it has strong capability to provide viewers (interactive participants) with intimate viewpoint as if they were present witnessing at the other end of the corner when the conversations between the reporters and source persons run in each place. It can be seen primarily in all of the interviews done in MEE. ITV, even though implements the same technique, but uses it with another variant. Only one out of their three interviews shows either the reporter or the source person in a disconnected shot (**Scene 5**). Meanwhile, the other two (**Scene 1 & Scene 3**) tend to omit the reporter off the screen and hence the focus is fully directed around the source persons.

b) Conceptual Processes

Going the same way, ‘covert taxonomy’ also characterizes the ‘classificational process’ in the ITV’s video report. Here all of the source persons

(subordinates) are indirectly connected to each other by the questions (superordinate) proposed by Damon Green respectively. While there can be observed that there is general agreement between the first two source persons to recognize the possible effect that Mo Salah has, only Omar, however, who remains ambivalent and denies the Muslim hate crimes. Omar does not think that Islam and Muslims have fallen short of the values of religious harmony in Liverpool city. Instead, he says that Liverpool is probably the friendliest city already even before Mo Salah.

“The people in Liverpool are probably the most friendliest people in my life. Me personally have never known they’re saying a racist towards Muslims.” (Shot 2; Scene 5; ITV)

In contrast to MEE, the ‘analytical process’ in the ITV’s report has more homogenous source persons as well as lesser in terms of numbers. While MEE has five groups on the turn and that they comprise of either white, mixed, Muslim or non-Muslim, ITV solely gets three groups and all of them are Muslim. The first is Imam Abu Usamah at-Thahabi as one of the highly respected figures in the religious group of the Muslim community in the UK. The second is Hamzah Khalique-Loonat, a football pundit who currently serves as a presenter at Tactics Weekly Podcast, who stands for football experts. Finally, the third is Omar who represents the local people and ordinary supporters in Liverpool. Symbolically speaking, when it comes to talking about Mo Salah effect, ITV seems to care about the voices of one group only and therefore putting aside the other groups. Therefore, it raises out the suspicion that ITV is biased (partisanship) to the political tendency of the Republican – the party which has been associated with John Malone – in this term (see **b) Relations**

between Interactive Participants in 2.4.2 Representation and Interactional Meaning).

2) Representation and Interactional Meaning

a) Relations between Interactive and Represented Participants

Differing from MEE, the interactive act called 'offer', however, is out of nowhere in ITV's report, provided that its reporter Damon Green is not given enough exposure like Osha Mahmoud in MEE. The only scene in which Damon Green appears in the video is in **Shot 1 (Scene 5)**, in a very short amount of time, oblique angle, with a camera behind him. Not even a single source person is privileged to have a direct look at the viewers. So practically, there is no contact between represented participants and the viewers which can be identified visually. Scenes transitions are commenced with audio narratives. Alternatively, the 'offer' is represented only through those audio narratives as ITV tends to omit the visual presence of its reporter. To sum up, it symbolically brings a sense of exclusivity which separates the relationship between interactive participants (the viewers and ITV as the producer).

b) Relations between Interactive Participants

The institutional goals of ITV, therefore, are mirrored in the way they produce the content of this report. The choice to put three people whose religious and ethnical backgrounds are all Muslims and Arab-mixed as source persons can perhaps be justifiable for the reason that they are the groups which have more prone to the issue of Islamophobia in comparison to groups like Christians, Buddhism, other Asians,

Caribbean, etc. However, the decision to not hear the perspectives from other groups around this topic seems to make ITV sounds like partisanship in this term. Therefore, when it comes to talking about the relation between interactive participants – the producer and the viewers – it is very likely that ITV is imposing on its viewers the idea that as if Islamophobia was an issue that had never really existed and hurt the Muslim community. ITV misses out that the issue of Islamophobia generally involves two major groups - Muslims as the victim and any groups other than Muslims who do racist. Its concern is very much inclined to the effect felt by the victims only, while the effect felt by groups that are potential to perform racist is left unknown.

