

## Visual Social Semiotics on Malaysian Fishing Boat Capture News

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### Abstract

*Indonesia-Malaysia is two neighboring countries in Southeast Asia. The geographical proximity makes the two countries have a lot in common. However, this similarity does not guarantee that the two countries can coexist harmoniously. One of the problems in the relationship between the two countries is border-related issues, such as illegal fishing in the border area. This issue has been widely covered by the Indonesian mass media, including Metro TV and TVRI. This paper tries to see how Metro TV and TVRI reported the arrest of a Malaysian fishing boat near the border. This study uses a semiotic social visual analysis as a research method and the main theory of social reconstruction of reality. The research findings show Metro TV interprets this incident as illegal fishing and sovereignty violations. Meanwhile, TVRI interpreted this incident as illegal fishing and the achievements of the Indonesian marine police.*

**Keywords:** *Indonesia-Malaysia; Social Construction of Reality; Sign and Meaning; Visual Social Semiotic*

### Abstrak

*Indonesia-Malaysia adalah dua negara tetangga di Asia Tenggara. Kedekatan geografis membuat kedua negara memiliki banyak kesamaan. Namun banyak kesamaan yang mereka miliki tidak menjamin bahwa kedua negara dapat hidup berdampingan secara harmonis. Salah satu permasalahan dalam hubungan kedua negara adalah perbatasan, yaitu illegal fishing di wilayah perbatasan. Isu ini telah banyak diliput oleh media massa Indonesia, termasuk Metro TV dan TVRI. Tulisan ini mencoba melihat bagaimana Metro TV dan TVRI melaporkan penangkapan kapal nelayan Malaysia di dekat perbatasan kedua negara. Penelitian ini menggunakan analisis visual sosial semiotik sebagai metode penelitian dan teori utama rekonstruksi sosial atas realitas. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa Metro TV memaknai kejadian ini sebagai illegal fishing dan pelanggaran kedaulatan. Sementara itu, TVRI memaknai kejadian ini sebagai peristiwa kriminal dan prestasi Polri.*

**Kata Kunci:** *Indonesia-Malaysia; Semiotika Sosial Visual; Tanda dan Makna; Konstruksi Sosial atas Realitas*

## Introduction

Indonesia and Malaysia are two neighboring countries in the Southeast Asia region. Geographical proximity makes Indonesia and Malaysia two countries with many similarities, including similarities in race, culture, language, and religion. These many similarities make some experts or researchers define Indonesia-Malaysia as a cognate nation (Kremer, 2011; Jacob, 2009).

However, the many similarities between Indonesia and Malaysia do not guarantee that the two will always live harmoniously side by side. Historical facts in the period 1960-2000 show that there were ups and downs in the relationship between these two allied nations (Khalid & Yacob, 2012; Mat Yazid, 2013; Nurliana & Aimi Khairunnisa, 2016). Indonesia-Malaysia problems became more complex after 2000. Indonesia-Malaysia were involved in many problems, such as border issues (Ambalat Block and illegal fishing). In addition, the other problems between Indonesia and Malaysia are cultural issues (Pendet Dance and Tor-tor Dance) and migrant worker problems (Wilfrida Soik case, Siti Aishah case, and Adelina Siao case). Moreover, Indonesia-Malaysia also has smoke problems due to forest fires in Sumatra and Kalimantan, such as in 2013, 2015, and 2019.

One of the prominent problems between Indonesia and Malaysia is the border issue between the two countries (Colson, 2017; Druce & Baikoeni, 2018), which turns into national-level issue. For several times, the capture of illegal fishing boats has become a joint problem between Indonesia and Malaysia. Not infrequently, this problem almost sparked a conflict between the two countries. A prominent problem regarding illegal fishing occurred in April 2019 in the Malacca Strait area. Indonesian marine security forces conducting patrols and legal action against Malaysian fishing boats met with Malaysian marine security forces. This meeting sparked tension between the two countries (Rini, 2019).

The Indonesian mass media pay great attention to the ebb and flow of relations between the two countries. Several studies conducted on the mass media in Indonesia show that the reporting of events involving the relationship between Indonesia and Malaysia is carried out unequally. The sources of news and storylines that are appointed are often only one party from Indonesia. Another finding in the study also showed that reporting on events involving relations between the two countries is often done in a provocative sensational way (Bharata & Nik Hasan, 2017; D. Parahita, 2013; Hamedi & Dunan, 2016; Priyowidodo & Indrayani, 2012; Syas, 2015; Zabedah et al., 2012).

The research findings of the Indonesia-Malaysia media state that the Indonesian people still rely on the mass media to obtain information regarding the problems of Indonesia-Malaysia relations (Selo et al., 2015). The problem is that the unbalanced, provocative, and sensational reporting from the Indonesian mass media regarding the problems in relations between the two countries has created a negative perception of the Indonesian audience towards Malaysia (Saad et al., 2016). Another study found that the dispute between Indonesia and Malaysia has penetrated the digital world through social media. The study also showed an increase in the expression of public dissatisfaction and anger when problems sparks between the two countries. This expression is no longer only in the form of demonstrations from community groups in each country but is also expressed through the internet and social media (Irwansyah, 2017; Prestianta, 2021; Suhardjono, 2012).

