CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

The Internet has undoubtedly become a crucial part of the lives of many individuals. A recent survey reveals that there are approximately 2.2 billion Internet users from all around the world (*Internet World Stats*, 2012). In fact, Asia emerged as the region that contains the highest number of Internet users. Another worldwide survey investigated the Internet use among university students and discovered that a third of students spend more than five hours online a day (*Internet Addiction Statistics 2012*, 2012). These findings highlight the existence of an online generation and also imply the extent of the Internet's widespread influence. The development of the Internet subsequently led to the emergence of Computer-Mediated Communication (CMC) such as emails, chat rooms and vlogs. Given that CMC is used so extensively today, it is important for one to gain a better understanding of it. This study strives to do just that, by offering insight into the opening and closing sequences of vlogs.

Video blogs or vlogs are a relatively new type of CMC that involves people recording video footages of themselves, which are then uploaded to the Internet. They can be described as "the direct multimodal extension of traditional text-based blogging where spoken works are enriched by the non-verbal behaviour shown in front of the camera" (Biel & Gatica-Perez, 2010). In most cases, vlogs appear in the form of monologues as there is usually only one speaker in the video. They can also be likened to video diaries since

vloggers tend to discuss personal matters in a Skype-style fashion where they face the camera and address the virtual audience. Figure 1.1 shows an example of a vlog.
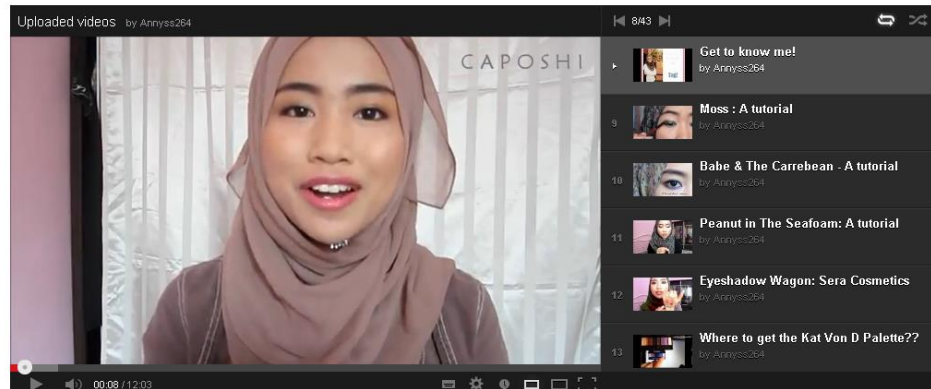

Figure 1.1: Example of a Vlog

Once the vlogs are uploaded online, other individuals who are also known as the viewers can access and watch them. Vlogs are fundamentally asynchronous in nature and this notion entails that the vloggers and viewers cannot interact simultaneously. It is only after the vlogs are uploaded to the Internet that the viewers can proceed to give their feedback. In other words, the feedback from the viewers is delayed. Video-sharing websites such as YouTube allow 'conversational' exchanges between the vloggers and viewers. These exchanges come in the form of comments, which the viewers can post in the website and they can also rate the vlogs as well as subscribe to the channel of the vloggers if they like the videos.

1.2   Statement of the Problem

Vlogs are a fairly new multimodal genre of CMC that is still in the process of developing. Despite its novelty, vlogging is rapidly gaining popularity in countries across the world, including Malaysia (Nasa, 2011). More and more Malaysians are discovering the delights

of vlogging and this idea is proven through the establishment of an online channel known as United Malaysian Vlogger Channel (UMVC). Malaysian vloggers effectively connect with each other through this channel by regularly sharing and posting vlogs. Moreover, in contrast to other online mediums like emails and chat rooms, non-verbal cues are available in audio-visual vlogs. They are basically a treasure trove of verbal and non-verbal cues waiting to be explored. Therefore, it is crucial that research is conducted to obtain a more comprehensive and deeper understanding of this specific phenomenon.

Scholarly research has indeed shown increasing interest in the study of CMC. Well-researched forms of CMC include emails (Waldvogel, 2007; Bou-Franch, 2011), chat rooms (Su, 2004; Hastrdlová, 2009) and blogs (Blood, 2002). However, relatively few studies analysed vlogs, particularly in terms of their opening sequences. The situation is even direr for the closing sequences in vlogs because it appears that no one has attempted to assess how vlogs are closed. Furthermore, studies on the vlog viewers' opinions regarding the openings and closings in vlogs are notably absent in the literature. Little attention has also been given to the monologues in vlogs. Most researchers studied other types of monologues such as answering-machine messages (Gold, 1991; Liddicoat, 1994; Aijmer, 2007) and media talk (Tolson, 2005; Montgomery, 2007).

The study on the openings and closings of vlogs is crucial to reveal the ways in which Malaysian vloggers reach out to their viewers. Gaining the attention and approval of the viewers is essential since they determine the popularity of the vloggers. The investigation of the openings and closings sheds light on the various techniques used by the vloggers to appeal to the viewers. Openings are needed to grab the attention of the viewers and to further encourage them to continue watching whereas closings enable the vloggers to leave

a lasting impression. Furthermore, by identifying and analyzing the structure of the openings and closings of vlogs, one can determine how these sequences are adjusted in the monologic context. In particular, this study demonstrates the different strategies that are employed to avoid suspended turns and general awkwardness in the monologues. The examination of the structure of the openings and closings also ascertains if the Malaysian vloggers adhere to the social expectations of their society and divulges the influence of culture on how they open and close their vlogs. Therefore, the aim of this study is to examine the opening and closing sequences of Malaysian vlogs.

1.3   Research Objectives

On the whole, the present study has three objectives. Firstly, it aims to investigate the strategies that the Malaysian vloggers use in the opening sequences of their vlogs. Secondly, this study strives to examine the closing strategies that the vloggers employ in their vlogs. The findings of the analysis reveals the different types of opening and closing strategies used by the vloggers and also discloses the sequence combination in which these strategies occur. Essentially, this part of the analysis illuminates the ways in which the vloggers attempt to adapt to their rather unconventional monologic context. Their non-verbal behaviour in terms of their hand gestures and facial expressions are further inspected to find out how they behave in process of recording a monologue.

Thirdly, the present study intends to investigate how the Malaysian viewers perceive the importance of opening and closing sequences in vlogs. The opinions of the viewers are garnered through online interviews, which are conducted via the social networking website Facebook. These interviews reveal the extent of the viewers' agreement or disagreement regarding the importance of openings and closings in vlogs. Aside from their agreement or

disagreement, they are required to justify why they think opening and closing sequences are important or unimportant. This part of the analysis ultimately sheds light on the roles that openings and closings play and how these roles improve as well as ensure the overall well-being of the vlogs. It also divulges the preferences of the Malaysian viewers—whether or not they prefer vlogs with opening and closing sequences.

1.4   Research Questions

Motivated by the aim of obtaining in-depth knowledge of the opening and closing sequences in vlogs, the following research questions are proposed:

1. What strategies do the vloggers use in the opening sequence of their vlogs?

2. What strategies do the vloggers use in the closing sequence of their vlogs?

3. How do the viewers perceive the importance of openings and closings in vlogs?

1.5   Limitations of the Study

This study concentrates solely on the opening and closing sequences of the Malaysian vlogs. In short, only parts that clearly constitute the opening and closing sequences are transcribed and studied. This criterion implies that the content of the monologic vlogs is not taken into account. The scope is limited to ensure that the study does not deviate from its focus. Still, future studies could be undertaken to examine the various topics or content of Malaysian vlogs. Another limitation involves the size of the data sample where only 30 Malaysian vlogs are examined in the present study. These vlogs are produced within a span of six years—that is, from the year 2007 to 2012.

In addition, this study only looks at the spoken language and non-verbal behaviour of the vloggers such as pauses, hand gestures and facial expressions. The other features in the vlogs such as written messages are not taken into consideration. The non-verbal cues are included in the analysis because they enhance what is spoken and enable the vloggers to better express themselves. More importantly, these cues also help the vloggers to adapt in the monologic context. Other than that, only YouTube vlogs are selected for the study, given that YouTube is a prominent website in which videos are very frequently uploaded. According to the YouTube webpage, 72 hours of video are uploaded every minute and over four billion hours of video are watched each month on YouTube (*Statistics*, 2012). In fact, some of the most popular vloggers like *Nigahiga* and *KevJumba*, who have millions of subscribers, originate from this specific website.

1.6   Significance of the Study

This study is significant to scholars in the field of Pragmatics. More specifically, it demonstrates how vloggers adapt their speech in the context of monologues. Adaptation is vital as monologues lack features that are prevalent in dialogues like turn-taking and the negotiation of speaker roles. The present study also adds to the body of knowledge regarding monologues. It contributes to the depiction of monologues as interaction by presenting the verbal and non-verbal strategies that the vloggers use to attract their viewers.

In a more general sense, this study contributes to CMC literature in that it studies vlogs, a newly developing form of CMC. Vlogs possess a special theoretical significance because they make up a genre so new that the conventions are still being negotiated. In other words, they comprise a genre so young that there are no standardized opening and closing guidelines to which vloggers can refer to. This study enriches the severely lacking body of

research regarding vlogs by offering in-depth information pertaining to vlogs, particularly in terms of the vloggers' opening and closing strategies as well as the resources used to appeal to the viewers.

1.7   Definition of Terms

There are several key terms that are used in the present study. They include *computer-mediated communication*, *vlogs* and *monologues*. The definitions of these important terms are provided in the following paragraphs.

According to Walther (1992, p. 52), *computer-mediated communication* involves "synchronous or asynchronous electronic mail and computer conferencing, by which senders encode in text their messages that are relayed from senders' computers to receivers." Meanwhile, Lengel et al. (2004, p. 16) stressed that the definition of CMC does not merely encompass the applications and impacts of computer technologies. Like Walther (1992), they claimed that CMC is essentially concerned with human interpersonal interaction that is achieved through the Internet.

Mason and Romiskowski (1998, p. 398) referred to CMC as "the process by which people create, exchange, and perceive information using networked telecommunications systems that facilitate encoding, transmitting, and decoding messages." They further divided CMC into two types: synchronous (real-time) and asynchronous (delayed time) communication. Synchronous communication, such as chat rooms and instant messenger, is where participants are able to interact with each other simultaneously. It is likened to face-to-face discussion and talking on the telephone. In asynchronous communication, however, there is

a time delay between sending a message and it being read (Mason & Romiskowski, 1998, p. 398). Examples of such communication include emails, internet bulletin boards and vlogs.

On the other hand, Bryant (2006, p. 8) described *vlogging* as "part personal diary and part filmmaking". She also provided some core qualities that vlogs ought to have: (a) video that can be downloaded and played, (b) a frequently updated blog format and (c) a Really Simple Syndication (RSS) feed with enclosures so that viewers can subscribe to the feed and download the videos. Hays and Singh (2011, p. 271) defined vlogs as: "the next generation of blogs that uses video to integrate the diary-like component of blogs—and is also either in the public or private Internet domain."

Elaborating further on vlogs, Frobenius (2011, p. 815) claimed that two phases exist in a vlog's production. The first stage constitutes the recording of the material, during which the production of speech occurs while the second stage comprises video editing where the original sequences are changed. In this editing stage, vloggers can choose to alter and revise any image or sound that they have recorded. Furthermore, Frobenius (2011, p. 815) stated that vlogs instantiate "non-scripted and non-institutionalized monologue situations." Vlogs are usually monologic in nature and in most cases, there is no sign of other speakers during the recording of the vlog.

According to the Macmillan Dictionary (2012), a *monologue* refers to a speech generated by a person who converses for a long time and does not allow anyone else say anything. Another definition is provided by Ross and Greatrex (2001, p. 36), who described monologues as "a soliloquy or speech by one person." In this study, the meaning of 'monologue' does not encompass 'soliloquy' as vloggers are not merely speaking to

themselves. On the contrary, they are actually talking to an unknown virtual audience whose presence is constructed in their minds. In sum, a monologue is basically an uninterrupted speech that expresses a complete line of thought.

In the next chapter, the literature of various areas—monologues, opening and closing sequences and CMC—that provide the foundation for the present study is examined in more detail.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter reviews previous studies that are conducted in the areas of monologues, dialogues and also CMC. To be more precise, it assesses these areas primarily in terms of opening and closing sequences, which is the core of the study. The literature review is presented in the following sections.

2.2 Research on Monologues

Studies on monologues are frequently linked to the classroom interaction genre. Davis (2007) observed monologues in lectures and made a distinction between monologues and soliloquies. He argued that monologues are personal and participatory speech acts, even though there is only one speaker (Davis, 2007, p. 179). In contrast to soliloquies, monologues involve speaking 'to' or 'with' someone. This notion is supported by Linell (1998, p. 278), who stated that "…what we call monologic activities can never be entirely monological; they are also bound to specific contexts, purposes, interests, concerns, and commitments." Unlike monologues, a soliloquy is impersonal as the words are intended to be heard only by the speaker.

On the other hand, Smith et al. (2005) examined the strategies that speakers use to establish referents in monologic settings when presenting new characters in the retelling of a movie. They discovered that the participants created an imaginary audience as a means of

overcoming the difficulties caused by the monologue context (Smith et al., 2005, p. 1865).

The structures used in the monologues varied from the ones found in normal dialogues. Essentially, there was more reliance on formal introduction devices that are typically associated with public speaking or performing (Smith et al., 2005, p. 1885). Moreover, the imaginary audience was addressed by the speakers in a direct manner through the use of personal pronouns such as 'you' and 'we.' It was also noted that monologists display more signs of awkwardness as compared to those engaged in dialogues.

There are also types of monologues where the audience is actually present. An example of this kind of monologue includes the monologue of a stand-up comedian. Glick (2007) explained how a stand-up comedian utilized the voicing of multiple parties to construct a dialogic frame in his monologue. This feat is accomplished by using different sounds for various 'speakers' and staging a turn-taking process where the 'speakers' literally turn to one another when they engage in a conversation (Glick, 2007, p. 304). Such actions not only make the stand-up act more appealing but also efficiently create the illusion of a conversational context and this in turn makes the act less dull and monotonous.

Meanwhile, Wells and Bull (2007) specifically analysed 'affiliative audience responses' in stand-up comedy and political speeches. The results showed that stand-up comedians and politicians are similar in terms of inviting affiliative audience responses (Wells & Bull, 2007, p. 321). The comedians basically elicit their audience's reactions with the help of certain rhetorical devices such as greetings and addressing the audience in a direct way. Affiliative feedback was also encouraged when the comedians stepped out of character.

Chafe (1985) looked at interactive features in spoken and written discourse. These features were found to be prevalent in spoken discourse but virtually absent in written discourse. The interactive features were divided into two types: positive and negative consequences. Positive consequences are devices that have the role of organizing the flow of information (Chafe, 1985, p. 112). Examples of positive consequences include words like 'now' and 'okay.' On the contrary, negative consequences refer to disfluencies in spoken language such as false starts, repetitions and fumblings (Chafe, 1985, p. 113). Spoken discourse ultimately contains more flow-monitoring devices because unlike written discourse, the language in spoken discourse cannot be continually refined before being presented.