While Republican, the political group in which John Malone has in a way been associated with, is recognized in the last few years as the party which reinforces the extreme belief of the white supremacy and the fear for Islam, so this might demonstrate the answer for the absence of the White community from the ITV's report in the time when their opinion is highly required for proven assessment of the possible effect that Mo Salah has. Therefore, the portrayals of the Mo Salah's phenomenon seem to remain subjective to the 'interests' of John Malone who, with all his financial power, has control, either direct or indirect, over ITV's attitude. Consequently, though there has been a nice attempt to take part in promoting the increased familiarity of Islam and Muslims in the UK due to Mo Salah's increasing profile, it seems like this attempt could deliver the opposite outcome when it goes for a wider term. Instead of giving its viewers more understandings about the noble

values of Islam through Mo Salah, ITV could have even worsened the sentiments as its report has the potential to endorse quasi-acceptance of Islam.

c) Modality

As for visual ‘modality’, there is no big difference between ITV and MEE. There can be seen that ITV also put *real* people, *real* locations, and also *real* events with immense details of colors, illuminations, depths, brightness in their video reports thanks to modern videography. Maximally articulated in high naturalistic modality markers, therefore, the ITV’s report can also be perceived as representing a high degree of factuality and ‘ideational’ as these modalities aim to construe our experience of the world around and inside us. The dynamic movements of all the represented participants inside the video report can observe with the naked eye, and too resemble what people judge as visually *real* in the real world. Thus, it gives the viewers the impression that all the visits, interviews, everything that happens inside the video, as long as it can go, are based on the *real*, non-fabricated situation.

B. Discussion

By scrutinizing the MEE and ITV’s video reports not only from the perspective of linguistic but also from other semiotic resources such as visual, structure as well as the media’s socio-historical and economic context, this research has provided critical analysis on how the phenomenon of Islamophobia drop rate in the UK brought by Mo Salah is multimodally represented and how the meaning of the representations from both media might have potential to send their viewers the opposite way as a result of what this research called as ‘off-target’ representations.

The key findings of this research are that, instead of giving more highlights on Mo Salah's Muslim identity, both MEE and ITV emphasize Mo Salah's statistic and achievements in football as the factor which earns him the position he is today – the position which public see as an advantage and capable of decreasing the sentiments upon Islam and Muslim community, and therefore can improve public's perception. But as the above findings point out, a bigger concern on the aspect of statistics and achievements would implicitly bear on the quasi-acceptance of Islam once it is not comprehensively understood. Thus, this research considers that the two variables should wisely be put in balance between his Muslim identity and footballer profile to avoid misconception and provide the best outcome.

To put these findings into extensive discussions, this research has relatively developed some existing studies concerning the representation of Muslim sports stars as role models that can improve public perception about Islam and Muslims as an underrepresented group in the West. Among these are Saeed (2002) and Black (2016). It was found that media representation on the success story and the nitty-gritty about Muhammad Ali and Mohamed Farah can indeed bring positive effects into the lives of Muslims as well as people of color in the respected countries. The findings of both studies suggest that their popularities are capable of improving awareness about injustices that have harmed Islam and its believers and therefore shifting stereotypes. However, the two existing studies have not yet discussed the issues critically while it is somewhat required to reveal what meanings are beyond such representations. It is vital to understand better other possible meanings that

might entail such representations – to further seek if they do attempt to redefine the image of Islam or otherwise. This research sees it as a gap since meanings, in the tradition of post-structuralism, are not single (multiples) and that media environments are where truths struggle.