The constructivist view of the study of journalism states that in the process of reporting and writing, even the consumption of news always involves an exchange of

meaning. Journalists give a certain meaning to the events or realities covered. Journalists also give meaning when constructing the facts of events when writing news. Constructivism believes that news production is a subjective process. This approach believes that the news production process produces a completely different new reality from the constructed social reality (Dennis & Merrill, 1984; Schudson, 2011; Tuchman, 2002).

Meanwhile, in the news production process, journalists use language as a tool to reconstruct social reality into the news. There are several ways journalists and media institutions use language as a tool to reconstruct and define reality (DeFleur & Ball-Rokeach, 1989). The first is to use the choice of words or symbols in the language. Even though media institutions only report facts from reality through news, if the choice of words, terms, or symbols used to reconstruct them conventionally has a certain meaning in society, it will certainly attract the community's attention. Kenneth Burke (Eriyanto, 2000) states that the choice of words, terms, or symbols in the news production process is not purely a journalistic, technical problem but is related to language politics. These words, terms, and symbols not only focus the audience's attention but also limit the audience's perception and direct it to certain ways of thinking and beliefs.

Second, journalists and media institutions could use *framing* on the reality or events covered (D'Angelo & Kuypers, 2010). This is at least due to technical demands such as limited space in newspaper columns or limited broadcast time on news broadcasts on radio and television. Technical demands like this make it rare for the media to be able to make or display news in its entirety, starting from the first minute or the beginning of the incident to the last minute of an event. In the name of journalistic rules, a long, wide, and complicated reality or event is tried to be simplified through a framing mechanism. The framing process carried out by journalists and media institutions is adjusted to the internal and external dynamics of the institution in the form of technical, economic, or political interests, even ideological ones (Entman, 1993; Gamson & Modigliani, 1989).

Providing a special space and time for reality is the third way journalists or media institutions can use language to reconstruct reality. Media and journalism studies recognize the Agenda Setting theory popularized by Maxwell McComb and Donald Shaw (Baran, 2014). This theory states that if the media gives a certain space or time to an event, then the event will get a certain level of attention from society. The greater the space or time given to an event, the greater the attention given by the audience. This study tries to answer the question, how do Indonesian television stations (Metro TV and TVRI) report and interpret the events of catching Malaysian fishing boats at the border?

## Method

This research is qualitative as it seeks to understand a phenomenon in the form of cultural objects, human experience, community life, or even institutions. Qualitative research aims to find the meaning of the phenomenon under study (Bryman, 2012; Hennink et al., 2020; Neuman, 2014). This study seeks to understand the meaning of television news texts regarding the capture of Malaysian fishing boats. In addition, this study also seeks to understand the policy of media managers to report this event.

The object of this research is television news text between 2008-2018. The technique of filtering news texts on the official media sites uses the method offered by (Seiffert-Brockmann et al., 2018). Metro TV and Televisi Republik Indonesia (TVRI)

were chosen to represent the different characteristics of the media. This difference is based on the concept offered by (Croteau & Haynes, 2006) and (Nainggolan, 2018). Metro TV is a private news television in Indonesia that was established in 2000. As a private news television Metro TV certainly has a strong market perspective. News products are produced not only to carry out an informative function but also to gain profit. On the other hand, TVRI has been a public broadcasting institution since 2002. As a public broadcaster, TVRI is not profit-oriented media. TVRI is more service-oriented to the community.

This research uses visual social semiotic analysis. Visual social semiotics is the development of a form of social semiotics initiated by MAK Halliday (Halliday & Hasan, 1989). Social semiotics not only examines the problem of signs and meanings but also explores why individuals or institutions use and choose these specific signs (and not other signs) (Kress, 2013). Therefore, there are two data collection techniques: qualitative content analysis with visual semiotic analysis and in-depth interviews with journalists and media editors.

This visual social semiotics is adapted from an analysis that has been used by Rick Iedema and Scott Koga-Browes (Iedema, 2011; Koga-browes, 2009). This visual social semiotics uses three metafunction concepts offered by MAK Halliday. These concepts are ideational, interactional, and compositional. The unit of analysis of the ideational concept consists of news angles (process), discourse involvement (participants), and words, phrases, and sentence forms (circumstances). The unit of analysis of the interactional concept is seen from the visual appearance, such as camera framing techniques and camera angles. Meanwhile, the unit of compositional analysis consists of a storyline, the concept of picture signs (icon, index, and symbol), and illustrations of music and original sound. The researcher applied this method to six Metro TV news and four TVRI news stories.

The next data collection technique is in-depth interviews. Interview is a method of collecting research data that involves researchers and research subjects and discusses a particular topic (Bryman, 2012; Hennink et al., 2020; Neuman, 2014). In this research, in-depth interviews were conducted with one journalist and one editor from each mass media institution studied. So, there were four people interviewed in this study.