In addition, monologues can be seen in conferences as well. Webber (2005) traced interactive features that are found in medical conference monologues. These interactive features, which encompass personal deictics, markers and imprecise quantifiers, are essential resources for building a relationship with the audience. According to Webber (2005, p. 173), personal pronouns were employed to indicate in-group affiliation. The use of these pronouns reflects one's desire to empathize with the audience and also to create a bond with members of the discourse community. Furthermore, markers like 'so' were used to signal a transition. They specify a topic shift or a possible locus for giving the audience a turn at talk (Webber, 2005, p. 168).

Other than that, Watanabe (2002) analysed the distribution of fillers in Japanese academic presentations and spontaneous speech. He discovered that there were fewer fillers in academic presentations, given that the speakers in such presentations are more prepared and less spontaneous. Speakers who are prepared do not need extra time to plan and organize their speech (Watanabe, 2002, p. 4). Due to this circumstance, they are able to

make use of suitable connectives and avoid the incorporation of fillers. Quite the opposite, speech with more spontaneity contain more fillers because speakers in such a situation are not given the opportunity to fully prepare their speech. As a result, their speech is not completely fluent.

Tolson (2005) asserted that deejays in radio talk utilize certain strategies to foster an ongoing relationship with their listeners. Direct requests or imperatives play a role in maximizing co-presence as they create a sense of what Moores (2000) calls 'intimacy at a distance.' This method effectively constructs an illusion, giving the impression that the deejays are talking directly to the listeners, much like in a face-to-face conversation. Markers of temporal and spatial deixis such as 'this', 'now' and 'that' also contribute to connecting with the listeners (Tolson, 2005, p. 115). Spatial deixis markers that are embedded in direct address forms like 'can you see that?' further suggests that the 'blindness' of the listeners is regretted.

Okamura (2009) shed light on the use of personal pronouns in monologic academic speeches. The findings demonstrated that the personal pronoun 'you' was employed most often in these speeches. Okamura (2009, p. 24) argued that speakers do not use this pronoun to distance themselves from the audience, in contrast to the assertions of other researchers (Rounds, 1987; Fortanet, 2004). Instead, it has the function of drawing attention and directly engaging the audience in the talk. The pronoun 'you' also assists the listeners to share the world in which the speaker is residing and in this way, it brings the listeners closer to the speakers (Okamura, 2009, p. 24).

Based on the reviewed literature in this section, it is clear that individuals who participate in monologic talk have to use certain techniques in order to capture the audience's interest. Monologues can come across as being dull and boring since there is only one speaker. Therefore, specific methods such as personal pronouns, rhetorical devices (e.g. greetings, terms of address) and the construction of an imaginary audience are used to make the monologues more engaging and also to bring the speakers closer to the audience.

2.2.1   Openings and Closings in Monologues

Some researchers choose to forgo examining the body of monologues and focus on the opening and closing sequences instead. Gold (1991) inspected answering machine talk by concentrating on the caller's recorded message. She discovered that the callers made use of strategies that "overcome the lack of linguistic and discourse conventions for this type of talk" (Gold, 1991, p. 244). Four sections were highlighted in answering machine messages: (a) greeting, (b) body, (c) closing and (d) postscript. Gold (1991, p. 246) claimed that the greeting section is reminiscent of the ritualized salutations in letters. It is further likened to written language as the callers employed formulaic salutations such as 'hi John.' The findings also show that the opening elements in the greeting section of answering machine talk are normally borrowed from other genres, in view of the fact that there is a lack of conventions for this type of communication.

Certain prosodic and pragmatic devices are used in the closing section to make up for the absent interlocutor in answering machine talk. According to Gold (1991, p. 249), preclosing gestures like 'so' and 'okay' are produced with low falling tones. They are also made with a rise or elongation of the vowel, which is then followed by a pause. This technique enables the creation of 'space' for the turn of the missing conversational partner

in the closing sequence. It is commonly found in the closings of face-to-face conversations and telephone calls. Additionally, Gold (1991, p. 250) introduced the concept of a 'dialogic couplet' where callers ask a question and then answer their own question. This self-answering method serves to compensate for the absent interlocutor's turn.

In his examination of answering machine communication, Liddicoat (1994) based his study on Gold's (1991) taxonomy and expanded the analysis by including both the receiver's pre-recorded message and the caller's spontaneously recorded message. Self-identification is deemed a necessary move in the caller's opening sequence due to two reasons (Liddicoat, 1994, p. 297). Firstly, the self-identification strategy personalizes the impersonal process of talking to a machine and secondly, the possibility remains that the other participant may fail to recognize the caller's voice. As such, it would be wise for the caller to take precaution by inserting a self-identification.

Besides, Liddicoat (1994, p. 303) included two additional elements in the closings of the caller's recorded message in answering machine talk: acknowledgments and arrangements. These closing elements were not seen in the analysis of Gold (1991). Emphasis was also given to topic bounding closing moves as they adequately suspend topics and thus, achieve a closing. Liddicoat (1994, p. 305) stated that answering machine talk is "highly structured and highly routinized" where the participants draw on strategies that are available in telephone conversations. However, constraints of performance lead to the "systematic modification of the available stock of conversational routines" (Liddicoat, 1994, p. 308). In other words, the structuring of borrowed moves is methodically varied to better fit answering machine communication. Liddicoat (1994, p. 307) also stressed that moves typical of negotiation such as preclosings are avoided in monologic answering machine

communication. His inference is made on the basis that the negotiation of closings is not possible, since there is only one interlocutor in the production of answering machine talk.

Aijmer (2007) also conducted a study on the caller's recorded message in answering machine talk. She made a comparison between messages that are produced at different times—in the 1970s and 1990s. Messages recorded in the 1970s contain more variation in terms of routine phrases and also appeared to be more formal (Aijmer, 2007, p. 340). These features reflect the callers' confusion concerning the appropriateness of various strategies. The confusion is caused by the fact that there were no established conventions for answering machine talk then. Conversely, there is less variation in messages that were recorded in the 1990s and the result indicates that conventionalism has developed further.

Apart from that, Aijmer (2007, p. 329) pointed out that the frame or 'blueprint' for answering machine messages is influenced by conceptual restrictions or attitudes to the medium. Unlike Gold (1991) and Liddicoat (1994), she specifically made a distinction between callers who imagined a receiver and callers who viewed the answering machine solely as a machine. The presence or absence of greetings determines this difference. The inclusion of greeting phrases in the openings shows that callers are aware they are talking to a recipient instead of a machine (Aijmer, 2007, p. 335). Quite the opposite, the omission of greetings indicates that the callers do not have an imagined recipient for the message. They see themselves as speaking to a machine and thus, do not feel the need to be polite.

Speeches given during wedding receptions are classified as a fairly monologic genre as there are usually no interjections or verbal reactions from the audience. Dunn (2005) examined congratulatory speeches at Japanese wedding receptions and found that speakers

tend to use formulaic phrases in both the opening and closing sequences of the speech. These formulaic phrases assist speakers by reducing cognitive processing, which then increases the fluency of the speakers (Dunn, 2005, p. 219). They are also a means of ensuring the appropriateness of the speech by making sure that it is socially suitable for the listeners, particularly in terms of form and content (Dunn, 2005, p. 219). This in turn makes the speeches more successful.

One can also find monologues in media talk. Montgomery (2007, p. 41) looked at the discourse structure of broadcast news and claimed that it is highly structured. The opening of news bulletin programs has a continuity announcement that signals a transition from the previous program in the schedule to the news program. Transitions are also marked by prosodic and paralinguistic cues. For instance, a pause and an audible intake of breathe are a sign of the boundary between one item and the next (Montgomery, 2007, p. 50).

Moreover, Montgomery (2007, p. 46) maintained that a closing phrase such as 'and that's all for now' and leave-taking words like 'goodbye' are obligatory structural elements in the closing of news bulletin programs. Broadcast news programs are generally delivered in an impersonal way but this impersonal manner is compensated through the direct visual address that the news presenters employ in the leave-taking stage. This technique involves the news presenters gazing directly at the audience and it establishes as well as projects a long-lasting personal relationship with them. Hence, ending the program is considered temporarily breaking co-presence with the viewers (Montgomery, 2007, p. 47). Self-identification is also frequently seen in the closings of news bulletin programs.

Tolson (2005) analysed the spoken discourse in television and radio programs. He readily acknowledged the lack of immediate audience feedback in monologic media talk and rejected the idea that greetings are a type of simulated friendliness that is used to hide the monologic nature of the talk. Instead, he argued that such greetings "construct a place for potential interaction, whether or not it is taken up in practice" (Tolson, 2005, p. 10). It is simply a method of reaching out to active listeners. It also brings about a fundamental form of active listenership and constructs a bond between the speaker and the audience.

2.2   Studies on Opening and Closing Sequences in Conversations

This section is further divided into three different parts: (a) opening sequences, (b) closing sequences and (c) opening and closing sequences. The literature for these three areas is presented in the following sections.