With that in mind, this research, to some extent, has specifically supported Burdsey (2007) which discussed the media representation of Amir Khan, a British-Asian and Muslim boxer star. The existing study suggested that when talking about Amir Khan as a figurehead for a number of social causes such as Islamophobia, media tend to deprioritize his ethnical (or religious) identities around the discourses. Therefore, although positive portrayals of Amir Khan can seem to help emancipate Khan and his affiliated ethno-faiths, the critical analysis showed the actual purpose of those media was to obscurely reproduce quasi-acceptance of Islam and perpetuate the discourses and practices of social exclusions in Britain. However, this research differs from the existing study in terms of data form. Unlike Burdsey (2007) whose data are in the form of written news, this research, as has been stated prior, takes video news and thus extends the discussion into the multimodal analysis.

While many previous studies around media representations on Islam and Muslims unveil the tendency of most media to cover Islam and Muslims in a negative slant, it is perhaps nothing new since Islam is often considered incompatible with the Western way of life, and that Muslims are barbaric, underdeveloped and even terrorists. To a certain degree, the findings of this research seem to add the list of those existing studies which analyzed and concluded that mainstream media

contribute to the growing trend of Islamophobia. This research reinforces Byng (2010) and Abdeslam (2019) which focused on the media's view about *hijab* and *niqab*, and Bowe & Makki (2015) on the view about mosques. All of which investigated the representation of Islam and Muslims on major newspapers in first-world countries such as the USA, the UK and France, where Muslim populations are fairly large, from the lens of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), specializing in the topic of racism. Nonetheless, considering that those issues have been quite scrutinized, hence, this research has extended the discussion into the current event which talks about media representation on Mo Salah and its disguised negative effects. This issue alone is novice since no researchers have critically addressed this issue through multimodal discourse analysis before.

It is also interesting to note that while Hanif (2019) found that ITV is listed among the UK broadcasters with the lowest rate of biased coverages about Islam and Muslim, this research shows how even the most considered 'neutral' the UK media might produce disturbing representation which is often indicative to the underlying bias of Islam and Muslim. Besides, Hanif (2019) also suggested that either TV broadcast or online media in the UK tend to hold constant drip-feed of false information about Islam and Muslims for deliberate reasons. Among online media mentioned in the existing study are the biggest and established ones such as The Times, ITV (online version), Mail Online, The Guardian, etc. However, in a way that there are still bulks of underexplored online media registered in the UK domain regarding the representation of Islam and Muslims, this research, therefore,

investigates the relatively new-born online media Middle East Eye (MEE) which is widely known for its controversy.

Up to the finding in this research, or in the existing studies, the insinuations directed against Muslims have made it very clear that there are still sentiments from Western media. More dangerously is the fact that media have all the instruments and powers to influence people, despite from very different backgrounds, to think about the same thing which, when it is linked with the present research, mean that there are potentials to frame people with the ideas that Islam and Muslim are inherently negatives (see **A. Mass Media, Culture & Society** in **Chapter II**).

Moreover, this research gives more nuances to the application of MDA in some existing studies by addressing the contextualization of socio-historical and economic events (Bednarek & Caple, 2012). This research furthers Yao & Zhuo (2018) who also drew from Kress & van Leeuwen (2006) to analyze the promotional video of Hangzhou city. Both the existing study and this research have discussed the representational and interactional processes found in the data. However, what distinguishes is that the existing study did not happen to include the socio-historical and economic contexts in its analysis while it should remain vastly significant to understand the text (any forms including video) based on the social, historical, and economic events that possibly motivate the production of the promotional video.

To the extent where the investigations of socio-historical and economic aspects can help comprehend the underlying assumptions, the producers and the important figures who set the tone of the news, the employment of socio-historical

and economic aspects are also useful to understand the news framing through the analysis of the discursive practices (Rau, 2010; Bednarek & Caple, 2012; van Dijk, 2013). To this point, this research accentuates Surdiasis & Eriyanto (2018) which scrutinized how President Jokowi framed himself and his first-spell presidency to particular narratives ahead of the 2019 Presidential Election through daily vlogs, and therefore established his personality as *humble*, *modest* and *progressive*. The existing study exemplifies the ideological act which this research finds almost similarly in the way MEE and ITV represent the Mo Salah phenomenon through the analysis of News Values (Bednarek & Caple, 2012). As it is stated in the above findings, MEE and ITV treat this issue in certain angles – mirrored in the selection of languages and images – which are likely influenced by the owner or the shareholder of both media.