## Results and Discussion

### Markers of Word, Phrase, Sentence, and News Corner

Metro TV and TVRI use a combination of active and passive verbs to describe events regarding the capture of Malaysian fishing boats. Some of the active verbs used by these two media are the words *securing*, *capturing*, *blocking*, and *escaping*. While the passive verbs used by Metro TV and TVRI, for example, are *secured* and *arrested*. In addition, these two media also use several words and phrases, which are figurative language. Metro TV uses words and phrases such as *securing*, *thwarting*, *blocking*, *escaping*, and *being very resentful*. TVRI uses the phrase *caught red-handed*, *secured*, and *followed up with legal action*.

Active verbs in the sentence structure indicate that there is an active party in carrying out an activity. Verbs such as *to secure*, *to thwart*, and *to arrest* are used by Metro TV to describe the police, navy, and the ministry of maritime affairs and fisheries who are actively taking measures to protect Indonesian seas from all kinds of disturbances. Meanwhile, Metro TV also uses active phrases such as *running away* and *trying to escape* to describe Malaysian fishers who do not want to be held responsible

for their illegal fishing. The verb *to intercept* is used by Metro TV to describe the active actions of the Malaysian security forces who are actually trying to protect against illegal fishing.

The word or phrase *securing, secured, unlicensed, and followed up with legal action*, as used by TVRI, is a euphemistic style of language (refining meaning). The word *secure* or *secured* is actually a substitute for the word *restrain*. The phrase *being followed up with legal action* means that the issue of illegal fishing will be brought to court. Meanwhile, the words *intercept, intercept, and ambush* used by Metro TV are dysphemism (strengthening the meaning) and have a negative meaning. This word means to intercept a person or group of people in the middle of a journey. The word *escape* in the sentence that the Malaysian fishing boat had fled is a personification style. This sentence likens a Malaysian fishing boat to the behavior of someone running away. The Malaysian sentence is very annoying; besides being a personification style, it is also a *pars-pro-toto* style of language.

Metro TV and TVRI also use the phrase *re-capture* to describe the capture of a Malaysian fishing boat. This phrase has two meanings. First, this phrase shows the success of the Indonesian security forces (police and the ministry of marine and fisheries) in maintaining the security of Indonesia's seas. Second, this phrase also wants to show that foreign fishing vessels, including Malaysian fishing vessels, have repeatedly carried out illegal fishing in Indonesian sea areas. Metro TV also uses the word *again* on a news title *Again, Foreign Ships Captured* (March 16, 2016). The word *again* indicates repetitive behavior. This means that foreign vessels have been arrested several times by Indonesian security forces for carrying out illegal fishing.

Metro TV reporter stated that Metro TV emphasizes the selection and use of straightforward words and phrases. This straightforwardness contains firmness because it reduces doubt in conveying information. The use of figure of speech is actually for the side news instead of the main news. The goal is to make the news more interesting. Likewise, passive sentences are also used for this goal. Actually, news writing with active sentences is a general standard for news writing. However, the use of passive voice is still allowed so that the audience does not get bored easily (Interview with informant T1-2, August 15, 2020). In contrast to Metro TV, which uses straightforward words in reporting on Indonesia and Malaysia, TVRI uses words that tend to be gentle and avoid being provocative.

The findings of this study are in line with the statement of Kenneth Burke. Kenneth Burke stated that the problem of choice of words, symbols, or terms in the news production process is actually not just a matter of journalistic practice. This problem is related to the politics of language. The choice of certain words, terms, and symbols can limit the audience from seeing different perspectives and lead the audience to understand an event (Eriyanto, 2000). In this case, there is a difference between Metro TV and TVRI. Metro TV's choice of words, phrases, and sentences, such as *blocking and being intercepted, ambushed and ambushed, was able to escape, violated maritime sovereignty, and Malaysia's actions were very annoying*, which would limit the audience to a certain perspective. For example, this perspective is the annoying behavior of Malaysian fishers, as parties who did not take responsibility yet like to interfere with the sovereignty of the Indonesian state. Meanwhile, TVRI chose words, phrases, and sentences related to the law, such as *securing, being caught red-handed, recidivist, and being followed up with legal action*. For example, this perspective is Malaysian fishers as criminals in the form of fishing theft.

In general, the Metro TV news angle regarding the capture of Malaysian fishing boats takes the theme of the problem of fishing theft or illegal fishing. However, Metro TV also provides viewpoint regarding the Indonesian maritime sovereignty incident at the border on the news of *Again, Foreign Ship Arrested* (March 16, 2016) and *Malaysian Fisherman Arrest, Fishing Vessel Secured* (April 11, 2011). Metro TV shows that there are two opposing parties, namely Indonesia versus Malaysia. On the news *Again, Foreign Ship Arrested* (March 16, 2016). Metro TV shows the opposite situation between Indonesian security forces and Indonesian fishers. Meanwhile, fishing boats were seized in the news on the arrest of Malaysian fishers (April 11, 2011). Metro TV even recounted the situation facing each other between Indonesian maritime security forces and Malaysian maritime security forces. Metro TV also stated that Indonesia's maritime sovereignty was violated by a Malaysian-flagged fishing vessel in this news lead.