2.2.1   Opening Sequences

Research on interactional openings has a relatively long history. In particular, telephone conversation openings have received attention from many researchers. One of the prominent researchers who looked at this field is Schegloff (1968), who carried out a thorough examination on the sequential organization of conversational openings. In contrast to Goffman (1971), he studied actual telephone conversation openings and identified four sequence of adjacency pairs in American telephone openings: (a) summons/answer, (b) identification/ recognition, (c) a greeting adjacency pair and (d) a "how are you" sequence. An example of his proposed opening sequence is shown below (Schegloff, 1986, p. 115).

```
1   A:  Hello::,              summon/answer sequence
2   C:  H'llo, Clara?         identification/recognition sequence
3   A:  Yeh
4   C:  Hi. Bernie.           greeting sequence
5   A:  Hi Bernie.
6   C:  How're you.           How are you sequences
7   A:  I'm awright,
        How're you
8   C:  Okay::?
9   A:  Good.
10  C:  'Laura there?'
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The ringing of the telephone is described as a summons and the 'hello' in the summons/answer sequence is not a greeting, but rather an acknowledgement to the summons (Schegloff, 1968, p. 1080). Once recognition is achieved, the participants will add another 'hello' that serves as an actual greeting.

However, Godard (1977) criticized Schegloff's (1968) work by arguing that his summon-answer sequence can not be universally applied and emphasized the importance of taking into account cultural aspects. Her results showed that unlike American callers, French callers tend to offer an apology in the opening. This difference is attributed to the ways in which callers interpret the answer to a summons. French callers take it as "an indication of the answerer's availability to be interrupted…." and not as a sign that the communication channel is open (Godard, 1977, p. 217). Therefore, they feel the need to include an apology.

Hopper and Koleilat-Doany (1989) investigated actual examples of French telephone conversation openings in a follow-up study but they were unsuccessful in finding substantiation for the claims of Godard (1977). Furthermore, Hopper et al. (1991) attempted to verify the extent to which Schegloff's (1986) opening sequence may be universally applied. They rejected Godard's (1977) statement that cultural specificity

influences the sequences required to open a dialogue (Hopper et al., 1991, p. 375). Instead, they insisted that cultural differences affect the actual content or the order of the sequences rather than the functions served.

Akin to Godard (1977), the results of Lee (2006) differed from the opening sequence proposed by Schegloff (1986). The data, which comprised Korean telephone openings, demonstrated that callers generate a second summons in the second turn of the opening (Lee, 2006, p. 262). This particular finding contrasts with Schegloff's (1986) notion of the non-repeatability of the summon/answer sequence. Essentially, the second summons has the function of inviting recognition. The receivers basically react to a second summons by working on recognition. They perceive the caller's second summons as a "recognition source" and offer a "recognition solution" in the next turn (Lee, 2006, p. 272). Once the second summons/answer is completed, the caller and receiver move on to the identification/recognition sequence.

Other than that, Schegloff (1979, p. 50) revealed that Americans generally prefer identification by recognition instead of explicit self-identification. In short, the interlocutors favour recognition through the inspection of opening moves like greetings. Recognition allows the caller and receiver to express an intimate relationship as well as solidarity with each other (Sifianou, 1989, p. 533). It also illustrates the positive politeness of the Americans. Still, preferences for self-identification vary according to culture. For example, Lindström (1994, p. 237) explored Swedish telephone conversation openings and discovered that most Swedish answerers offer explicit self-identification in their first turn. In fact, self-identification is the most frequent reply to summons for the Swedes.

Halmari (1993) studied business telephone conversations in an attempt to detect intercultural differences between Finish speakers and American English speakers. The results showed that Americans tend to go straight to the point with little care for preliminary pleasantries whereas Finns were more likely to make some type of polite conversation before conversing about business. The cross-cultural study of Halmari (1993) indicates that opening strategies are culture-specific.

There are also researchers who conduct studies on the greeting in different cultures. Akindele (1990) carried out a research on greetings in Yoruba, which is an African community. He made a distinction between English and Yoruba greetings and found that the structure of a Yoruba greeting consists of two types of exchanges: prefatory and informatory exchanges (Akindele, 1990, p. 9). Prefatory exchanges are a kind of preliminary talk or phatic communication, much like the small talk or phatic communication in English. On the other hand, informatory exchanges are concerned with the negotiation of the transmission of information. Akindele (1990, p. 2) stated that informatory exchanges are what distinguish Yoruba greetings from English greetings.

Meanwhile, Nyowe (1993) scrutinized greetings in another African community, which is the Igbo society. Greetings in the Igbo society are significant aspects of socio-cultural interaction (Nyowe, 1993, p. 47). In fact, Igbo members are expected to greet others, even strangers. Greetings function as solidarity markers and a demonstration of goodwill. Aside from phatic functions, they also measure the amount of warmth available in interpersonal and inter-group relationships (Nyowe, 1993, p. 47). Since greetings are customary, its absence is evaluated disapprovingly and failure to produce a greeting indicates bad manners and animosity towards the other party. The greetings' warmth, content and

duration are basically indexes of the degree of the relationship that exists between the interlocutors.

Pappas and Seale (2009) examined the opening sequence of real-time, video mediated telemedicine consultations. Such consultations are fairly new in the health care system and because of that, there are no conventionalized opening strategies for telemedicine consultations to which participants can coordinate their actions. The participants thus suffer from discrepancies in their knowledge (Pappas & Seale, 2009, p. 1233). They resolve this problem by transferring communication practices used in other settings to the telemedicine consultations, namely practices from face-to-face consultations and even daily conversations (Pappas & Seale, 2009, p. 1235). Humour is also employed to minimize the physical distance so that the patients feel more comfortable with the medium.

Béal and Traverso (2010) compared the ways in which Australian and French hosts and guests communicate at the beginning of visits between friends. Attention was given to the opening strategies in the study. Apart from the usual 'hi' and 'hello', the 'how are you' sequence was used in both Australian and French conversations. Béal and Traverso (2010, p. 21) asserted that this sequence is seldom used as a genuine health enquiry. Rather, it often serves phatic purposes. The 'how are you' sequence in English has greater 'phaticity' as compared to French. For Australians, the preferred response to this sequence is a minimal positive answer coupled with thanks and the question is hardly ever reciprocated (Béal & Traverso, 2010, p. 22). On the contrary, the French do not respond with thanking but reciprocate, which leads to more detailed conversations.

Apart from that, small talk is included in the study of opening sequences. Feminist linguist Tannen (1991) highlighted the significance of small talk by stressing that it builds and consolidates relationships. It is a means of preserving a sense of camaraderie when there is nothing in particular to say (Tannen, 1991, p. 102). Tannen's (1991) statement that small talk is vital in maintaining social relationships corresponds with Brown and Levinson's (1987) theory on positive face. Face refers to an individual's self esteem and there are two types of face: positive face and negative face. Positive face is the want of every member that their wants be desirable to at least some others while negative face refers to the want of individuals that their actions be unimpeded by others (Brown & Levinson, 1987, p. 62).

Coupland (2000, p. 6) agreed with Tannen (1991) regarding the importance of small talk by arguing that it cannot be left out when it comes to examining 'mainstream' concerns of talk because it constitutes an intrinsic part of talk. Coupland (2000, p. 3) defined small talk as talk that is aimless, prefatory and occasionally even irrelevant but is still "part of the process of fulfilling our intrinsically human needs for social cohesiveness and mutual recognition." It is deemed phatic communication as well since it establishes and maintains social relationships. Small talk can also be used to accomplish transitions—into, within and out of more content oriented talk (Coupland, 2000, p. 5). The topics involved in small talk are usually trivial ones and therefore, it is unlikely that conversational partners will be seriously threatened if one party dominates the conversation floor. It was further noted that small talk may appear in new communicative domains.

In addition, Drew and Chilton (2000) focused on small talk in regular and habitualised telephone calls. They claimed that small talk can be divided into three broad categories. In the first category, speakers converse about things they notice in the immediate environment

(Drew & Chilton, 2000, p. 150). They report what is being displayed in their field of vision or hearing and these observations are made spontaneously. In the second category, speakers report or elicit a report from the other party about something they have just done or something done earlier. Meanwhile, in the third category, speakers ask for news updates about events that were current when they last spoke on the phone (Drew & Chilton, 2000, p. 150). These requests are solicitous and seek to improve the relationship between the conversational partners. All three categories share a strong sense of being current, either temporally or spatially.

2.2.2   Closing Sequences

Some of the distinguished scholars who analysed conversational closings include Schegloff and Sacks (1973, p. 265), who termed conversational closings as 'terminal exchanges.' They stated that the minimal canonical structure of closing a conversation consists of two adjacency pairs (Schegloff & Sacks, 1973, p. 265). The first and second turns in the first adjacency pair comprise preclosings while the third and fourth turns in the second adjacency pair encompass final farewells. Schegloff and Sacks (1973, p. 269) further identified specific markers in closings, which they called 'preclosings'. Preclosings such as 'well' and 'okay' are utilized to indicate that an individual is prepared to terminate the conversation. Simultaneously, they also offer the other party a chance to initiate another topic of conversation.

Besides, emphasis was given to the importance of considering the surrounding context in deciding that a particular word or phrase is a preclosing (Schegloff & Sacks, 1973, p. 269). Precaution should be taken as words that usually constitute preclosings like 'okay' or 'well', can be employed in other contexts, which do not necessarily signal the wish to end the

conversation. Still, one can confirm the function of certain words as preclosings if these words are located at the "analyzable end of a topic" (Schegloff & Sacks, 1973, p. 269).

Schegloff and Sacks (1973, p. 269) pointed out that "analyzable ends" are achieved when conversationalists in an interaction intentionally attend to achieving a topic boundary. In other words, preclosings can be identified and ascertained through the topic bounding technique. An example of this technique includes the offering of "a proverbial or aphoristic formulation of conventional wisdom" that can be interpreted as the lesson or moral of the topic being potentially terminated (Schegloff & Sacks, 1973, p. 269). These formulations are typically 'agreeable with.' When such formulations are proffered by one speaker and agreed by another, a topic is considered closed. An immediately following 'okay then' or 'well' may thereby be construed as a preclosing. An example of the topic bounding technique is shown below:

> Johnson: … and uh, uh we're gonna see if we can't uh tie in our plans a
>   little better.
> Baldwin: Okay / / fine.
> Johnson: Alright?
> Baldwin: Right.
> Johnson: Okay boy,
> Baldwin: Okay.
> Johnson: Bye / / bye
> Baldwin: G'night.   (Schegloff & Sacks, 1973, p. 270)

Schegloff and Sacks (1973) discussed several stages of the closings in their research. Yet, aside from preclosings, they did not provide formal or precise names for these stages nor did they classify the stages into distinct categories. Instead, they listed out an extensive range of possibilities that appear within a vague category between preclosings and final closings and classified this in-between part as the 'leave-taking' phase (Schegloff & Sacks,

1973, p. 272). As closings are considered a face-threatening act, the leave-taking phase serves to reassure the relationship of the interlocutors.

Okamoto (1990) offered an objection to Schegloff and Sacks's (1973) work by arguing that closing sequences are cross-culturally different. As cited in Takami (2002, p. 70), Okamoto (1990) discovered several differences between Japanese and English speakers in terms of telephone closings. Firstly, unlike English speakers, Japanese speakers use more humor or jokes to initiate the closing sequence. Secondly, Japanese speakers tend to relay messages such as "please say hello to your family member", which was not found in the English data. Thirdly, in contrast to English speakers, Japanese speakers frequently did not express their joy like "it was a pleasure talking to you" in closings. Fourthly, Japanese speakers did not use the Japanese equivalent of 'goodbye' whereas English speakers typically use it as the terminal exchange. Okamoto's (1990) results support Paltridge's (2000) theory that conversation closings are context and culture specific.

Nonetheless, Okamoto (1990) did not provide in-depth information about her data collection and simply mentioned that recording devices were set up at seven Japanese houses. She did not clarify how many interactions were gathered, the conditions under which the interactions were made and the relationship of the interlocutors involved in the conversations. It is crucial to take these factors into account as the closing sequences may differ according to these factors.

According to Takami (2002), there are three phases in the closing sequence of Japanese telephone closings between intimates: preclosing, terminal exchange and leave-taking. The occurrence of preclosings and terminal exchanges in Japanese telephone closings concurs

with what was advocated by Schegloff and Sacks (1973). The findings demonstrated that the closing moves in the leave-taking stage are frequently repeated. In particular, the interlocutors were shown to repeatedly say 'goodbye' to one another. Takami (2002, p. 81) asserted that the repetition allows speakers to confirm the inexistence of a new topic and enables them to work towards terminating the conversation. The repetitions also reinforce the relationship between the interlocutors.

There are several researchers who came up with theories for closing sequences. Knapp et al. (1973, p. 176) suggested that speakers should fulfill certain general functions when they terminate a conversation. They proposed numerous strategies, which normally appear in less formal conversations: (a) reinforcement, (b) buffing, (c) welfare concern and (d) continuation (Knapp, et al., 1973). The element of status is woven into these strategies. For instance, reinforcements are used when conversing with acquaintances while buffing, which involves short sociosentric words like 'uh' and 'well', is employed for people with the same status but typically for people who have a lower status. The closing theory of Knapp et al. (1973) is not selected as the framework for this study because status is not a concern in the present research.

Additionally, Albert and Kessler (1978) believed that conversation closings consist of five different parts: (a) summary of the content, (b) justification of the termination of conversation, (c) statements of positive affect, (d) continuity and (e) well-wishing. The findings also revealed that these strategies increased in terms of frequency during the terminal phase of social encounters, regardless of whether the dialogue was between friends or strangers. Albert and Kessler's (1978) closing sequence is considered inappropriate for the present study as it contains an element that does not appear in the

closings of vlogs—the justification strategy. Vloggers rarely justify why they have to terminate their vlogs. Albert and Kessler's (1978) closing sequence also does not include preclosings, which is a strategy that appears frequently in the closings of the vloggers.

On the other hand, Button (1987) based his closing utterance theory on Schegloff and Sack's (1973) study of the sequential organization of conversation closings. Button (1987, p. 102) agreed that a closing sequence consists of four turns but called it the "archetype closing" instead of "canonical closing", which was suggested by Schegloff and Sacks. Closings are devised with "opportunity spaces in which a movement out of closing can be made in the interests of preserving the mutuality of closings" (Button, 1987, p. 148). Several sequence types such as arrangements and back-references may be employed in an archetype closing to initiate a movement out of the closings.

Pavlidou (2000, p. 225) studied the closings of Greek telephone calls and rejected Button's (1987) idea of "moving out of closings." Instead, she suggested that it was more of a gradual moving towards closing the telephone conversation for Greeks, who tend to "build their way up to the terminal sequence over more, and not always unequivocal steps" (Pavlidou, 2002, p. 224). The speakers use certain devices to mark their orientation towards closings. For example, they typically offer one another elements of involvement and agreement and also made use of specific discourse markers and particles to indicate their desire to terminate the conversation. This strategy is similar to Schegloff and Sacks's (1973) concept of preclosings. The presence of these devices signals concern over how to close the conversation without triggering any negative feelings within the other interlocutors.

Hartford and Bardovi-Harlig (1992) observed the closings of institutional conversations. More specifically, they concentrated on the closings of academic advising session interviews and compared both native and non-native speakers. Hartford and Bardovi-Harlig (1992, p. 99) pointed out that these closings differ from the closings of natural conversations. Unlike the closings of naturally occurring conversations, the closings of academic advising session interviews cannot be reopened as described by Schegloff and Sacks (1973). Native speaker interviews were not reopened at all but were merely followed by distinct and extremely limited post-session conversations (Hartford & Bardovi-Harlig, 1992, p. 101). On the contrary, non-native speakers who were unfamiliar with the context reopened their closings by reiterating topics that were previously negotiated, which resulted in infelicitous closings.