In addition, the identification of a sense of ‘proximity’ as it is constructed by News Values (Bednarek & Caple, 2012) in this research supports Chouliaraki (2004) and Bednarek & Caple (2012). In creating meaning about proximity, news producers make use of languages and images to mediate different locales – breaking ‘space-time’ barrier between the represented events and the spectators (viewers). In so doing, proximity may come through evaluative languages or images that signify the ethnic or cultural landmarks of the group being represented. Such instances are seen in this research when Mo Salah is referred to with ‘The Fourth Pyramid’ and ‘Egyptian King’, as well as when frequent images displaying famous landmarks of Liverpool city. These demonstrate how space-time articulation can moralize the viewers with

particular feelings and relationships as MEE and ITV are projecting something close to them.

Finally, this research might later resonate with Tseronis's (2014) finding on the importance of having news magazines with 'attractive' verbal and visual content to attract more numbers of viewers, and therefore imply more buyers. The existing study examined six covers from two German magazines reporting about the role of Greece in the 2010-2012 eurozone crisis period within the analysis of multimodal discourse, and indicated that there were increasing capitals as 'good' covers appeal to more prospective readerships (or viewers as of this case). It accords especially with ITV which seems to be so naturally profit-oriented considering that ITV is a commercial broadcaster. Whereas getting more viewers watching are likely the main objective, more viewers also mean more streams of revenue available. It is reasonable since audiences (viewers) are seen as commodity exchangeable for ad spaces in the business of media.

On top of those, this research has strongly attempted to shed light on other possible meanings behind the media representation of the Mo Salah phenomenon through the use of Kress & van Leeuwen (2006) and Bednarek & Caple (2012). The first major question proposed in **Chapter I** has had this research understood how deliberate use of multi modes in the special video report about 'Mo Salah and his possible effect to Islamophobia drop in the UK' produced by Middle East Eye and ITV help construct the representation of the Mo Salah phenomenon in a way that can potentially perpetuate the idea that Islam and Muslim are incompatible with the value

of the so-called ‘modern’ cultures of the Western. Instead of redefining and humanizing the face of Islam and Muslims, the subjectivities of Middle East Eye and ITV might have played a big role in contributing or, at least, maintaining Islamophobia in the UK as well as worldwide.

Besides, this research has also answered the second question of this research by explaining how socio-historical and economic contexts of Middle East Eye and ITV possibly influence their representations of Mo Salah and his possible effect to Islamophobia drop in the UK in such a negative way. In summary, this research accounts for at least two novelties. First, this research has extended the studies of Saeed (2002) and Black (2016) to a more critical discussion of the representation of top Muslim figures. Second, this research has also extended the studies of media representations on Islam and Muslim which were previously more concerned in the analysis of linguistic discourses (Burdsey, 2007; Byng, 2010; Bowe & Makki, 2015; Abdeslam, 2019) to the discussion that touches multimodal analysis of discourses. By all means, this research finally expects to contribute to the enrichments within the works of literature of Critical Discourse Analysis and of the representations of Islam and Muslims in the media.

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

This chapter mainly highlights the conclusions of this research. In addition, some useful suggestions are also mentioned to provide directions for future researchers on how to address the conclusions of this research into broader contexts, settings, and cultures.

