

## CHAPTER V

### CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

This final chapter presents the conclusion and suggestion. The conclusion covers the formulation of problems, the main findings, and the conclusion of the research. Meanwhile, the suggestion intends to give implication for future research and a reference to consider in studying ISIS and their communiqués.

#### 5.1. Conclusion

This research was conducted with the intention of investigating (1) the strategies used by ISIS to represent themselves and (2) the signification of the representations using Van Leeuwen's (2008) Social Actor Representation. From the three articles produced by ISIS titled (1) Important Memorandums, (2) Operations, and (3) Why We Hate You & Why We Fight You which were taken from their magazines namely Dabiq and Rumiayah, it was found that ISIS use both exclusion and inclusion to represent themselves. It was also found that no intentional exclusion could be found from the two main types of exclusion namely suppression and backgrounding. Several inclusion strategies are used by ISIS to include themselves and related social actors in the representations. The strategies are personalisation – impersonalisation, activation – passivation, genericisation – specification, association, differentiation – indifferenciation, and categorisation – nomination.

It was concluded from the lack of intentional exclusion and that inclusion is the main mode of ISIS to represent themselves and related social actors, ISIS are very open about their violence. ISIS also favour frontal representation as apparent from the dominance of direct participation in their activation compared to possessivation and circumstantialisation. ISIS are activated mainly in relation to claiming that they have the most correct belief, conducting operations towards their enemies, and hating and fighting their enemies. 'Fighting' is included separately from 'conducting operations' as 'fighting' here refers to the conceptual side of fighting instead of the physical action in 'conducting operations.' On the other hand, passivation is used by ISIS mainly to present the Muslims as being attacked by the West, Islam as being violated by the apostates, and Allah as being benefited

Yusuf Abdiauzan, 2020

*ISIS AS REPRESENTED IN THEIR OWN DISCOURSE: A REPRESENTATIONAL STUDY OF MAGAZINES RELEASED BY ISIS*

Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia | repository.upi.edu | perpustakaan.upi.edu

from the actions of ISIS. Allah can also be seen to be activated, mainly in relation to commanding and blessing ISIS.

ISIS are and ISIS related social actors are specified more than they are genericised. Collectivisation scores higher than individualisation and aggregation comes the lowest. It was concluded that references to ISIS also serve to establish theological credibility and to build solidarity whether the reference is genericised or specified; collectivised or individualised. Several individuals can also be observed to set narrative of heroism where they are considered as the ideal men of ISIS. As ISIS are collectivised more than they are aggregated, it was concluded that ISIS wish to be seen as a cohesive group more than they wish to be seen as large in number.

Association is another way to group social actors that is utilised by ISIS. ISIS can be seen to be associated with Allah, the prophets and messengers, and past Islamic scholars. This is done to attach ISIS to the aforementioned social actors. Thus, ISIS are able to claim religious understanding and authority. This was essential to ISIS claim of control towards Muslim societies. Association is also used to equate ISIS with the said social actors in order to establish the narrative of attacking ISIS means attacking them and vice versa. Through combination of association and collectivisation, ISIS are also able to present themselves as organised. Association, especially when achieved through possessivation, enabled the soldiers of ISIS to be presented as an integral part of ISIS. Association was also found used to distribute victimisation. One of which is through the breaking of 'us' into 'men, women, and children.'

ISIS are always differentiated from their enemies; mainly the disbelievers, presented as the West, and the apostates, presented as other Islamic groups. On the other hand, ISIS are indifferentiated from Allah, the prophets and messengers, and past Islamic scholars. ISIS are differentiated and indifferentiated by the means of having different or sharing activities, identities, and beliefs. Both differentiation and indifferentiation are important for ISIS' identity building where they wish to be seen as the defender of Sunni Islam against the menacing others.

Categorisation and nomination are important to ISIS' identity building. The terms used for their categories and nomination are almost all Arabic; in line with Islamic tradition. Allah, ISIS high ranking officials and past Islamic scholars are always formalised while ISIS and their supporters can be seen to be formalised and semi-formalised. The prophets and messengers and the companions of the Prophet are always semi-formalised if historical norms of mentioning people are to be neglected. ISIS and ISIS social actors can all be seen to experience appraisal – honorification. In the discourse of ISIS, the classifications 'man' and 'woman' are replaced with 'brother' and 'sister' to demonstrate exclusiveness. To further this, possessivation is utilised which results in the soldiers of ISIS being represented with relational classification. Almost all of the social actors can also be seen to be functionalised; highlighting their roles and positions.

ISIS and ISIS related social actors could be seen to be both personalised and impersonalised. In the discourse of ISIS, there seemed to be an overlap between the reference to Allah and to the Muslims. 'Islam' and 'the religion' could both refer to Allah as the by-product of Allah's command and to the Muslims especially when 'Islam' and 'the religion' are victimised. Impersonalisation could be seen to be used by ISIS especially in the form of utterance autonomisation when the commands of God is needed to justify their actions. Meanwhile abstraction could be seen used mostly in the form of religious jargons.

It was concluded from the study that the way ISIS represent themselves is important for their identity building, claim of practising the most correct teaching of Islam, and narrative of crisis. All of which are used to justify their actions. ISIS openness is seen to be not unique and is common in many other terrorist groups. ISIS openness also represent their claim of practising the soundest *aqidah*. Women are treated differently from men in the discourse of ISIS and are underrepresented. This supports several previous studies in which women are not expected to fill other than supportive roles in the discourse of terrorist groups. Although men are more represented than women, the representations are not without problem as the men are portrayed as being hyper-masculine.

## 5.2. Suggestions

As it is implied from the statement of Wozniak et al. (2020), despite the fact that ISIS has been declared to be defeated, it is still beneficial to study ISIS and their communiqués especially given the fact that the group still shows signs of activities. It would also be beneficial to the study of terrorism in general. Due to the limitations of this study, there are still several gaps that can be filled by future researches in regards to ISIS and their discourse using van Leeuwen's (2008) Social Actor Representation. As it has been discussed in other chapters, this study focuses on ISIS and ISIS related social actors, therefore the enemies of ISIS were not discussed in depth in which future studies may fill the gap.

This study also could not discover the third type of exclusion mentioned by van Leeuwen (2008) as this study forwent the comparison with other sources about ISIS which future studies may exploit. Dabiq and Rumiyah contain women targeted sections. As this study lack the data to fully understand the representation of women in the communiqués of ISIS, future researches may draw the data from articles in the said sections. Future researchers may also use van Leeuwen's (2008) Social Actor Representation to study (1) ISIS' magazines in other languages such as Arabic, (2) other forms of ISIS communiqués such as bulletins, or (3) ISIS cultural materials such as poetry. Other tools from van Leeuwen's (2008) Sociosemantic approach may also be utilised to fill the aforementioned gaps especially in relation to the fact that images were radically excluded from the analyses in which van Leeuwen's (2008) Visual Representation of Social Actors may be utilised in combination with his Social Actor Representation.