Besides, Robinson (2001) conducted a study on the closings of medical encounters and discovered that these closings are accomplished through two sequences—the arrangement sequence and the final-concern sequence. The arrangement sequence comprised two structured series of actions, one of which involves a future-arrangement. In this part, the physicians bring up an action that will be achieved after the present encounter is completed, such as 'I'll see you again at the end of next week.' Akin to arrangements in ordinary interactions, these future arrangements instigate final topics and therefore, imply that their resolution will form a closing-relevant environment (Robinson, 2001, p. 643). Questions in the final-concern sequence like 'any other question?' are designed to turn down topicalized additional concerns and generate to a move into closing (Robinson, 2001, p. 647).

Mart ńez (2003) made a comparison between the closing sections of news interviews and talk show interviews. The closing structure, content and style of both broadcast events are

genre-specific and molded by the particular goal pursued in each speech event and by participants' relationship (Martínez, 2003, p. 283). News interviews and talk show interviews closings are alike in that the terminal closing component is usually headed by preclosing work. For news interviews, the preclosing may merely comprise a boundary marker like 'well', which specifies a shift of direction. Conversely, the preclosing segment of talk show interviews is differentiated by its complexity. Aside from boundary markers, the preclosing section also includes other elements such as well-wishes, invitations to future shows and interpersonal tokens associated with interaction (Mart ńez, 2003, p. 290). The multifaceted structure of talk show interview closings is attributed to its entertainment-seeking purpose and the presence of a live audience.

Other than that, Anderson (2013) looked at the closing sequences of business letters and claimed that individuals should incorporate an appropriate closing to show respect for one another (Anderson, 2013, p. 1, para. 1). The closing sequences in such letters are associated with proper business etiquette. They are important because they facilitate the formation of a productive business relationship and the creation of a professional impression.

2.2.3   Opening and Closing Sequences

Laver (1975) concentrated on linguistic routines in the negotiation of social relationships and emphasized that linguistic routines are politeness tools used to lessen the risk of face threats. They are in essence guided by social norms and examples of these linguistic routines include formulaic phrases of greetings as well as parting. Laver (1975, p. 302) identified three types of greeting strategies in his analysis: neutral, other-oriented and self-oriented categories. Each category is used according to the recipient's status. Neutral phrases like 'nice tie' can be employed for speakers of any status whereas other-oriented

phrases such as 'how's your family' is available only to speakers of a fairly higher status. Meanwhile, self-oriented phrases like 'I do like a breath of fresh air' are catered only to speakers of a relatively lower status.

Laver (1975, p. 303) also stated that linguistic routines enable interlocutors to achieve a cooperative parting in which any feeling of rejection by the individual being abandoned can be mollified by suitable reassurance from the departing individual. They basically consolidate the relationship between two interlocutors. Laver (1975, p. 303) further differentiated two types of phatic tactics used in the closing phase—mitigation and consolidation. Mitigatory comments are justifications for ending the conversation and they address the recipient's negative face. By contrast, consolidatory comments include well-wishes and arrangements that signal a continuation of the relationship and they address the positive aspect of face.

On the other hand, Coronel-Molina (1998) inspected the opening and closing sequences of telephone conversations between native Spanish speakers. In general, the opening sequences of the Spanish speakers do not occur in Schegloff's (1968) canonical order. Sometimes, such sequences are not explicitly present but the function performed by the explicitly missing sequence is usually implied in another sequence (Coronel-Molina, 1998, p. 57). An example of this notion is portrayed in the identification/recognition sequence of the Spanish interlocutors. The interlocutors typically do not prefer overt identification because the ability to recognize the other speaker's voice reflects positive politeness, which reaffirms solidarity with one another (Coronel-Molina, 1998, p. 56). In this case, due to the fact that the speaker recognizes the other speaker's voice, he or she bypasses the tentative identification routine to go straight to the greeting or inquiry sequence.

In the present study, the closings of the monologic Malaysian vlogs are analysed based on Coronel-Molina's (1998) closing sequence (refer to Section 3.3.2 of Chapter 3 for more reference). This closing sequence is appropriate because it contains potential elements that may appear in the closings of the vlogs. In other words, it is hypothesized that the closings of the Malaysian vlogs may be similar to those found in telephone conversations and natural interactions.

Additionally, Choi (2001) examined the pragmatic function of the interjection *ye* in the opening and closing sequences of Korean travel consultations. This interjection is equivalent to 'yes' or 'yeah' in English and one of its tasks is to substitute greetings (Choi, 2001, p. 263). It is capable of carrying out multiple functions in that it comprises the functions of the summon-answer, recognition-response, greeting and 'how are you?' sequences. This feature is portrayed as cultural variance and is part of the distinctiveness of institutional interaction.

Choi (2001, p. 265) asserted that *ye* is also employed to end on-going topics and confirm there is nothing else to add to the current topic. Although it entails that matters are exhausted, *ye* does not guarantee a terminal sequence. This situation caused by its inherent nature of agreeing, which is similar to that of the English interjection 'mm.' It indicates 'passive recipiency' and suggests that participants can continue talking (Choi, 2001, p. 272). In short, *ye* permits the introduction of a new topic and in this way, the interjection is like Schegloff and Sacks's (1973) 'preclosing' where a new topic can be initiated after it. To overcome this predicament, an explicit preclosing sequence usually follows to warrant a terminal sequence.

Ling (2005) explored the linguistic elements of short messaging system (SMS), some of which include the opening and closing sections. Based on the data, relatively few messages had salutations and closings. Ling (2005, p. 347) divided the opening and closing sequences into simple and more formal versions. Most of the messages contained a simple greeting, typically a 'hi' and few used formal openings that include both a greeting and the name of the receiver. This situation is so because most senders of the message know the identity of their receivers and hence, adding the name of the receiver is perceived as redundant. The same condition applies to the closing sequences. The participants preferred informal closings that materialize in the form of the sender's name, endearments as well as emoticons.

Bernicot et al. (2012) were also interested in the opening and closing sequences of SMS and their data compromised the SMS messages of French adolescents. Most of the messages did not follow the obligatory opening-message-closing structure of traditional oral and written conversations (Bernicot et al., 2012, p. 1710). Moreover, the messages contain more closings than openings and in this way, the findings concur with the results of Ling (2005). Spilioti (2011) explained the presence or absence of closings from the point of view of politeness. An SMS exchange is a type of communication that permits the absence of closings because they are not necessarily expected by the conversational partners. As such, omitting a closing in an SMS message does not threaten the face of the interlocutors.

Furthermore, Horton-Salway et al. (2008) provided insight into the structure of telephone tutorial conferences utilized for distance learning in higher education. The opening section was termed as the 'calling in' sequence whereas the closing section was labeled as the

'closing-down' sequence. The 'calling in' adheres to the normative patterns proposed by Schegloff (1986) in telephone call openings (Horton-Salway et al., 2008, p. 740). It has a summon/answer sequence followed by an identification/ recognition sequence. After that, there is usually a 'how are you' sequence, which is trailed by small talk. Transition from one phase to the other is typically marked by a discourse marker. The 'closing-down' sequence is also similar to a telephone conversation closing as it contains preclosings and final closings like 'goodbye' (Horton-Salway et al., 2008, p. 751). The 'closing-down' sequence is further marked by the establishment of affirmation that the tutorials were helpful and future arrangements.

Halbe (2012) described the differences between telephone and face-to-face meetings. She maintained that concrete features such as opening and closing sequences vary according to the medium. Like the findings of Horton-Salway et al. (2008), greetings and self-identification were found in telephone conferences (Halbe, 2012, p. 58). Speakers expect others to recognize their voice once their presence is made known and this perception is parallel to Schegloff's (1979) assertion about the general preference of identification by recognition. On the contrary, openings sequences in face-to-face meetings are more casual where acknowledgement is given with a mere smile or nod. Closings in telephone conferences consist of preclosings, arrangements and final closings (Halbe, 2012, p. 58). In face-to-face meetings, however, closings simply phase out and the interlocutors move on to post-meeting talk.

McKay et al. (2009) underscored the importance of having an opening and closing sequence in a speech. They argued that all good speeches must have an introduction and a conclusion and that the opening is the most crucial part of the speech. It captures the

attention of the audience and enables the speaker to establish a relationship with them (McKay et al., 2009, p. 298). Closing sequences are equally important as well and for persuasive speeches, closings essentially serve as a call for action. They encourage the audience to take a course of action that will benefit the speaker in specific ways.

Barešová (2008) compared American and Japanese rejection letters. The findings showed that there is usually a combination of agreement and apology in the opening of American rejection letters (Barešová, 2008, p. 72). Some also start with a 'thank you' that sets a polite tone to pacify the receiver. Most of the letters ended in a positive manner by providing some alternative or support. This action is taken to minimize disappointment and save the face of the receiver. As for Japanese rejection letters, the openings and closings resemble English letters in that there is a 'thank you' to sound well-mannered and positive encouragement in the closing to mollify the receiver (Barešová, 2008, p. 75).

In a local study, Kuang et al. (2011) analysed the openings and closings in front counter transactions of Malaysian government hospitals. The researchers first drew attention to the significance of politeness in Malaysia and acknowledged that politeness is a vital element for all human communication in the Malaysian context (Kuang et al., 2011, p. 14). The front counter people were expected to conform to the rules of social interaction by including opening and closing sequences in their conversations. After all, these sequences are markers of respect and politeness. However, the results of the analysis demonstrated that the front counter staff of Malaysian government hospitals employed few openings and closings in their public transitions with patients or clients (Kuang et al., 2011, p. 27). As such, they are portrayed as being less courteous than expected.

Kuang et al. (2012) also carried out a research on the openings and closings in Malaysian private hospitals. The front counter people were expected to be polite because unlike government hospitals, patients in private hospitals are charged for treatment. However, similar to their previous study, Kuang et al. (2012, p. 168) discovered that the front counter staff did not utilize as many polite opening strategies as expected whilst serving the patients or clients. They also noted that Malaysian patients may be offended at the lack of respect conveyed. In terms of closings, the front counter staff appeared more polite as they employed more polite and semi-polite closing strategies as compared to impolite closings.

Moreover, Nielsen (2013) conducted a canonical sequential analysis on the openings and closings of department meetings. The data revealed meeting openings have a stable pattern where "stepping stones" are used to achieve openings and facilitate the transition from multiparty talk to meeting talk (Nielsen, 2013, p. 56). The chairperson used a boundary marker such as 'well' or 'so' to mark his or her intention to begin the meeting. These markers may be prosodically altered to make them more noticeable. The closings of the meetings have a constant pattern as well. Topic bounding techniques like using the word 'okay' are often employed to indicate the desire to terminate the meeting (Nielsen, 2013, p. 57). The chairperson may also generate a concluding remark or 'lesson' of the last topic to officially end the meeting.

Discourse markers are typically mentioned when it comes to research on opening and closing sequences and they have been shown to perform a variety of functions. Schiffrin (1988) stated that one of its purposes is to establish discourse coherence. On the other hand, Bolden (2009) suggested different pragmatic functions for the word 'so.' He maintained that aside from developing discourse coherence, the discourse marker 'so' marks the end of

preceding turn and prompts recipients to take the next relevant action. Meanwhile, Schegloff and Sacks (1973) perceived the word 'okay' as markers that initiate pre-close whereas Condon (2011) viewed it as a sign of topic transition.

2.3   Research on Computer-Mediated Communication

Studies conducted on CMC tend to focus on the interactional features of talk. Numerous researchers propose that CMC language possess certain features and patterns that vary from natural face-to-face conversations. It is suggested that the language employed in particular virtual communities in individual settings like chat rooms, social networking sites and emails has group-specific characteristics.

Like face-to-face interaction, verbal and non-verbal cues are available in CMC. According to Harris and Paradice (2007), as cited in Riordan and Kreuz (2010, p. 1806), verbal cues in CMC are made up of the same language that is found in face-to-face communication: the words and sentences, which are spoken or written. On the other hand, non-verbal cues are discovered in CMC that allows audio-visual interaction. Paralinguistic and visual cues are frequently absent in text-based forms of online communication such as email and instant messaging and the lack of such cues may render communication ambiguous. However, this condition is not applicable to vlogs as they allow audio-visual communication. Viewers are able to see the images of the vloggers and this circumstance enables the study of the vloggers' non-verbal cues.

Apart from that, anonymity in CMC like Internet Relay Chat (IRC) frees users from their own body and facilitates the manipulation their identities. Kang and Yang (2004, p. 2735) maintained that the new identity could be an ideal type or an unconscious self-image. For

example, a reserved individual in real life can appear extremely active in cyberspace. CMC users recognize that anonymity permits them to create an alternative self and provides them with the chance to participant in a new kind of interaction. Baran (2007) agrees with Kang and Yang (2004) and stated that identity play is possible in some forms of CMC. Users are able to establish their own identities by choosing to display characteristics that they want to be known for (Baran, 2007, p. 327).

According to Chen (2006 2006, p. 35), email literacy is a critical issue in the digital era and although email has become a regular interpersonal communication medium, users may still come across email-specific difficulties. Such challenges are caused by the lack of paralinguistic cues like facial expressions and gestures, which play an important part in communication. Furthermore, Chen (2006, p. 36) noted that there are no fixed and conventional email writing rules that can guide email users. Hence, users have nothing for reference in terms of writing emails and this makes email-writing somewhat tricky.

Blood (2002) shed light on blogs by distinguishing three basic kinds of blogs: filters, personal journals and notebooks. The content of filters is external to the blogger and may concern world events or online happenings (Blood, 2002, p. 8). On the contrary, personal journals hold internal contents such as the blogger's thoughts. Notebooks may have either external or internal content and are distinguished by longer focused essays. The journal type of blog is relatively more popular as compared to the other two. Blood (2002, p. 10) claimed blogs are exclusive and unique to the Web and opposed the idea that they are brought over from other off-line genres. Blogging is regularly depicted as socially interactive and community-like in nature. Blogs are connected in a sense that users can be linked from one blog to another. Readers can also post comments to individual entries and

this feature allows viewer feedback and enables 'conversational' exchanges on blogs. These characteristics can also be found in vlogs.

In addition, Harley and Fitzpatrick (2009) were interested in a relatively new area in online interaction—monologic video blogs or vlogs. More specifically, they showed the ways in which vloggers generate a conversational context between each other via the YouTube website. Some of the communicative modes employed include reconstructing the sense of turn-taking. It is accomplished through the use of self-rhetorical questions, responding to one's own questions and reenacting a dialogue shared with others (Harley & Fitzpatrick, 2009, p. 686). Another strategy involves eye contact where the vloggers' eye contact comes and goes throughout the monologue to maintain a feeling of conversational engagement. Vloggers also create a conversational context by establishing personal common ground with their physically absent audience. They inhabit one another's worlds and transpose themselves there to search for common ground and thus, build personal connections (Harley & Fitzpatrick, 2009, p. 687). Essentially, these strategies allow the vloggers to construct a sense of communication and overcome the constraints of the online medium by reducing the disconnected sense of the *other*.

Biel and Gatica-Perez (2010) investigated the link between behaviour and the attention vlogs obtain in YouTube. The research revealed that non-verbal behavioural cues correlate with the average number of views per video (Biel & Gatica-Perez, 2010, p. 1). Vloggers who spoke faster and used few pauses generally had more views. The analysis also showed that vloggers who had an appropriate distance with respect to the camera were more popular (Biel & Gatica-Perez, 2010, p. 4). Conversely, those who were too close to the camera received less attention. There was also a positive correlation between looking time

and the amount of attention the vlogs received. Based on their findings, Biel and Gatica-Perez (2010) deduced that non-verbal behaviour are part of the communication process of vlogging and may influence the ways in which vloggers are perceived.