A. Conclusions

The issue of Islamophobia has relatively experienced no significant improvements in the past few decades. The world, particularly few Western countries, keep on sharing fear-mongering sentiments and negative stereotypes which result in the marginalization, inequality, and exclusion of Muslims from many aspects of life. While the answers to the question of ‘what are the factors that originate Islamophobia’ may vary, it is argued that political interests have here and there become primary sources which drive such hostile tensions toward Islam and Muslims. Some political conservatives in the West such as Republican Party, for example, believe that Islam is pollution and therefore cannot go hand in hand with the cultures and values of the Western. In such a way, the attempts to banish Islam and Muslims from the West are well expressed in, among others, discriminative political rhetoric, foreign policies as well as media representations.

To be more specific in this context, media, as it is recognized as one of the most powerful and pervasive tools in the formation of particular stereotypes, often

become the main reliance for information in which the public feel that Islam and Muslim are spreading bad influence and therefore deserve public detachments by the standard. More often than not, mainstream media's representations of Islam and Muslims are very much tendentious. The worst of all is that this media-generated information remains inherently hegemonic as they continue to impose people to think about Islam and Muslims the same way – which in this case is negative. In such discussion, it is noteworthy to take account of external influences which may come from socio-historical and economic contexts or political interests of the moguls as these are the main factors responsible for setting up the tone of the media.

While some Islamophobic attitudes are represented explicitly through the reporting of 9/11, serial terrorisms, and *niqab*, some others are disguised in a seemingly positive portrayal (Byng, 2010; Bowe & Makki, 2015; Abdeslam (2019). At least, it is what this research has found in the representation of Mo Salah and his effect on Islamophobia drop rate in the UK by Middle East Eye (MEE) and Independent Television (ITV). Since Mo Salah signed for Liverpool FC in Summer 2017, there had been a strong assumption that his presence had caused the decline of Islamophobic attitudes. The assumption grew stronger as the report by Stanford University confirmed the decrease of around 18,9% as of 2019 (Alrababa'h, Marble, Mousa & Siegel, 2019). As media like MEE and ITV soon began to cite and represent it, the world started to buzz and held Mo Salah in high regard for he is considered the ambassador of Islam and Muslim to the dominant society where Islam and Muslims are treated badly. This becomes the initial point of this research,

knowing that media representation is a perfect environment for meanings contestation and truth struggles.

By employing Bednarek & Caple (2012) on News Values, this research is able to identify the initial attitudes of both MEE and ITV towards the Mo Salah phenomenon through discursive investigation of their video reports. The discursive practices of MEE are reflected in the way they construe the issue linguistically and visually through news values that demonstrate *prominence*, *proximity*, *consonance* and *impact*. ITV, with relatively shorter duration compared to MEE, whereas, employ *prominence* and *impact* for linguistic resources and *prominence*, *consonance* and *proximity* for visual counterparts. In such deep multimodal analysis, this research finds that both MEE and ITV's representations might manifest secondary meanings which have the potential to endorse quasi-acceptance of Islam and Muslim as they give spotlights on Mo Salah's statistic and achievements in football more than they emphasize on his Muslim identity.

Besides, this research also uses Social Semiotic Theory of Representation by Kress & van Leeuwen (2006) to analyze the meanings processes of the video reports. It then goes down to specifically scrutinize the narrative meanings (the relation between represented participants) and the interactional meanings (the relation between represented participants and interactive participants as well as the relation between interactive participants). When it is interlinked with Bednarek & Caple's (2012) Socio-Historical and Economic Contexts, this research is able to break down the institutional goals of both MEE and ITV.