News on *Arrest of Malaysian Fishermen, Fishing Vessels Secured* (April 11, 2011) tells of the incident of the arrest of a Malaysian fishing boat by marine security forces from the Ministry of Maritime Affairs and Fisheries in the sea area of Belawan (North Sumatra). Metro TV described that the arrest process did not run smoothly. This is because the Malaysian maritime security forces suddenly came and tried to hinder the arrest process. Through a statement from a news source, Metro TV said that the Malaysian maritime security apparatus had given warnings and brandished weapons at Indonesian maritime security forces. The Indonesian marine security forces chose not to heed this warning and continued to make arrests. Indonesian security forces only stand by Malaysia's warning as a form of vigilance.

Metro TV also reported that the arrest of a Malaysian fishing boat in the sea area of Belawan (North Sumatra) received strong protests from the Malaysian government. News of *Border Violation* (April 11, 2011) tells about the Malaysian government's strong protest against Indonesia for arresting a Malaysian fishing boat. Metro TV conveyed news coverage from several Malaysian media regarding the objections of the Malaysian Foreign Minister Annifah Amann to the Indonesian government. This means that Metro TV sees this problem as more than just a criminal incident in the form of illegal fishing at the Indonesia-Malaysia border. This incident is at the border involving two neighboring countries, namely Indonesia and Malaysia.

The Metro TV producer stated that the Metro TV news perspective on the issue of national symbols, culture, and the border between Indonesia and Malaysia is to defend the nation's interests. Metro TV admits that these three things can make Metro TV news stories no longer neutral because they will side with Indonesia (Interview with T1-1, August 6, 2020). The Metro TV producer's statement was corroborated by a news reporter. The Metro TV news reporter stated that Metro TV used the nationalist approach to report cultural events and the border between Indonesia and Malaysia. Metro TV believes this news can awaken and strengthen the nationalism of the Indonesian people (Interview T1-2, August 15, 2020).

In contrast to Metro TV, TVRI takes the news angle of a Malaysian fishing boat arrest as a violation of the law or a criminal incident. This law violation or criminal event is in the form of fish theft by Malaysian fishers. In addition, the TVRI news angle also tells about the achievements of the Indonesian police in eradicating crime in the form of illegal fishing in Indonesian marine areas. This can be seen from the choice of words and phrases used by TVRI to describe the capture of Malaysian fishing vessels in the Indonesian seas. TVRI's choice of words and phrases are words and phrases

commonly used in criminal and legal news. These words and phrases include *being caught red-handed without being accompanied by official documents*, *catching fish without a permit (illegal fishing)*, *recidivist*, and *followed up with legal actions*.

The *angle* of TVRI news that shows the achievements of the Indonesian police is strengthened by TVRI's statement on the news body. This statement states that the arrest of a Malaysian fishing boat was an achievement of the Tarakan City Marine Police (East Kalimantan) in early 2016. This statement is in the news of *Marine Police of Tarakan Re-capture a Malaysian-flagged fishing boat* (January 25, 2016). In addition, TVRI also chose a statement from a news source from the Directorate of Marine Police Baharkam POLRI, who stated that the arrest of illegal fishing boats was one of the 100-day work priority targets of the Indonesian National Police Chief. This TVRI source statement was in the news *Police Arrested Two Foreign Fishing Boats in Natuna* (July 25, 2016).

TVRI reporters and cameramen admit that TVRI is very careful in producing news from events that have the potential for conflict, such as the Indonesia-Malaysia issue. TVRI will not make news that provokes the public to worsen the situation. This is done because TVRI is a public broadcasting institution with a mission and vision to maintain peace and harmony in society (Interview with T2-2, July 29, 2020).

### **Discourse Engage (Tenor of Discourse)**

The consequence of Metro TV news which positions the capture of a Malaysian fishing boat as a case of fishing theft and a violation of Indonesia's maritime sovereignty is the selection of relatively diverse news sources. Metro TV involves not only news sources who are directly involved in the event but also those who are not directly involved. These sources were staff from the marine police, staff of the ministry of maritime affairs and fisheries, the navy, the customs staff, the minister of maritime affairs and fisheries (Susi Pudjiastuti and Fadel Muhammad), and the foreign minister of Malaysia (Annifah Aman).

It is just that there is a difference in the treatment of Metro TV to display this news source. News sources from Indonesia are presented through direct interviews. Like the Navy Captain Soepiadi, whom Metro TV journalists interviewed on the news *Alien Ship Caught Stealing Fish* (March 13, 2019), Palu (Central Sulawesi) Customs and Excise Head Heru Prayitno on the news that Three Malaysian Ships were Arrested (March 25, 2015), and the Minister of Maritime Affairs and Fisheries Susi Pudjiastuti on the news *Again, Foreign Ships Arrested* (March 16, 2016). Meanwhile, Metro TV only reads a statement from a news source from Malaysia, namely the Minister of Foreign Affairs (Annifah Aman), who strongly protested the arrest of a Malaysian fishing boat on the news of *Border Breach* (April 11, 2011).