2.3.1   Openings and Closings in CMC

Conversational openings and closings have been given generous attention in research on spoken language. More recently, however, attention has gradually diverted to the occurrence of opening and closing sequences in online interactions. The shift of attention is caused by the vast development and influence of online communication in the globally networked world.

Internet Relay Chat (IRC) is a form of CMC that has been studied in-depth. Rintel et al. (2001) employed Conversation Analysis (CA) in examining the openings in IRC. They differentiated the ways in which conversational partners manage openings in chat rooms as compared to spoken discourse (Rintel et al., 2001). Unlike in a dialogue where interlocutors greet each other with a simple 'hello', openings in IRC start with automated messages being delivered to both the entering user and other users in the chat room. These messages are called 'channel entry phases' and they serve to proclaim the arrival of the new user into the chat (Rintel et al., 2001). As such, interlocutors in the chat may orient to the messages by responding to them in a direct manner and form their opening sequences accordingly.

Hastrdlová (2009) also took an interest in the openings and closings sequences of IRC. The opening strategies adopted in the IRC openings are generally similar to those found in face-to-face communication (Hastrdlová, 2009, p. 93). The greetings have two functions—they invite other participants for further talk and act as a phatic element that fulfills a social

function. Furthermore, it is common for IRC participants to not respond to a greeting. Hastrdlová (2009, p. 98) argued that such behaviour is not impolite or face-threatening but is in fact specific of cyber culture. The findings showed that majority of the chat participants did not use any closing at all and it is not considered offensive due to the anonymity of chat rooms. There were also cases where participants left without waiting for others to respond to their preclosings. This behaviour too is deemed appropriate as waiting for all the participants to say goodbye is not technically feasible (Hastrdlová, 2009, p. 113).

Apart from that, Negretti (1999) scrutinized Webchat interaction to find out the participants' patterns and conversational strategies in the online context. In the openings, participants usually introduce themselves by self-identifying to establish contact with the others in the room. Identification in Webchat is more of a self-introduction with the goal of having one's presence acknowledged by other individuals (Negretti, 1999, p. 83). It is unlike the case of Schegloff's (1968) telephone conversation openings where one self-identifies in response to a question by the other interlocutor. The participants in Webchat also often greet the whole room using more general structures and lexical items (Negretti, 1999, p. 84). This way of greeting is less personal but it is ultimately a more economical way of executing the action.

In terms of closing sequences, the participants in Webchat tend to employ preclosings to signal their intention to end the conversation. According to Negretti (1999, p. 84), the preclosing statement seeks farewells from the other participants whereas the closing statement solicits a definitive goodbye from the individual who is going to leave. Many of the participants offer some type of justification or the reason why they have to leave

(Negretti, 1999, p. 84). This step is taken to prevent the expression of negative feelings like boredom or disinterest to the room.

Raclaw (2008) focused on closings in instant messaging and divided them into two patterns. The first one comprises the expanded archetype sequence that adheres to the structure of closings located in spoken discourse (Raclaw, 2008, p. 9). Such closings include elements like preclosings, justifications, arrangements and terminal exchanges. According to Raclaw (2008, p. 13), these elements mark dispreferred action within the discourse. The participants regard closing sequences as relatively undesirable face-threatening acts and therefore, they use these closing elements to reassure conversational partners that future contact is wanted, thereby saving the conversational partners' face. The second closing pattern involves the usage of automated messages supplied by the instant messaging program (Raclaw, 2008, p. 14). It normally appears within the terminal exchange position, occurring after a preclosing sequence.

In her analysis of quasisynchronous chat-based virtual meetings, Markman (2009) divulged that chat environments are more chaotic than natural face-to-face interaction in that they contain more utterances, turns and disruptions. This situation makes it more difficult to begin as well as to terminate the conversation. A two-stage process is utilized for both opening and closings to overcome this problem. It enables participants to consistently employ specific linguistic and conversational devices to denote possible transition locations for the openings and closings (Markman, 2009, p. 164). Moreover, virtual meetings take a longer time to open and close as compared to face-to-face meetings. Such a complication is caused by the necessity to include additional and occasionally repetitive work to ultimately start and end the conversation (Markman, 2009, p. 164).

On the other hand, Pojanapunya and Jaroenkitboworn (2011) demonstrated the ways in which closings can be achieved in Second Life, a multiplayer virtual world. They discovered that closings in Second Life are rather similar to those in natural conversations. Four components make up the closing act: (a) preclosing, (b) insertion, (c) terminal closing and (d) after-close (Pojanapunya & Jaroenkitboworn, 2011, p. 3600). The most frequently used closing combination was preclosing and terminal closing. Most participants in Second Life tend to provide an indication to preclose their conversations with others. They use these preclosings not only to capture the interlocutors' attention but also to implicitly request the interlocutors to acknowledge the move before conveying the need to depart (Pojanapunya & Jaroenkitboworn, 2011, p. 3594). Hence, preclosings can be thought of as politeness markers because they mitigate the threat to the interlocutors' face. These findings illustrate that the participants still take the concept of 'face' or 'face-saving' seriously although they are communicating in a virtual world.

Frobenius (2011) investigated the opening sequences of monologic vlogs and proposed a taxonomy of opening practices (refer to Section 3.3.1 of Chapter 3 for more reference). She basically claimed that vloggers borrow strategies from other genres to make up for the absent interlocutor. The analysis of vlog openings in present study is based on the Frobenius's (2011) taxonomy. This framework is appropriate as the core of her research is the opening sequences of vlogs, which is also the focus of the present study. It helps in the identification of the various strategies that Malaysian vloggers use to open their vlogs.

2.3.1.1 Power Relations in CMC

Many researchers were interested in the interplay of structural and stylistic features in the openings and closings of emails. One of the many issues investigated in the openings and closings of emails is the issue of power. As stated by Fairclough (2001, p. 38), "power in discourse" involves powerful participants controlling and constraining the contributions of non-powerful participants. Sherblom (1988) inspected the closings in emails and looked at the ways in which social position in a hierarchy influences the use of signatures in emails. In this case, the emails were sent to a manager in a business organization. The findings displayed that none of the messages sent down the hierarchy had signatures whereas over a third of the messages sent to the managers were signed. Such results led Sherblom (1988) to deduce that the closings in emails are affected by power relations.

Crystal (2001) also lavished his attention on the openings and closings of emails. The results of his study contrasted with Sherblom's (1988) findings. He claimed that salutations and signatures in emails tend to be sparse or non-existent and attributed the pattern to the informality of emails where the names of the sender and receiver are displayed at the top of the message. This circumstance renders additional greetings and closings unnecessary. The findings of Crystal (2001) are parallel to the claims of Baron (1998), who pointed out that the lack of salutations and signatures in emails is caused by the conversational immediacy of email language. Crystal (2001) also backed up the notion that email conventions have evolved. Some users transfer conventions from daily face-to-face interactions to email writing, such as beginning the email with a casual 'hi.'

Waldvogel (2007) explored greetings and closings in the emails of two different types of workplaces—an educational organization and a manufacturing plant. She discovered that

email writing is influenced by sociological variables like relative status, social distance as well as gender. Waldvogel (2007, p. 19) also revealed that greeting and closings were seldom used in the educational organization due to its indirect and socially distant styles. This detached email style was termed as "business first, people second", highlighting the influence of workplace culture (Waldvogel, 2007, p. 17). Quite the opposite, greetings and closings were used more extensively in the manufacturing plant and this occurrence is credited to the plant's direct and friendly workplace culture.

Besides, Bou-Franch (2006) examined the opening and closing sequences of Spanish emails sent by students to their university lecturers. To be more precise, she looked at the interpersonal styles of deference and solidarity. Most of the students' emails that were sent to the lecturers contain opening and closing moves and this particular finding reflects the influence of power relations and concurs with Sherblom's (1988) findings. However, her data opposes Crystal's (2001) data, disproving his statement that openings and closings in emails tend to be sparse.

In a larger and separate study, Bou-Franch (2011) looked at the discourse practices utilized to open and close Spanish emails. The institutional power of participants and the interactional position of the emails were taken into account. The results showed that the opening and closing sequences were subjected to technological, social and interactional constraints (Bou-Franch, 2011). For example, self-identification in openings was used more often in emails sent up the institutional hierarchy. However, in contrast to Waldvogel's (2007) findings, there was a high degree of sociability in the openings and closings of Spanish emails and this communicative style was labelled as "people first, business second" (Bou-Franch, 2011, p. 1783).

Poon (2008), a local researcher, also conducted a research on emails. Essentially, she compared Malaysian and Hong Kong emails in terms of opening and closing sequences. Poon (2008) found that Malaysians frequently use openings in their emails. In contrast, there were fewer openings in Hong Kong emails. This difference was linked to each country's view of power distribution. Malaysians employed openings in their emails due to their view of the inequality of power distribution and hence, they feel the need to appear polite (Poon, 2008, p. 82). Meanwhile, both countries had closings in all of the emails and within these closings, there were societal niceties as well, like 'best regards' and 'thanks' to express one's courtesy towards another (Poon, 2008, p. 84).

2.4   Summary

On the whole, the literature review highlights the lack of research conducted on monologues in cyberspace. More conventional forms of monologues such as answering machine messages and media talk have been given more attention. The literature review also illustrates the dominant interest in the openings and closings of telephone calls and other online mediums like IRC and emails. Not much research has been done on the opening and closing sequences of monologic vlogs. The lack of attention given to vlogs in general may be attributed to its novelty in the online world. The present study remedies this deficiency by providing insight into vlogs, especially in terms of its opening and closing sequences.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0   Introduction

The research methodology of this study discusses several aspects, which include the profile

of the vloggers, instrument, theoretical framework, method, data collection and procedure

as well as data analysis.

3.1   Profile of the Vloggers

The participants of this study are selected from YouTube and they consist of 30 Malaysian

vloggers, namely 16 males and 14 females. The vloggers range from between 18 to 33

years of age. They are also of different ethnic communities, namely Malay (M) (N=16),

Chinese (C) (N=12) and Indian (I) (N=2).

Table 3.1: Profile of the Vloggers

No.	Gender	Race	No.	Gender	Race
1	M1	M	1	F1	M
2	M2	M	2	F2	M
3	M3	M	3	F3	M
4	M4	I	4	F4	C
5	M5	M	5	F5	M
6	M6	M	6	F6	M
7	M7	C	7	F7	M
8	M8	C	8	F8	C
9	M9	M	9	F9	C
10	M10	C	10	F10	C
11	M11	M	11	F11	C
12	M12	M	12	F12	M
13	M13	C	13	F13	C
14	M14	C	14	F14	C

| 15 | M15 | M | |
| 16 | M16 | I | |

Purposeful sampling is used in the selection of the vloggers. They are chosen because they are information-rich and this notion means the vloggers can offer in-depth information that adheres to the core of the present study. In other words, the analysis of the vlogs will yield details that can enhance one's knowledge about the openings and closings of vlogs. The vloggers are basically chosen according to two criteria: (a) they are Malaysians and (b) they produce monologues.

3.2 Instrument

A total of two instruments are used in this study and they comprise the transcription of the monologues of the vloggers that impart their views, and online interviews.

3.2.1 Vlogs and the Vloggers' Monologues

The first instrument in this study consists of the Malaysian vlogs. Table 3.2 demonstrates the profile of the vlogs that are selected for the study (see Appendix F for the links of the vlogs). Information such as the gender of the vloggers, title, duration and production date of the vlogs as well as the vloggers' number of views and subscribers are given in the table.

Table 3.2: Profile of the Vlogs

Vlogs	Gender	Title of the Vlog	Duration (min/sec)	Production Date	Number of Views	Number of Subscribers
V1	F	Ramadan and attitude	7.26	August, 2012	2660	1180
V2	M	*Tak Suka* Facebook Don't like Facebook	5.23	August, 2012	**31,609**	9,261

V3	M	Ramadan	4.20	August, 2012	361	88
V4	F	*kaye*..so what? #23 rich..so what? #23	6.54	July, 2011	**60,799**	7,735
V5	F	Get to know me!	12.03	July, 2012	453	276
V6	F	My Jellyfish Rant.	7.44	July, 2012	29	13
V7	M	Vlog 18: TOP 5 Reasons WHY MOST HATE TO MOVE…..	4.30	June, 2012	21	53
V8	F	PROM SUCKS IN MALAYSIA!!! (not really)	**16.25**	April, 2012	105	15
V9	M	Vlog 5: My Rant about Maxis	6.00	March, 2012	195	7
V10	F	My rant on perceptions against race and gender	6.40	January, 2012	316	140
V11	M	5 Benda yang tak best semasa hari jadi 5 *Things which are not* best *during birthdays*	5.58	January, 2012	1,725	1,470
V12	M	Pollen Grain Allergy	3.37	2012	165	3,676
V13	F	talking about social stuff	5.27	December, 2011	**152,348**	34,649
V14	M	The Twilight Saga: Break Your Own Dawn	3.51	December, 2011	7,011	15,402
V15	M	Im Still a Shopaholic (05.12.11)	5.01	December, 2011	177	38
V16	M	Vlog #10: Fat Jokes	2.20	November, 2011	1,057	850
V17	M	Sam Vlogs #2 Conceited people (Chinese subs)	3.20	October, 2011	114	17
V18	F	STOP SAYING GAY!!	3.41	August, 2011	451	230
V19	M	i hate catching cold...	**1.15**	May, 2011	30	51
V20	M	ITS SOO ANNOYING!!!	2.49	February, 2011	211	161
V21	M	vLog 26thFeb2011	**1.15**	February, 2011	20	9
V22	M	V.LOG #01; Comeback	2.29	February, 2011	337	3
V23	F	HOSPITALS SUCK 08.12.2010	8.13	December, 2010	57	3
V24	F	I hate you , Ulcer !	3.05	April, 2010	244	165
V25	M	Case of the Fishy Ex	2.33	May, 2010	160	47

V26	M	The HomeGrownMalaysian's First Vlog - Intro / Malaysian Accents	2.07	2010	3165	68
V27	F	Pet Peeves	5.15	September, 2009	162	201
V28	F	Youtubers & A Bookfair	7.14	May, 2009	165	286
V29	F	Eurasians And Discrimination	3.07	February, 2009	8,228	463
V30	F	Vlog#1 - My Encounter With A Crazy "Mechanic"	6.18	November, 2007	795	76

Based on the information in Table 3.2, gender appears to affect the duration of vlogs. The data shows that female vloggers tend to talk longer as compared to male vloggers. A comparison reveals that the length of the male vloggers' videos does not exceed 6 minutes. On the contrary, the length of the female vloggers' videos goes up to more than 16 minutes. In fact, the longest vlog in the study belongs to a female vlogger with the duration of 16 minutes and 25 seconds. In contrast, the shortest vlogs are from two males vloggers with the duration of 1 minute and 15 seconds.

Apart from that, the choice of topics seems to influence the level of a vlog's popularity. The information in Table 3.2 indicates that the vlogs with the most number of views revolve around current matters. Out of the three vlogs that received the highest number of views, a total of two of them discussed the subject of technology. V13 who attained the highest number of views (N=152,348) talked about how people nowadays are obsessed with their mobile phones. Meanwhile, V2 who comes in third in terms of the number of views (N=31,609) spoke about why he does not favour Facebook. This discovery suggests that vlog viewers are particularly concerned about the issue of technology, since it is now

very much part of their lives. It is also a topic of interest in today's world and thus, the viewers are keen on such topics.

The vlogs in the present study also differ in terms of the degree of editing work, depending on the video editing skills and choices of the vloggers. The editing work include cutting off certain unwanted or redundant parts of video but there are some vloggers who do not resort to editing and offer the whole recorded conversation for the viewers.

The transcription of the vloggers' monologue serves as the first instrument of the study. For the purpose of the study, only the opening and closing sequences are transcribed for analysis and this condition means that the content or body of the vlog is not examined. These transcriptions provide answers for the first and second research question as they reveal the different strategies that vloggers use to open and close their vlogs. It is also through these transcriptions that the adaptation techniques of the vloggers in dealing with the monologic context are unveiled.

3.2.2   Online Interviews

The second instrument comprises online interviews and they are conducted to investigate the viewers' perception of the importance of opening and closings in vlogs. A total of 40 viewers, namely 30 females (F) and 10 males (M), are chosen for the interviews that are conducted through Facebook. They range from 23 to 27 years of age and are of different races—Chinese (C) (N=32), Malay (MY) (N=5), Indian (I) (N=3). An investigation also reveals that the vlog viewers typically watch vloggers who converse in English (N=40). There are also some of them watch a mixture of English and Malay vlogs (N=9). Table 3.3 illustrates the profile of the vlog viewers that are chosen for the study.

Table 3.3: Profile of the Vlog Viewers

Vlog Viewers	Gender	Age	Race	Language of Vlogs Normally Watched
VV1	F	25	MY	E, MY
VV2	M	24	C	E
VV3	M	26	C	E
VV4	F	23	C	E
VV5	M	24	C	E
VV6	F	24	C	E, MY
VV7	M	24	C	E
VV8	F	24	C	E
VV9	F	24	I	E
VV10	F	23	C	E
VV11	F	24	C	E
VV12	M	27	MY	E, MY
VV13	M	24	C	E
VV14	M	26	MY	E, MY
VV15	F	24	C	E
VV16	F	24	C	E
VV17	F	25	C	E
VV18	F	24	C	E
VV19	F	24	C	E, MY
VV20	F	25	C	E
VV21	F	26	C	E
VV22	F	25	MY	E, MY
VV23	F	25	C	E
VV24	F	24	C	E
VV25	F	24	C	E
VV26	F	25	C	E
VV27	F	23	C	E
VV28	F	27	C	E
VV29	M	25	I	E, MY
VV30	F	25	C	E
VV31	M	24	C	E
VV32	M	24	C	E, MY
VV33	F	25	C	E
VV34	F	25	C	E
VV35	F	25	C	E
VV36	F	26	I	E
VV37	M	24	C	E
VV38	F	25	C	E