Despite its claim as independent and neutral media, MEE is surprisingly a new state-sponsored Qatari media aimed at supporting the geopolitical interests of Qatar and thus produce some tendentious and manipulative reports. Consequently, it causes great turmoil among Qatar's enemy states such as Saudi Arabia, Bahrain and Egypt – the country where Mo Salah comes from. When MEE represents Mo Salah in such a way, MEE is perhaps exercising 'indirect attack' to Egypt which simultaneously, and sadly, might have a chained effect to contribute Islamophobia. Whereas, the fact that John Malone – an American multi-billionaire businessman who was also sympathetic to Donald Trump – is the major holder of ITV's shares might be indicative of the rationale behind ITV's homogenous selection of source persons. The absence of the White community's opinions (Western) from the ITV's video report should relatively be less acceptable considering that the issue of Islamophobia drop rate is supposed to be assessed proportionally between Muslim as the victim and the White as the perpetrator (most of the times) to avoid biases. With that in mind, it seems like ITV is implicitly incorporating the extreme belief of white supremacy – the belief which has long been held by Donald Trump and its affiliated party the Republican. Therefore, instead of humanizing Islam and Muslims, it might reinforce that ITV is imposing on the quasi-acceptance of Islam and Muslims.

Finally, the researcher has seen that the findings of this research have relatively provided some useful additions to some existing studies stated prior in this research. First, this research has extended the studies of Saeed (2002) and Black (2016) to a more critical discussion of the representation of top Muslim figures by

examining the socio-historical and economic aspects. Second, this research has also taken further the studies of media representations on Islam and Muslim which were previously more concentrated on the linguistic analysis of discourses (Burdsey, 2007; Byng, 2010; Bowe & Makki, 2015; Abdeslam, 2019) to the discussion that comes to the multimodal analysis of discourses. To sum up, this research finally expects to contribute to the enrichments within the works of literature of Critical Discourse Analysis and of the representations of Islam and Muslims in the media.

B. Suggestions

By critically understanding how MEE and ITV represent the Mo Salah phenomenon through multimodal analyses and how their socio-historical and economic contexts influence their representations, it is expected that this research can make numbers of people (readers) more acquainted with the motives behind MEE's and ITV's 'suspicious' representations on Islamophobia drop rate in the UK following that Mo Salah's brilliant performance since he joined Liverpool FC in Summer 2017. Instead of taking everything that the media say for granted, this research carries out a thorough investigation on how their points of interests can potentially produce long-term quasi-acceptance of Islam – the condition where Islam, as a religion of other in Western society, is accepted seemingly; apparently; not really – and therefore shed light on their real agenda to essentialize that Mo Salah, as a symbol of Muslim in the footballing world, is not worthy of positive recognition and therefore implies that Muslims are always 'behind' the West.

Although the critics on the removal of the religious aspects of Mo Salah might too be interpreted as an ‘exaggeration’ since it is usually normal for media to not incorporate religions when they talk about other footballers (e.g. Lionel Messi, Cristiano Ronaldo, etc.), however, to go with this possibility, further data which can provide reliable evidence on media’s treatments over Muslim players and non-Muslim players (might be a percentage or whatever) are of course needed – whether it is part of the secular value¹⁹ or not – which insofar are still missing in the present research. While this research’s findings suggest that both MEE and ITV’s representations might potentially endorse quasi-acceptance of Islam and Muslim, this research is also not in denial and is humbled to acknowledge if, for example, all of these are possibly part of secularism values (provided that further data are in place). It is reasonable to be fully aware of other possible meanings since ‘meanings’ is not single in the tradition of poststructuralism.

Moreover, the researcher is fully aware of some limitations in this research. The researcher realizes that the Mo Salah phenomenon makes up only a small part of the current discourse on Islam and Islamophobia while, at the same time, the researcher also does not ignore the fact that Islamophobia and crimes against Islam are sociologically and politically complex and thus require complex actions as well. Therefore, the researcher suggests that future researchers can address the problem of this research in broader contexts, settings, and cultures using critical multimodal discourse analysis. To bring this research to a close, the researcher also welcomes

¹⁹ Secular value or secularism is generally understood as the banishment of religious matters from public sphere.

future researchers who wish to provide studies that might evidently give more concrete insights on the ultimate finding of this research; the potential of the quasi-acceptance of Islam and Muslims as the long-term effect of ‘off-target’ representations.



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CURRICULUM VITAE



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