There seems to be a difference between Metro TV's treatment of Indonesian and Malaysian news sources. Metro TV appears to be conducting face-to-face interviews with all news sources from Indonesia. As for news sources from Malaysia, Metro TV only reads out their statements without conducting face-to-face interviews. Metro TV reporters recognize this as a lack or limitation of Metro TV in obtaining news sources from Malaysia. Metro TV does not have a representative office in Malaysia. Consequently, Metro TV cannot move quickly to obtain clarification from the Malaysian side if there are problems in Indonesia-Malaysia relations. Metro TV only relies on news sources from the Malaysian Embassy in Jakarta and foreign news

agencies that contain statements from news sources in Malaysia (Interview with informant T1-2, August 20, 2020).

Unlike Metro TV, which displays relatively diverse news sources, TVRI only uses one group of news sources for two news sources regarding the capture of Malaysian fishing boats. The news sources used by TVRI are only from the Indonesian police. This is because TVRI's news angle positions fishing as a criminal event in the form of fish theft by Malaysian fishers. The news source was the Director of PolAir Baharkam at the National Police Headquarters, Brigadier General. Police M. Khairul Nur Alamsyah for news Police Arrest Two Foreign Fishing Boats in Natuna (July 25, 2016) and Head of Sub-Directorate for Law Enforcement PolAir Polda East Kalimantan AKBP Erlan Sunarji for news PolAir Tarakan Re-arrest Malaysian-flagged fishing boat (January 25, 2016).

TVRI producers realize that the lack of news sources involved is a consequence of the news angle chosen. The TVRI producer stated that TVRI did this because TVRI did not want to clash opinions between Indonesian and Malaysian news sources. TVRI does not want to make the atmosphere of Indonesia-Malaysia relations noisy. This is because there is a greater interest in the nation and state. Indonesia-Malaysia are, in fact, two neighboring countries and have much economic cooperation. TVRI does not want this news about Indonesia-Malaysia relations to have a negative impact on relations between the two countries (Interview with informant T2-1, August 13, 2020)

### **News Images (Framing and Camera Angles and Category of Icons, Indexes, Symbols)**

Metro TV uses a variety of framing techniques and camera angles to depict the capture of this Malaysian fishing boat. The extreme long shot and long-shot framing techniques are usually used to show one particular object that is located far from the cameraman's location. This technique is also used to depict landscapes. In news of catching Malaysian fishing boats, these two techniques are used to show objects in the form of fishing boats in the middle of the sea and views of the open sea. As for the camera angle, Metro TV adjusts more between the camera position and the position of the object image being taken.

The stand-out camera framing techniques are the close-up and extreme close-up techniques used by Metro TV. This technique is used to show details of image objects. Metro TV reporter said that one of the standards of Metro TV news images is the aspect of image detail. In addition to images that must attract the attention of the audience's eyes, Metro TV news images also pay attention to details (Interview with informant T1-2, August 15, 2020).

Unlike Metro TV, which uses many camera framing techniques and angle variations, TVRI looks more monotonous. TVRI mostly uses medium shot and long-shot camera framing techniques. TVRI rarely uses the extreme long shot technique. TVRI has never used close-up or extreme close-up framing techniques. TVRI usually uses the long shot and extreme long shot framing techniques to display news images in the form of certain objects with the surrounding environment. In addition, TVRI uses this technique to show the landscape. As for the camera angle, the same as Metro TV, TVRI seems to be trying to adjust the camera position with the position of the image object.

TVRI reporters and cameramen stated they had the freedom to take news pictures of the covered events. This freedom is from the content and technical aspects of



shooting. This is due to that the news production regarding Indonesia-Malaysia is not a live view (live broadcast). All news pictures taken by TVRI cameramen will still go through the editing process in the studio before being broadcast. In this image editing process, editors and producers will choose images that are in accordance with TVRI's journalistic standards (Interview with informant T2-2, July 29, 2020).

Furthermore, Metro TV also includes image excerpts to strengthen the news narrative, which states that the capture of a Malaysian fishing boat is an incident involving Indonesia-Malaysia. As in the news of the arrest of a fishing boat from Malaysia, a fishing boat was seized (April 11, 2011). This news features a picture of the Malaysian security forces threatening Indonesia. This happened when an Indonesian security patrol boat attempted to arrest several Malaysian fishing boats that were found to be stealing fish in Indonesian sea areas.

News image quotes with this chronological narrative become an iconic sign to show Malaysia's arrogant attitude towards Indonesia in the incident. Moreover, inadvertently the shooting technique was carried out with a low angle (low eye angle) on the Malaysian helicopter. This low-angle technique is combined with the long-shoot technique. This further strengthens the meaning of the message to be conveyed by Metro TV that Malaysia is indeed arrogant toward Indonesia.

Metro TV also shows a visual of Malaysia's behavior that likes to take Indonesia's natural wealth without a permit in the form of illegal fishing. These images become icons of Malaysia's actions to steal fish in Indonesian marine areas. This sign has become an icon because this visual shows the fact that there are many thefts from illegal fishing by Malaysian fishing boats.