VV39	M	27	C	E
VV40	F	27	MY	E, MY

Convenience sampling and purposeful sampling are used in the implementation of these online interviews. Convenience sampling is employed in that the viewers consist of the researcher's readily available friends and acquaintances. Purposeful sampling is also used where the viewers are selected specifically. To be more precise, only those who watch vlogs and only those who are Malaysians are chosen for the online interviews.

All in all, the viewers are asked to answer two questions (see Appendix B). The first question seeks their agreement or disagreement about the importance of openings and closings in vlogs—"Opening sequences (e.g. hi, hello guys, hi everyone) and closing sequences (e.g. okay bye, thanks for watching) play an important role in vlogs." Specifically, the opening strategies of greeting (N=25) and term of address (N=20) are selected because they are the strategies that appear most frequently in the openings of the vloggers. The same goes for the closing strategies that are listed in the interview, where preclosings (N=24) and final closings (N=20) are used most often by the vloggers. These major strategies are also common strategies that viewers are familiar with and their inclusion in the interview questions facilitates ease of understanding.

The viewers are asked to respond to this statement based on a five-point Likert scale, which ranges from 'strongly agree' to 'strongly disagree.' This type of scale is selected because it does not yield a simple yes or no answer from the viewers but allows the measurement of the degree of their agreement or disagreement (McLeod, 2008). The data that emerge from the Likert scale is also quantifiable and therefore, can be analysed with relative ease.

The extent of the viewers' agreement or disagreement regarding the importance of opening and closing sequences is examined through only one question. In other words, the openings and closings are not evaluated separately. The first question of the interview is devised in this way because the selected respondents are those who do watch vlogs. Bearing this in mind, they are definitely aware of what a vlog entails and would be familiar with the general structure of vlogs. This notion means that the viewers would also be familiar with the opening and closing sequences of vlogs and they would have an idea of what the vloggers typically incorporate in their openings and closings. As such, it is not necessary to use two questions to investigate the viewers' perception of the importance of opening and closing sequences

On the other hand, the second question of the interview requires the viewers to justify their responses to the first question—"Please explain the reason for your response." This part reveals the reasons as to why they think opening and closing sequences are important or unimportant in vlogs.

3.3　Transcription Convention

The transcriptions of the vloggers' monologues are done based on Jefferson's (2004) transcription symbols. Since the focus of the study is on monologues, not all of the symbols are available in the transcriptions. For example, there are no overlap symbols in the transcripts as the vloggers are alone in their speech production. Table 3.4 shows the transcriptions symbols that are used in the data.

Table 3.4: Transcription Symbols

Symbol	Explanation	Example
.	Period indicates falling tone in the preceding element and suggests finality	Hey YouTube.
?	Question mark shows rising tone in the preceding element.	how are you?
,	Comma demonstrates a continuing intonation and suggests non-finality.	okay um,
-	A single dash refers to a cutoff.	a hos- at the nearby hospital
=	Equal signs indicate no break or gap.	Hey what's up boys= =SL here,
(.)	A dot in parentheses specifies a brief interval within or between utterances.	cause I'm just going to do a (.) rant.
{ }	Braces indicate non-verbal behaviour like movements and looks and video editing such as cuts.	bye! {waves}
(( ))	Doubled parentheses indicate aspects of the utterance such as laughter, whispers and coughing.	uh guys, ((laughs))
::	Colons indicate prolongation of the immediately prior sound.	so:: lately I've been getting a lot of fat jokes
WORD	Upper case indicates especially loud sounds relative to the surrounding talk.	and er let me know if you AGREE with me.
˚word˚	Degree signs bracketing an utterance or utterance-part indicate that the sounds are softer than the surrounding talk.	˚cause I think it is˚
( )	Empty parentheses signals utterances that cannot be transcribed with certainty.	( ) if they fuck things up.
↑↓	Arrows indicate shifts into especially high or low pitch	↑ and I'm having tea with Harry Potte::r ↓

3.4 Theoretical Framework

As mentioned previously, this study is conducted based on the frameworks of Frobenius (2011) and Coronel-Molina (1998) (see section 2.2.3 and section 2.3.1 of Chapter Two for more reference). Each of the frameworks is discussed in the following sections.

3.4.1   Frobenius's (2011) Taxonomy of Vlog Openings

In the present study, the openings of the Malaysian vlogs are analysed based on the taxonomy put forward by Frobenius (2011), who examined the opening sequences of monologic Western vlogs. She pointed out that monologues do not have salient dialogic elements like phatic communication and sequentality and the lack of such elements is attributed to the missing interlocutor (Frobenius, 2011, p. 814). Due to the absence of dialogic elements, vloggers have to resort to other types of verbal and non-verbal strategies to manage the job of generating a monologue in front of the camera.

Frobenius (2011) suggested a list of eight opening strategies used in vlogs. The proposed strategies are as follow:

a. Greetings (e.g. hi, hello)

b. Term of address (e.g. everyone, guys)

b. Self-identification (e.g. this is John)

c. Linguistic markers (e.g. okay, so)

d. Date

e. Foregrounded object

f. Cut (e.g. cutting out unwanted or redundant part of the vlog)

g. Variations from established, personal openings

A brief description is provided in Table 3.5 to give one a rough idea of the functions of each opening strategy. It is to be noted that the functions of these opening strategies are analysed and explained more thoroughly in Chapter Four of the study.

Table 3.5: The Functions of the Opening Strategies

Opening Strategies	Functions
Greeting	Greetings are used to acknowledge the presence of the viewers.
Term of address	This strategy is used to directly engage the viewers and to build rapport with them.
Self-identification	The vloggers self-identity to establish their identities and unique characters in the vlogging world.
Linguistic marker	This strategy includes both discourse markers and boundary markers such as "okay" and "so." It establishes discourse coherence and serves as crucial markers of transition.
Date	Dates are incorporated to make the vlogs appear more journalistic.
Foregrounded object	Objects are used by vloggers to capture the attention of the viewers and also to distract themselves from their discomfort of the monologic context.
Cut	Cuts are generally used to mark a transition from one part of the vlog to another.
Variations from established, personal openings	Variations are incorporated to grab the viewers' attention and also to make the openings more entertaining.

According to Frobenius (2011, p. 824), these interactive strategies are borrowed from "dialogic genres or conventionalized monologues." Vloggers actually employ conventions from other genres to compensate for the shortage of standardized guidelines in vlogging. For instance, the findings in Frobenius's (2011, p. 819) research showed that some vloggers used a greeting, term of address as well as self-identification in their opening sequence— 'Hey YouTubers, it's me Michelle.' This particular sequence combination is borrowed from answering machine talk or perhaps even TV or radio talk. Another common example is the use of a greeting and term of address such as 'hi everyone', which is typical in the openings of conversations with multiple speakers.

Frobenius (2011, p. 815) also claimed that audience design is the driving factor in the creation of vlogs. Vloggers tend to imagine or construct an audience when they are

producing monologues and this method makes the process of generating a monologue easier. They feel a need to greet and address their viewers, despite the fact that the viewers remain physically absent and largely unknown to them. Yet, one cannot successfully argue that vlogs without greetings and terms of address were not recorded with an imagined audience in mind (Frobenius, 2011, p. 817).

In addition, the functions of opening sequences in vlogs differ from that of conversational openings in other settings (Frobenius, 2011, p. 817). Speakers in a dialogic conversation have to navigate through several tasks such as ensuring the availability of other interlocutors and negotiating topics. However, in the case of vlogs, none of these functions are compulsory for the talk to carry on. Therefore, opening sequences in vlogs may perform other functions. The openings of vlogs can pique the interest of the viewers and encourage them to watch the entire vlog. They are also an interactional element that persuades the viewers to use the interactive features found in the website such as the comment box and subscription button.

As there are no standardized guidelines, vloggers attempt to create their own conventions in the openings of their vlogs. Established, idiosyncratic phrases or behavioural patterns are crucial in the routine of some vloggers (Frobenius, 2011, p, 822). These patterns enable them to stand out and hence, construct their own identity. There are also vloggers who occasionally deviate from their own opening routine. This technique is carried out due to the belief that something can be achieved from this inconsistency (Frobenius, 2011, p. 822). For instance, it can be employed as a means of humor to make the vlogs more interesting.

Frobenius's (2011) study was conducted in a Western context and this study intends to determine if the taxonomy applies to a Malaysian context. The underlying conjecture is that the opening sequence of Malaysian vlogs will contain the opening strategies outlined by Frobenius (2011). However, it is also hypothesized that the vloggers may use other types of opening strategies, which are not found in Frobenius's (2011) research. Malaysians consider politeness an essential element for the construction of a successful relationship (Katz, 2006). Therefore, it is expected that the Malaysian vloggers may incorporate some kind of polite conversation before moving on to the main topic of the vlog.

3.4.2   Coronel-Molina's (1998) Closing Sequence

The closing sequences of the Malaysian vlogs are examined according to the closing strategies proposed by Coronel-Molina (1998), who looked at both the openings and closings of Spanish telephone conversations. She primarily relied on the framework of Schegloff and Sacks (1973) to ground her own work and used CA to analyse her data.

As mentioned previously (see Section 2.2.2 of Chapter Two for more reference), Schegloff and Sacks (1973) did not provide exact names for their closing stages nor did they classify the strategies into distinct categories. Instead, they offered a wide range of potential strategies that may appear within the leave-taking phase. Coronel-Molina (1998) overcomes this deficiency by dividing Schegloff and Sacks's (1973) strategies into specific categories: (a) preclosing, (b) new topic introduction, (c) recapitulation and (d) final closing. The functions of these closing strategies, as proposed by Coronel-Molina (1998, p. 59), are shown in Table 3.6.

Table 3.6: The Functions of the Closing Strategies

Closing Strategies	Functions
Preclosing	Preclosings such as "okay" and "so" indicate that the speaker is prepared to terminate the conversation and offer the other party a chance to initiate another topic of conversation. It is noted that the function of preclosings is similar to that of linguistic markers in the opening sequence of the vloggers.
New topic introduction	This closing strategy involves the introduction of a new topic of conversation after a preclosing gambit.
Recapitulation	Recapitulation includes the summarization of topics discussed, arrangements made and the sending of best wishes.
Final closing	Final closings refer to actual 'goodbyes' or other equivalent fitting to the context of a closing such as 'thank you.' In this study, final closings also include personal remarks such as 'I love you guys' and 'take care.'

The findings demonstrated that the telephone conversation closings of the Spanish speakers do follow Schegloff and Sacks's (1973) four basic closing phases. Still, these closings contain sequential variations and Coronel-Molina (1998, p. 49) suggested that such variations could be due to the influence of culture. This particular observation concurs with the statement of Hopper and Koleilat-Doany (1989).

Coronel-Molina (1998, p. 60) also addressed the fact that some closing elements may be omitted in the closing sequence. In her data, some of the preclosings resulted directly in a final closing instead of leading to the initiation of a new topic. Several of the Spanish interlocutors even started their closing sequence with a recapitulation rather than the conventional preclosing. Additionally, Coronel-Molina (1998, p. 60) gave special emphasis to final closings by arguing that the presence of this closing strategy is compulsory to ensure the termination of a conversation.

Apart from that, preclosings may not necessarily lead the conversation to an end. A preclosing may look as if it is headed to the ending stages of a conversation, only to go through another series of alternating preclosings, recapitulations and new topics (Coronel-Molina, 1998, p. 61). In short, the closing strategies are sometimes repeated multiple times before the conversation is finally closed down and this variability is attributed to the unpredictable nature of the communication process. The constant occurrence of preclosings also led to the reasonable deduction that it is difficult to end a dialogue without a preclosing.

Besides, Coronel-Molina (1998, p. 63) discovered that the final closings in some of the telephone conversation closings emerged in triplets instead of adjacency pairs. The first interlocutor would say "goodbye", the second interlocutor would respond in kind and then the first interlocutor would repeat it again before hanging up. One possible cause of this fairly common occurrence is the personal style of the speakers, who perhaps feel the need to have to the last word before ending the conversation.

The present study uses Coronel-Molina's (1998) clearly-divided categories in examining the closing sequences of Malaysian vlogs. Her research investigated naturally occurring telephone interactions between two parties. In this study, however, there is only one party involved as the attention is on the monologues of the vloggers. Therefore, this study strives to determine if Coronel-Molina's (1998) closing sequence applies to monologues as well. The proposition is that the closings of monologic Malaysian vlogs may not necessarily follow the closing sequence put forward by Coronel-Molina's (1998).

3.4.3 Justification for the Use of Two Different Frameworks

Two different frameworks from two different researchers are used in this study because of the circumstances surrounding the frameworks. The taxonomy proposed by Frobenius (2011) fits perfectly as it concentrates on the opening sequences of vlogs, which is also the core of this study. Unfortunately, Frobenius (2011) only looked at openings and left out closings in her analysis. Furthermore, it appears that no one has conducted research on the closing sequences of vlogs. This condition entails that there is no available taxonomy for the closings of vlogs. As a result, the researcher has to look for an alternative framework for the vlog closings. Coronel-Molina's (1998) taxonomy is deemed appropriate as majority of her closing strategies emerged in the closings of the Malaysian vloggers.

In addition, these two frameworks differ in terms of their structural units in that Coronel-Molina's (1998) taxonomy targets larger rhetorical moves (e.g. preclosing, recapitulation) whereas Frobenius's (2011) looks at smaller structural units (e.g. greeting, term of address). Still, frameworks that are designed for closing sequences generally consist of larger structural units (Schegloff & Sacks, 1973; Mart ńez, 2003; Raclaw, 2008; Pojanapunya & Jaroenkitboworn, 2011; Halbe, 2012), but these larger structural units enable the researcher to identify and examine the finer units involved in the closings of the vloggers. For example, the recapitulation strategy in this study can be broken down into three smaller parts: (a) summary, (b) best wishes and (c) arrangements whereas the final closing strategy can be divided into two types: (a) the typical 'thank you' and 'goodbye' as well as (b) personal remarks such as 'I love you guys' and 'take care.'

3.5 Method

Qualitative research is used in examining the data in the present study. Creswell (2012, p. 16) stated that qualitative methods involve investigating a problem and developing a comprehensive understanding of a central phenomenon. Similarly, this study addresses a research problem, which is the lack of studies conducted on vlogs, a relatively new form of CMC. It highlights the fact that a study on the openings and closings of vlogs is notably absent in the literature. This study attempts to obtain in-depth knowledge about the vlogging phenomenon by identifying and examining the strategies that the Malaysian vloggers use to open and close their vlogs.

Other than that, qualitative research involves gathering data based on words from a small number of individuals so that the participants' views are garnered (Creswell, 2012, p. 16). This study investigates the vlog viewers' perception regarding the importance of openings and closings in vlogs through the interview of 40 viewers. In addition, using a qualitative method is appropriate because the present study requires one to be analytical rather than enumerative. Statistics do not play a major role in this research since the primary focus is on the description as well as analysis of the opening and closing sequences of the vlogs.

3.6 Ethical Issues

The Association of Internet Researchers (AoIR) proposed numerous criteria to be checked regarding Internet research ethics (Markham et al., 2002). The following arguments, which are made based on these conditions lead to the belief that employing such data in this study is ethically acceptable.

Firstly, the vlogs used in this study are obtained from the publicly accessible website YouTube. YouTube allows users to restrict access to other users and this means that the vloggers can actually privatize their vlogs. However, none of the vloggers in the study used such a restriction. Secondly, the vloggers frequently encourage their viewers to subscribe and comment. This particular behaviour signals their consciousness of the fact that they are in a public setting and indicates that they know an audience is watching them.

Thirdly, the content uploaded within the YouTube website is clearly open for all. According to YouTube's Terms of Service, specifically in the 'Your Content and Conduct' section, any personal information or video content that one voluntarily disclose online may be collected and used by others. This condition essentially allows the vlogs to be researched. Fourthly, there are no ethically significant risks for the vloggers because this study concentrates on the language that the vloggers use, not on the content. Besides, opening and closing sequences are not sensitive topics that can cause any damage. The identities of the vloggers are also not revealed and pseudonyms are used to ensure their anonymity.

3.7 Data Collection and Procedure

There are two stages in the data collection and procedure of this study. Stage One concerns the selection and organization of data, as illustrated by Figure 3.1.

```
                        ┌──────────────────┐
                        │     Stage 1      │
                        └──────────────────┘
                                │
        ┌───────────────────────────────────────────────────┐
        │ The phrase 'Malaysian vlogs' is entered into YouTube search function │
        └───────────────────────────────────────────────────┘
                                │
                        ┌──────────────────┐
                        │ Filtering of vlogs │
                        └──────────────────┘
                                │
        ┌───────────────────────────────────────────────────┐
        │                                                   │
┌──────────────────┐                          ┌──────────────────┐
│ Only Malaysian vlogs │                      │ Only monologues  │
└──────────────────┘                          └──────────────────┘
        │                                                   │
        └───────────────────────────────────────────────────┘
                                │
                ┌───────────────────────────────────────┐
                │ Vlogs are downloaded via YouTube Downloader │
                └───────────────────────────────────────┘
```
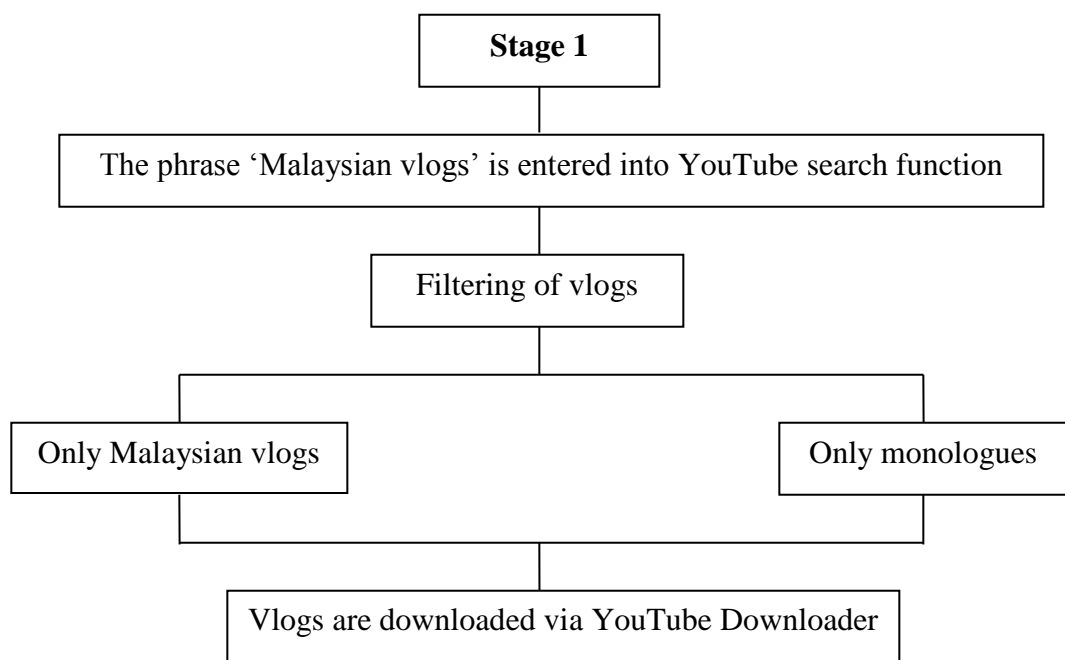
Figure 3.1: Stage One of Data Collection and Procedure

Stage One basically involves the process of obtaining the vlogs from YouTube. The phrase 'Malaysian vlogs' is entered into the search function of the website and only those that state 'Malaysia' as the country of residence are chosen. Only vlogs, which feature one speaker, are selected as this study concentrates on monologues. The vlogs are then downloaded via the YouTube Downloader. After this initial filtering, the vlogs are watched for further study. The languages of the Malaysian vloggers are also noted because there are instances of code-switching. Most of the vloggers, being at least bilingual, tend to code-switch from English to Malay and translations are provided if code-switching occurs.

On the other hand, Stage Two is concerned with the analysis of the opening and closing sequences of the vlogs. It also includes the examination of the viewers' perception about the importance of openings and closings in vlogs.
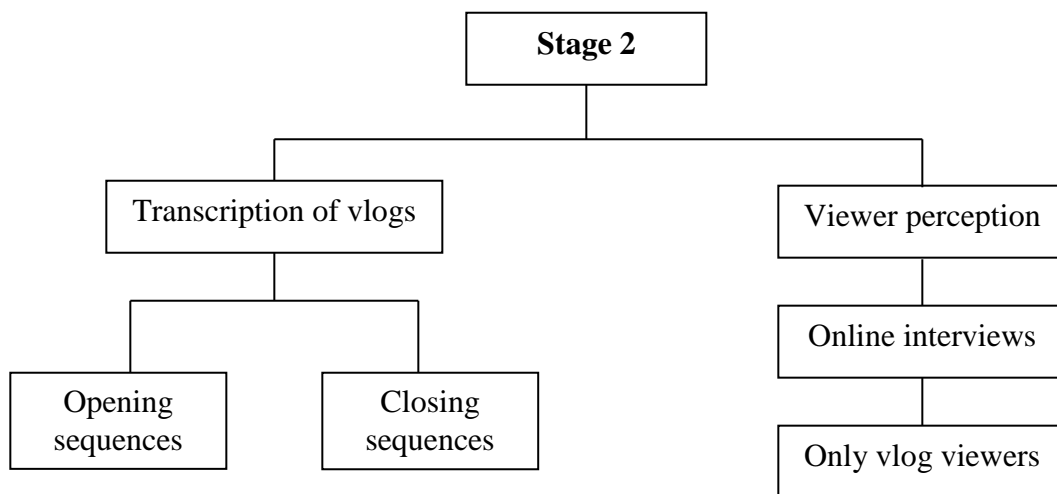
Figure 3.2: Stage Two of Data Collection and Procedure

As shown in Figure 3.2, the first part of Stage Two concerns the transcription of the vloggers' monologues where only the opening and closing sequences are transcribed for analysis. They also effectively reveal the different opening and closing strategies as well as the more minute details such as the non-verbal cues of the vloggers.

Meanwhile, the second part involves investigating perception of the vlog viewers and their opinions are gathered through online interviews. The filtering process is carried out by asking each of them if they do watch vlogs and only those who do so are chosen for the interviews. This step is carried out to guarantee the validity of the study. Those who do not watch vlogs are not interviewed to prevent inaccurate and misleading results.

3.7.1   Coding of Data

The 30 vlogs and the 40 viewers chosen for the online interviews are systematically coded. More specifically, the vlogs are labeled as V1, V2, V3 … and V30 whereas the viewers are coded as P1, P2…and P40. The opening strategies of the vloggers are coded based on the

researcher's own coding system since Frobenius (2011) did not use any coding system in her study. They are basically coded according to the initial letter of the first word, except for foregrounded object (FO). This exception is done to avoid the clash of codes between the opening and closing strategies.

Besides, three additional codes are added to the original list of opening strategies. These extra codes are added to accommodate the newly discovered opening strategies in the Malaysian data—small talk (ST), pleasantries (PL) and request for feedback (RF). Table 3.7 demonstrates the coding of the opening strategies of the Malaysian vloggers.

Table 3.7: Coding of Opening Strategies

Opening Strategies	Code
Greeting	G
Term of address	T
Self-identification	S
Linguistic marker	L
Cut	C
Date	D
Foregrounded object	FO
Variations from established, personal openings	V
Pleasantry	PL
Small talk	ST
Request for feedback	RF

Similar to Frobenius (2011), Coronel-Molina (1998) merely listed the strategies that she discovered and did not provide any specific codes. Like the opening strategies, the researcher creates new codes for the closing strategies, which are formed based on the initial letter of the first word. Three extra codes are inserted into the list since three new closing strategies emerged in the Malaysian data— request for feedback (RF), apology (A)

and self-identification (S). The request for feedback strategy and self-identification are also found in the openings of the vloggers. Table 3.8 shows the coding of the closing strategies.

Table 3.8: Coding of Closing Strategies

Closing Strategies	Code
Preclosing	P
New topic introduction	N
Recapitulation	R
Final closing	F
Request for feedback	RF
Apology	A
Self-identification	S

3.8   Data Analysis

Conversation Analysis (CA) is used in investigating the openings and closings of the Malaysian vloggers. However, this study does not incorporate a full CA approach but adapts it because there the focus is on monologues. Such a situation entails that there no dialogic elements such as turn-taking or overlap in the monologues of the vloggers. CA fundamentally helps in examining the overall structure of the opening and closing sequences. It allows the researcher to discover and analyze recurring patterns in the monologues of the vloggers. For example, by scrutinizing the monologic turns and utterances of the vloggers, certain interactive patterns that are connected with the social expectations of the Malaysian society can be ascertained in the openings and closings. Furthermore, CA enables the researcher to discover how vloggers shape their speech according to the context of vlogs. Essentially, it shows how their utterances are relatable to the need of appealing to the viewers in vlogging. Transcribing, one of the crucial elements of CA, is also used where the monologues of the vloggers are transcribed for analysis.

There are two stages of analysis in the present study. In the first stage, the opening and closing sequences of the Malaysian vloggers are transcribed. The working definition of the openings and closings is derived from the sequences outlined by Frobenius (2011) and Coronel-Molina (1998) and also from the cultural norms of a typical conversation among Malaysians based on the researcher's own experience as a member of that particular culture. In terms of openings, it is predicted that the vloggers may include some type of polite talk before proceeding with the actual topic of the vlog, since politeness is valued in Malaysia. Such talk is essentially considered part of the opening sequence as well. Discourse markers like "okay" and "well" that appear right before the introduction of the topic mark the end of an opening and it is at this point that the transcription for the opening sequence would stop. There are also other opening strategies such as cuts and small talk that signal a transition from the opening sequence to the main content of the vlog.

On the other hand, there are specific verbal cues in the English language that one employs to point out that he or she would like to end the conversation (Coronel-Molina, 1998, p. 53). These verbal cues are also known as preclosings and they include words like "so" and "okay", as suggested as Schegloff and Sacks (1973). The researcher seeks out such cues and transcribes the closings from that point forward to the actual end of the monologues.

Once the sequences are transcribed, the opening and closing strategies are calculated in terms of frequency. The appearance of these strategies in each vlog is counted as one occurrence, regardless if a strategy occurs multiple times. For example, even if a vlogger uses multiple linguistic markers in his opening sequence, the researcher considers it as only one occurrence. This step is taken to ensure that the frequency of the opening and closing strategies matches the number of the vlogs used for the study (N=30). Nevertheless,

examples that contain multiple opening and closing strategies are shown and elaborated in the analysis. The different order or sequence combination in which these strategies occur is also revealed. The first stage determines to what extent the data fits the theories of Frobenius (2011) and Coronel-Molina (1998).

In addition, the non-verbal behaviour of the vloggers, particularly their pauses, hand gestures and facial expressions, are scrutinized and rationalized. The examination of such elements sheds light on how the vloggers use them to manage the task of producing a monologue. It also portrays the ways in which they attempt to attract the interest of their viewers. Appropriate examples of the openings and closings are also given to facilitate explanations. The findings in this first stage answer the first and second research question.

Meanwhile, the second stage of the analysis looks at the ways in which the viewers perceive the importance of the opening and closing sequences in vlogs. Online interviews that consist of two questions are conducted to gather the data. In the first question, the viewers are required to respond to this notion based on a five-point Likert scale—"Opening sequences (e.g. hi, hello guys, hi everyone) and closing sequences (e.g. bye, thanks for watching) play an important role in vlogs." Apart from stating the extent of their agreement or disagreement of the importance of openings and closings, they are also required to give justifications for their responses.

Content analysis is used to study the results that the online interviews bring forth. Hsieh and Shannon (2005, p. 1278) defined content analysis as "a research method for the subjective interpretation of the content of text data through the systematic classification process of coding and identifying themes or patterns." This method is employed to find out

the extent of the viewers' agreement or disagreement regarding the proposed notion as well as the justifications of their agreement or disagreement. Essentially, content analysis allows the researcher to extract the lexical items from the viewers' justifications that reflect their agreement or disagreement of the proposed notion. The patterns that emerge from the inspection of the lexical items are then classified accordingly. The findings of the online interviews ultimately provide an answer to the third research question.

3.9 Pilot Study

A pilot study was carried out to evaluate the feasibility of the present research. A total of five Malaysian vlogs are selected and Table 3.9 provides the links of the vlogs that are used for the pilot study.

Table 3.9: Links of the Vlogs Used in Pilot Study

Vlogs	Links
V1	http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pRHadioqQwI&list=UUq8Dut-XpkZXFB_gkgNBEbg&index=2&feature=plcp
V2	http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ML9qPTmZxr0
V3	http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_NIQ049WSo8
V4	http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=20ihBjvCBwk&feature=plcp
V5	http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QFzJGaq4XW4

3.9.1 Opening Sequences of Vlogs

The opening sequences of the five vlogs are analysed based on the Frobenius's (2011) taxonomy. The results demonstrate that a total of four vlogs contain opening strategies whereas one did not have any opening strategies. Other than that, all the strategies that Frobenius (2011) outlined, except for self-identification, date and foregrounded object, are found in the data. Table 3.10 shows the frequency of the various opening strategies.

Table 3.10: Frequency of the Opening Strategies

Opening Strategies	Frequency
Cut	4
Linguistic marker	3
Greeting	3
Term of address	3
Variations from established, personal openings	1
Pleasantry	1
Self-identification	0
Date	0
Foregrounded object	0

The findings show that cuts dominate in terms of frequency (N=4). These cuts are used by the vloggers to ensure their fluency and the smoothness of their videos. Apart from that, linguistic markers, greetings and terms of address are employed quite often as well (N=3). Only one vlogger had an opening sequence that differed from his usual opening routine (N=1). To determine if variation exists, the researcher examines the openings of the vloggers' other vlogs and compares them with the openings of the 30 vlogs. Still, these other vlogs are not subjected to in-depth analysis, unlike the 30 vlogs that are selected for the study. They are examined for the mere purpose of determining if a vlogger has chosen a different way to open his or her vlog. Besides, none of the vloggers (N=0) self-identified in their videos and no one provided the dates either. The results also demonstrate that none of them used objects in their vlogs.

As expected, an opening strategy that is unique to the Malaysian society appeared in the findings—pleasantry (N=1). This strategy is not seen in the Western data of Frobenius (2011). The opening strategies are coded based on the codes presented in Section 3.7.1. An extra code is added to the list—pleasantry (PL). This strategy primarily involves the 'how are you' sequence. Table 3.11 shows the opening sequence combinations of the vloggers.

Table 3.11: Opening Sequence Combinations of the Malaysian Vloggers

Vloggers	Opening Sequence Combinations
V1	G + C + T + PL + C + L
V2	G + G + T + S +C
V3	V + L + C
V4	C + C
V5	G + T + L

The transcriptions of the opening sequences of the vloggers are shown in Table 3.12. In these transcriptions, their opening strategies are illustrated as well.

Table 3.12: Transcription of the Vloggers' Opening Sequences

Vlogs	Line	Transcriptions	Opening Strategies
V1	1	*Assalamualaikum dan salam sejahtera.*{salutes} Peace be upon you and greetings. {salutes}	Greeting
	2	{cut}	Deletion
	3	you guys doing good? {points to the camera}	Term of address Pleasantry
	4	{cut}	Deletion
	5	I'm doing good *alhamduilah.* {gestures to self} I'm doing good praise to God. {gestures to self}	
	6	{cut}	Deletion
	7	**so** today I'm going to be talking about two things that have been appearing on my Facebook wall.	Linguistic marker
V2	1	Recorded.	
	2	*assalamualaikum wa rahmatullahi wa barakatuh,* peace be upon you and so may the mercy of Allah and His blessings	Greeting
	3	hi Internet.	Greeting Term of address
	4	you're welcomed,	
	5	and with me again A as usual,	Self-identification
	6	and I'm blabbering again.	
	7	{cut}	Transition
	8	today I want to talk about standards and vlog.	Topic
V3	1	oh God!	Variation from established, personal openings
	2	oh God!	
	3	oh God!	

	4	oh!	
	5	**okay** seriously.	Linguistic marker
	6	{cut}	Transition
	7	I am going to PLKM.	Topic
V4	1	is this thing on?	
	2	{cut}	Deletion
	3	do you want to know what I've been doing for the whole week?	Topic
	4	{cut}	Deletion
	5	nothing productive.	Topic
V5	1	hi everyone= {waves}	Greeting Term of address
	2	=welcome back.	
	3	**so**:: today's video is going to be on what's your beauty tips,	Linguistic marker

Based on the opening sequence combinations, it is clear that majority of the vloggers take care to insert at least a greeting and term of address (N=3). This result sheds light on the importance of having a rudimentary form of opening in vlogs. Additionally, all of the Malaysian vlogs in the pilot study contain a linguistic marker or cut before proceeding with the body of the vlog. It can be deduced that this sequence combination officially marks the vloggers' shift from the opening sequence to the main topic of their vlogs.

3.9.2 Closing Sequences of Vlogs

The closing sequences of the Malaysian vlogs are examined based on Coronel-Molina's (1998) closing strategies. Table 3.13 illustrates the frequency of the each closing strategy.

Table 3.13: Frequency of the Closing Strategies

Closing Strategies	Frequency
Recapitulation	5
Preclosing	4
Final closing	4

New topic introduction	1
Request for Feedback	1

On the whole, the Malaysian vloggers used recapitulations most frequently (N=5) and the high occurrence of this strategy gives one a hint of its importance in the closing sequences of the vloggers. Recapitulations are followed by preclosings and final closings (N=4) and only one vlogger introduced a new topic in his closing (N=1). The data also revealed another a closing strategy, which was not discovered by Coronel-Molina (1998)—request for feedback. This strategy involves the vloggers asking the viewers for subscriptions and persuading them to watch their other videos. The request for feedback strategy is coded as RF and Table 3.14 shows the closing sequence combinations of the vloggers.

Table 3.14: Closing Sequence Combinations of the Malaysian Vloggers

Vloggers	**Closing Sequence Combinations**
V1	P + RF + R + R + N
V2	P + R + F + R + F
V3	Example containing none of the elements
V4	P + R + F + F
V5	P + R + P + F + R + F

Table 3.15 provides the transcriptions of the closing sequences of the Malaysian vloggers. It also demonstrates the closing strategies that are used by the vloggers in the pilot study.

Table 3.15: Transcription of the Vloggers' Closing Sequences

Vlogs	**Lines**	**Transcriptions**	**Closing Strategies**
V1	201	**And that's all for now.** {clasps his hands together}	Preclosing
	202	if you would like to check out my other videos the links are over there {points to his right}	Request for feedback
	203	and I'll see you all next time *insyahAllah*. and I'll see you all next time God willing.	Recapitulation – *Arrangement*

	204	may peace be upon you.	Recapitulation – *Best wishes*
	205	*tadi terbuka* (.) {points to the cupboard behind him} it opened just now (.) {points to the cupboard behind him}	New topic introduction
	206	( ) *nak rekod balik.* ( ) want to record again.	
	207	so you know my wardrobe, {points at camera}	
	208	shhh! {shushing gesture with finger on lips}	
V2	175	**so that's all for today.**	Preclosing
	176	{cut}	Deletion
	177	see you guys another time and place.	Recapitulation – *Arrangement*
	178	I mean (.)	
	179	here as usual.	
	180	in front of the camera.	
	181	bye. {waves}	Final closing
	182	*assalamualaikum wa rahmatullahi wa barakatuh.* peace be upon you and so may the mercy of Allah and His blessings.	Recapitulation – *Best wishes*
	183	bye YouTube. {waves}	Final closing
V3	43	you're supposed to be happy,	Example containing none of the closing elements
	44	cause you didn't get Sabah or Sarawak.	
	45	{cut}	
	46	whatever!	
	47	{cut}	
	48	whatever!	
	49	{cut}	
	50	whatever dude!	
V4	29	**so,**	Preclosing
	30	you've watched what I did for the entire week,	Recapitulation - *Summary*
	31	and I know it's kind of embarrassing.	
	32	but I had fun doing the video,	
	33	so I have no problem.	
	34	{cut}	Deletion
	35	till then.	Final closing
	36	thanks for watching!	Final closing
V5	56	**so (.) yeah**,	Preclosing
	57	that's beauty trade and or beauty tips.	Recapitulation- *Summary*
	58	**so** thank you so much for watching.	Preclosing Final closing

	59	I'll talk to you guys soon.	Recapitulation – *Arrangement*
	60	bye! {waves}	Final closing

In the pilot study, only one vlogger (V3) did not use any closing strategies. In this case, V3 was lamenting about the fact that he has to attend National Service. He left out the closing strategies as a means of giving emphasis to the bleakness of his situation. Based on Table 3.14, the most recurrent strategies used in the combinations are recapitulations and final closings (N=4). Such a finding indicates that these strategies play a key role in the termination of the monologues of the vloggers.

3.9.3   Viewer Perception on the Importance of Openings and Closings in Vlogs

Online interviews are used to investigate the vlog viewers' opinion of the importance of openings and closings in vlogs and these interviews are carried out via Facebook (see Appendix B for the interview questions). A total of five viewers were asked to specify the extent of their agreement or disagreement with the following statement: "Opening sequences and closing sequences play an important role in vlogs." Table 3.16 shows the results that the data generated (see Appendix C for the responses of the viewers).

Table 3.16: The Viewers' Agreement or Disagreement of the Importance of Openings and Closings

Responses	Number of Participants
Agree	3
Strongly Agree	2
Undecided	0
Disagree	0
Strongly Disagree	0

As shown in Table 3.15, 60 percent of the viewers agree that openings and closings are significant whereas 40 percent of them strongly agree that opening and closing sequences are crucial in vlogs. None of the viewers in the study were undecided, disagreed or strongly disagreed. This finding indicates that they deem openings and closings as of utmost importance in vlogs. It also implies that vlogs with opening and closing sequences are more appealing to the viewers.

Besides, the viewers are required to justify their agreement of the statement. After analysing their responses, it was discovered that there are three main reasons as to why they strongly agree or agree that openings and closings are important in vlogs. The categories of the justifications are classified according to the lexical items extracted from the justifications of the viewers (see Appendix C). Figure 3.3 portrays the three primary justifications given by the viewers.

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              ┌─────────────────┐
              │  Justifications  │
              └─────────────────┘
        ┌─────────────┼─────────────────┐
┌─────────────┐ ┌─────────────┐ ┌─────────────────┐
│  Politeness  │ │  Structure   │ │   Sense of       │
└─────────────┘ └─────────────┘ │   Communication  │
                                └─────────────────┘
```
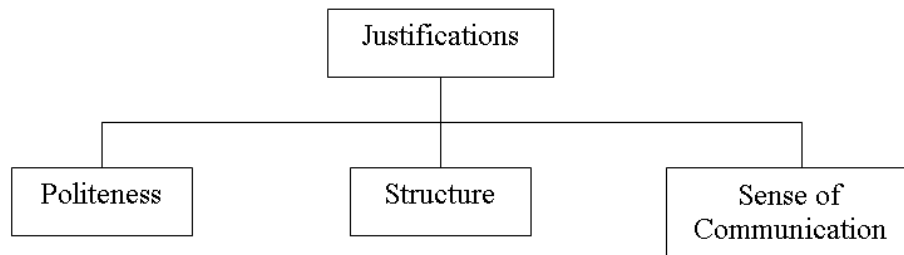
Figure 3.3: Viewers' Justifications for Strongly Agreeing/Agreeing with the
Importance of Openings and Closings in Vlogs