Just like Metro TV, TVRI also displays more signs in the form of icons for all news themes. Icons are signs to describe events that have occurred. For instance, TVRI uses news images such as icons in the news *Police Arrest Two Foreign Fishing Vessels in Natuna*, July 25, 2016, and *Marine Police of Tarakan Re-arrest a Malaysian-flagged Fishing Vessel*, January 25, 2016. This news image describes the atmosphere of the inspection of Malaysian ships that violate the law in Indonesian territory in reporting on violations of national borders. The image on the left shows several Indonesian police personnel discussing while looking at the evidence of a crime. While the picture on the right shows two police officers in full uniform working together to conduct inspections on a Malaysian fishing boat.

TVRI also uses a sign as an icon to show evidence of a crime or crime in reporting on the issue of violation of state borders. As in news *Police Arrest Two Foreign Fishing Vessels in Natuna*, July 25, 2016 and *Water Police of Tarakan Re-arrest Malaysian-flagged Fishing Vessels*, January 25, 2016, the news images show evidence of crime and criminality in the form of fishing nets used by illegal Malaysian-flagged fishing vessels in the area North Kalimantan Sea. Another news image shows the catch of fish stored in the hull of a Malaysian fishing boat in the Natuna sea area. These two images are signs in the form of icons to strengthen news statements that convey that Malaysia has committed a criminal act or violated the law in Indonesian territory by carrying out illegal fishing.

Research findings regarding news images (icon) on Metro TV and TVRI differ from Hamed & Dunan's (2016) research findings. This study finds data that Metro TV and TVRI do not only use news images to define Malaysia in the cases of Blok Ambalat, Pendet dance, and migrant workers. Metro TV and TVRI also use graphics and graphic illustrations (cartoons) to explain reported events. Meanwhile, in this study,

Metro TV and TVRI only used news images in the form of icons to explain events. This news image in the form of an icon is an event recorded by a news cameraman (Hamed & Dunan, 2016).

### **Soundbyte and Music Illustration**

Metro TV uses a sign in the form of a soundbyte or musical illustrations of these events. Soundbyte is usually displayed as the background or background of the news narration that is read. Soundbyte also appeared in the news regarding Malaysian Fisherman's Arrest, Fishing Vessel Secured (April 11, 2011). The news narrative that describes the process of catching Malaysian fishing boats seems to be accompanied by a soundbyte of the atmosphere of the arrest. In this news, an incident occurred when two helicopters from the Malaysian navy intercepted a ship by the Indonesian marine security forces. Metro TV displayed a soundbyte regarding instructions from the Malaysian security forces ordering a ship from the Indonesian security forces to release the two captured Malaysian fishing boats. Soundbyte also appeared in the news *Illegal Fishing* (June 4, 2016), *Foreign Ship Arrest* (September 7, 2016), *Foreign Ship Caught Stealing Fish* (March 13, 2019), and *Illegal Fishing* (March 18, 2017). Metro TV also uses musical illustrations, such as on the news *Four Malaysian Fishermen Arrested* (September 18, 2015).

Soundbyte and music illustrations are usually used to make audio-visual displays (news, video documentaries, and films) more interesting to enjoy. Soundbyte also seems to invite the audience to feel directly the situation or event that occurred. Like the soundbyte in the news of the *Malaysian Fisherman's Arrest, Fisherman's Ship Secured* (April 11, 2011), the *soundbyte* makes the events reported seem dramatic and tense. The audience experienced firsthand what the Indonesian security forces were feeling dealing directly with the Malaysian security forces.

Metro TV reporter admits that Metro TV uses soundbites and music illustrations in a news story. However, Metro TV will do it objectively and not overly. The use of soundbytes and music illustrations is intended to strengthen the news message to be conveyed. In addition, the use of soundbites and music illustrations makes the news more interesting for the audience to watch. The presence of soundbites and musical illustrations make the audience more emotional (Interview with informant T2-1, August 15, 2020).

TVRI tries not to dramatize the events in the news regarding the violation of national borders. TVRI tries to report the illegal fishing incident as is. This can be seen from the minimal use of soundbytes and the absence of musical illustrations accompanying the news narration. Soundbyte or natural sound only appears during interviews with news sources, for example, the sound of waves and the wind blowing. Of course, this is something that cannot be avoided when TVRI journalists conduct on-the-spot interviews with sources. However, the existence of a soundbyte like this still makes the news natural, or there is no tense and dramatic atmosphere. This news also does not use music illustrations at all.

TVRI reporters and cameramen admit that TVRI news avoids using soundbyte and musical illustrations. However, TVRI reporters and cameramen admit that the use of a soundbyte is actually very helpful in showing the actual situation of an event. However, in accordance with TVRI's news policies and standards, TVRI tries to avoid using soundbites and music illustrations in its news stories (Interview with informant T2-2, July 29, 2020).

### **The Meaning of the News of the Capture of Malaysian Fishing Boats**

Departing from the analysis of visual social semiotics on the news texts of Metro TV and TVRI, it appears that there is a difference in meaning between the two when reporting on the incident of catching Malaysian fishing boats. In general, Metro TV interprets the arrest of a Malaysian fishing boat as a case of fishing theft. Metro TV interprets Malaysia as a foreign party that has often carried out illegal fishing and tends to be irresponsible. However, on the news *Malaysian Fisherman Arrest, Fishing Boat Secured* (April 11, 2011), *Again, Foreign Ship Arrested* (March 16, 2016), and the news of *Border Breach* (April 11, 2011), Metro TV interpreted this incident as a case of violation of Indonesia's maritime sovereignty. Metro TV interprets Malaysia as a party that violates sovereignty. Malaysia even dared to choose an alternative to open conflict with Indonesia. Meanwhile, TVRI interpreted this event as a case of violating the law as a criminal act. This criminal act is in the form of illegal fishing. TVRI also interpreted this event as a positive performance by the Indonesian marine police. The Indonesian marine police are trying to maintain the security of Indonesia's seas and continue eradicating crimes that occur on Indonesian seas.

This different meaning occurs because Metro TV and TVRI give different language signs to the news text. For example, in choosing the words, phrases, and sentences in the meaning of *catching* a Malaysian fishing boat as a case of fishing theft, Metro TV uses words and phrases such as *catch*, *hold back*, *thwart*, *chase*, and *confiscate* to interpret the actions of the Indonesian security forces in arresting Malaysian fishing boats. On the other hand, Metro TV uses words and phrases such as *stealing*, *stealing fish*, *entering without a permit*, and *doing illegal fishing* to interpret Malaysia taking fish without a permit. Malaysia does not want to be responsible for the act of illegal fishing. In addition, Metro TV interpreted this incident as a violation of sovereignty by using the phrase *Indonesia's maritime sovereignty was violated*, *Malaysia's actions were very annoying*, *intercepting* and *being intercepted*, and *ambush* and *ambushed*. Meanwhile, TVRI uses words and phrases commonly used for cases of violating the law or criminal acts, for example, *being caught red-handed*, *without a permit*, *not equipped with official documents*, *illegal fishing*, *recidivist*, and *followed up with legal action*. TVRI also uses words and phrases such as successful arrests, successful arrests, and achievements at the beginning of the year to interpret the performance of the Indonesian marine police.

The framing technique of Metro TV cameras is more varied, utilizing all techniques such as extreme long shots, long shots, medium shots, close-ups, to extreme close-ups. Metro TV often uses camera movement techniques that target specific objects, ranging from long shots to close-ups in one image. Another camera technique is a camera that continues to move following events. This is a consequence of the chronological model. This camera technique seems to invite the audience to be involved in the catching of Malaysian fishing boats. The audience seemed to be invited to participate in a chase or ambush between Indonesian security forces and a Malaysian fishing boat. The audience also seemed to be invited to participate in a tense atmosphere when there was a meeting between Indonesian maritime security forces and Malaysian maritime security forces. The many variations of this camera technique make Metro TV news more dynamic. On the other hand, the TVRI camera technique is much simpler. The framing technique is more dominant in the medium and long shots. TVRI also uses more eye-level camera angles in taking pictures.

Metro TV still allows the use of soundbites and music illustrations in news captions. *Soundbyte* usage is seen in almost all the news. However, the most prominent soundbites appeared in the news 'Again, Foreign Ship Arrested' (March 16, 2016), *Malaysian Fishing Vessel Arrest*, 'Fishing Boat Securitized' (April 11, 2011), and 'Territorial Breach' (April 11, 2011). This soundbyte (supported by chronological visualization) makes television viewers feel as if they are at the scene. The visualization that appears is the situation of a meeting between the Malaysian maritime security forces and the Indonesian marine police. The existence of a soundbyte supports the audience to feel the tense atmosphere that occurred at the event of the arrest. There is a dramatic effect on the text of the news. On the other hand, TVRI tries to avoid using soundbites and music illustrations in news production. The absence of soundbites and music illustrations in the news text makes TVRI's news softer and calmer. No dramatic effect was created on the news of the capture of a Malaysian fishing boat on TVRI.

The finding of different meanings between Metro TV and TVRI confirms the statements of mass media academics Michael Schudson (1991) and Gaye Tuchman (2002). Both of them state that, according to the constructivist perspective, the news is a reconstruction of reality that involves an exchange of meanings. Journalists and media institutions give certain meanings when covering events. This interpretation of reality continues during the news writing process (Schudson, 2011; Tuchman, 2002). Everette E. Dennis & John C. Merrill (1984) added that the news production process produces an entirely new and different reality from social reality. Therefore, the constructivist perspective believes that news is a subjective reconstruction of reality (Dennis & Merrill, 1984).

Likewise, a similar perspective also applies to the news of the arrest of a Malaysian fishing boat on Metro TV. Both Metro TV and TVRI give their respective meanings to the reality of catching Malaysian fishing boats. These different meanings occur because journalists and media institutions Metro TV and TVRI exchange different meanings for this reality. Metro TV and TVRI provide a different angle. Each also has differences in choosing words, phrases, and sentence forms. Both also wrote their own storylines. The two also differ in their choice of news sources. Metro TV and TVRI have a policy of choosing different news images. Both have different views about the need for soundbites and music illustrations in a news text. Subsequently, the news text products have their own versions.

The findings of this study also confirm the statement of Melvin DeFleur & Sandra Ball-Rokeach (1989), which states that one way of using language to reconstruct reality is by selecting words, terms, and symbols. Journalists and media agencies will choose words, terms, and symbols to attract their audience's attention (DeFleur & Ball-Rokeach, 1989). For example, Metro TV chooses a chronological model for news storylines. In addition, Metro TV also seems to maximize news visualization by utilizing framing techniques and camera angles. Metro TV visualization is supported by soundbytes and music illustrations. The goal is that this news can attract the attention of the audience. Meanwhile, TVRI selects words and phrases related to the term violation of the law or criminal acts. These words and phrases include *being caught red-handed*, *without a permit*, *without official documents*, *illegal fishing*, *recidivist*, and *being followed up with legal action*. These words and phrases are believed to be familiar to the audience. The hope is that the audience will be interested in following TVRI news.

The findings of this study also corroborate the statement of Robert M. Entman (1993) and William A. Gamson & Andre Modigliani (1989). These experts argue that

another way to reconstruct reality is by framing mechanisms. The framing mechanism is carried out by selecting and highlighting certain facts to become news. Social reality is built by many interrelated facts, but due to technical reasons and editorial policy (news angle), not all of these facts can be told to the audience. Journalists and media institutions will choose exciting facts according to the determined news angles (Entman, 1993; Gamson & Modigliani, 1989). For Metro TV, the chronology of the capture of Malaysian fishing boats is an interesting fact. This fact shows that there is a tense and dramatic situation between Indonesian marine security forces and Malaysian fishers. This fact is in the form of chasing or ambushing Malaysian fishing boats. The facts become even more interesting if there is a meeting between the Indonesian and Malaysian maritime security apparatus. Metro TV decided to highlight these facts in the news text. On the other hand, TVRI is not interested in reporting on the process of catching Malaysian fishing boats. TVRI is more interested in the performance of the marine police, who have succeeded in eradicating illegal fishers who have acted criminally in Indonesian marine areas.

### **Conclusion**

Indonesia and Malaysia are two neighboring countries in Southeast Asia. Both have direct borders on land (on the island of Borneo) and at sea (the Strait of Malacca and the South China Sea). The closeness of these two countries causes Indonesia-Malaysia to have many similarities, such as in culture, religion, and language. However, these many similarities do not guarantee that the relationship between the two will always be harmonious. Indonesia-Malaysia has many problems almost every year, ranging from border issues, cultural issues, Indonesian migrant workers in Malaysia, and haze due to forest and land fires in Indonesia impacting the Malaysian region and people.

One of the border issues between Indonesia and Malaysia is the problem of illegal fishing boats catching fish in the maritime border area of the two countries. This problem could lead to the potential for conflict between Indonesia and Malaysia. The potential conflict is not only between Indonesia's security forces and Malaysia's fishers but also between the countries' armed forces. The Indonesian mass media did a lot of coverage of this event, including Metro TV and TVRI.

Metro TV gives two meanings to this event. First, Metro TV interprets the arrest of a Malaysian fishing boat as a case of fish theft in Indonesian marine areas. Metro TV interprets Malaysian fishers as the party who commits the theft. Malaysian fishers also do not want to be responsible for this action. Second, for some news about the arrest of certain illegal fishing boats, Metro TV also interprets this event as a violation of Indonesia's maritime sovereignty. Malaysia is interpreted as a party that does not hesitate to try the potential for open conflict with Indonesia. This second meaning emerged when the arrest of a Malaysian fishing boat was marked by a meeting between Indonesian and Malaysian maritime security forces.

Metro TV uses a choice of words, phrases, and sentences in the form of active, passive verbs, and several forms of language style. In addition, Metro TV uses a chronological model for the storyline and angles of fishing theft and violations of Indonesia's maritime sovereignty. The visualization uses a combination of framing techniques and camera angles. Metro TV's prominent use of camera techniques is the technique of capturing images that keep moving following events. In addition, another camera technique is taking pictures of long shots, medium shots, and close-ups in one news image. Consequently, there is a tense and dramatic impression in some news

images regarding certain facts. Metro TV still allows *soundbytes* and musical illustrations to accompany the news. This is done so that the news message can be more assertive and attract the audience's attention.

Meanwhile, TVRI interprets the arrest of a Malaysian fishing boat as a violation of the law (criminal act) in the form of illegal fishing. In addition, TVRI interprets this event as an achievement or good performance of the Indonesian marine police in maintaining marine security by eradicating criminal acts in the form of illegal fishing. TVRI does this by selecting words, phrases, and sentences in the form of active-passive verbs and several forms of figurative language. TVRI's storyline uses a hard news model (inverted pyramid). This makes TVRI news shorter and denser. Although TVRI journalists or cameramen still have flexible camera framing techniques and angles, TVRI's visualization seems calmer. TVRI news images are far from dramatic and tense.

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