A total of two viewers (40%) feel that vlogs with opening and closing sequences are more polite. They claimed that vloggers who have openings and closings seem friendlier and more courteous. Meanwhile, a total of two viewers (40%) think that opening and closing sequences make structure of the vlogs appear more organized. Their responses emphasize

the importance of openings and closings in ensuring the structure of the vlogs. In addition, only one viewer (20%) stated that opening and closing sequences lessen the detached feeling between the vloggers and themselves by making them feel as though the vloggers are directly communicating with them.

3.9.4   Summary

In sum, the pilot study indicates that the present study is feasible. The procedures used to collect the data proved to be effective and the expectations that the researcher had for the results were met. Furthermore, there are no glitches so far in the implementation of the study. In short, this study is going according to plan and thus, the pilot study is a direct indication of how the present study is going to be carried out. This notion especially applies to the data collection and data analysis.

<center>**CHAPTER FOUR**</center>

<center>**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**</center>

4.0   Introduction

Analysis of the collected data is dealt with in this chapter. On the whole, there are three phases of analysis in the present study. The first phase consists of the examination of the opening strategies of the Malaysian vloggers whereas the second phase involves the investigation of the vloggers' closing strategies. Meanwhile, the third phase looks at the opinions of the vlog viewers regarding the importance of opening and closing sequences. The findings are discussed accordingly in the following sections.

4.1   Opening Sequences of Vlogs

The opening sequences of the 30 vlogs are examined based on taxonomy of Frobenius (2011). The subsequent sections present the analysis of the Malaysian vloggers' openings.

4.1.1   Frequency of the Opening Strategies

The results demonstrate that all the vlogs in the study contain opening strategies. None of the Malaysian vloggers started their videos abruptly by going straight to the content of their videos without a proper introductory phase. In addition, all of the strategies that Frobenius (2011) outlined are discovered in the data. The vloggers also used three other opening strategies, which Frobenius (2011) did not come across in her Western data: (a) small talk, (b) pleasantry and (c) request for feedback. Table 4.1 shows the frequency of the various opening strategies.

Table 4.1: Frequency of the Opening Strategies

Opening Strategies	Frequency
Greeting	25
Linguistic marker	25
Term of address	20
Small talk	19
Cut	12
Self-identification	10
Pleasantry	6
Foregrounded object	4
Variations from established, personal openings	4
Request for feedback	3
Date	2
Apology	2

The overall findings indicate that greetings are used most often by the Malaysian vloggers (N=25). Common examples of their greetings include 'hi', 'hello' and the Malay greeting '*assalamualaikum*' that basically translates to 'peace be upon you.' The presence of greetings implies that the Malaysian vloggers generally have an audience in mind (Linell, 1998; Aijmer, 2007; Davis, 2007). They are evidently aware they have an audience, albeit one that is not physically present with them. As a result, they feel the need to be polite and take care to slot in greetings in their openings. If the vloggers had looked at vlogging as merely talking to their camera, they probably would have omitted the greetings since talking to a machine does not exactly motivate one to be courteous. Essentially, the greetings are a means for the vloggers to intentionally communicate their consciousness of the presence of the viewers.

Linguistic markers that consist of discourse markers and boundary markers are also used frequently by the vloggers (N=25). The results show that most of them used words like "okay" and "so" as linguistic markers in their openings. These markers establish discourse coherence and serve as crucial markers of transition (Condon, 2011). On the other hand,

terms of address like 'you guys' and 'everyone' are also used quite often by the vloggers (N=20). Most of them address the viewers in a direct manner with the hopes of promoting a sense of closeness. Additionally, some of the vloggers employed cuts to edit their videos (N=12). These cuts enable them to remove any unwanted or redundant parts from their vlogs, thereby improving the condition of the vlogs. They also serve as an indication of a shift from the opening to the main topic of the vlog. Several vloggers also had self-identification in their opening sequences, which allows them to establish their identity amongst the viewers (N=10).

Apart from that, the findings illustrate that objects are used in some of the vlogs (N=4). These objects have different functions, ranging from reducing the discomfort of the vloggers to allowing the vlogs to stand out. A few of the vloggers also had variations in their opening sequences (N=4). In this case, the other vlogs of the vloggers are scrutinized to confirm if their opening sequence does differ from their usual established opening routine. These other vlogs are not subjected to in-depth analysis, unlike the 30 vlogs that are selected for the study. They are analysed for the purpose of determining if a vlogger has chosen a different way to open his or her vlog. Furthermore, dates are used less regularly by Malaysian vloggers (N=2) and this particular observation indicates that they generally do not consider dates essential in their openings.

Interestingly, four new opening strategies that are not found in Western vlog openings emerged in the Malaysian data. They comprise small talk, pleasantries, request for feedback and apology. The existence of small talk and pleasantries in the monologues of the vloggers contradicts Frobenius's (2011 p. 817) statement that monologues lack phatic communication. In fact, more than half of the Malaysian vloggers included small talk in

their opening sequences (N=19). In this study, small talk refers to talk that is aimless, prefatory and occasionally even irrelevant but it is still "part of the process of fulfilling our intrinsically human needs for social cohesiveness and mutual recognition" (Coupland, 2000, p. 3). It plays the role of constructing and maintaining the relationship between the vloggers and viewers. Besides, several vloggers incorporated pleasantries in their openings, which reflect their intention of developing a connection with the viewers (N=6). These pleasantries generally materialize in the form of a 'how are you' sequence. The small talk and pleasantries carry out considerable relationship work and their presence in the Malaysian vlogs draws attention to the significance of politeness in the Malaysian society.

A few of the vloggers also requested for the feedback of the viewers in their openings (N=3). This strategy persuades the viewers to take a course of action that will benefit the vloggers in specific ways. It is made up of five types: (a) a request for subscriptions, (b) a direct question, (c) a request for comments, (d) a request for views and (e) a request to follow other social networking sites, all of which are aimed at the viewers. A request for subscriptions is where the vloggers try to persuade the viewers to subscribe to their YouTube channels. In terms of a direct question, the vloggers basically ask the viewers questions regarding a certain issue in an attempt to get their answers. Meanwhile, a request for comments involves the vloggers asking the viewers to leave their comments in the comment box that is provided by YouTube. A request for views consists of the vloggers asking the viewers to check out their other vlogs whereas a request to follow other social networking sites is where the vloggers ask the viewers to follow their social networking websites like Facebook and Twitter.

The request for feedback strategy is also found in broadcast media such as radio and television talk. For instance, deejays in radio programs frequently ask for the response of the listeners and often encourage them to call in to request for their favourite songs. In television programs such as American Idol, audience feedback is crucial since it practically decides the fate of the contestants. Likewise, viewer feedback is of utmost importance for vloggers since it determines the level of their popularity.

Aside from that, there are a few vloggers who incorporate apologies in their opening sequences (N=2). These apologies are generally used to express regret over unbecoming situations that may portray the vloggers in a negative light. Table 4.2 shows the codes for the opening strategies whereas Table 4.3 shows the opening sequence combinations of the Malaysian vloggers.

Table 4.2: Codes for the Opening Strategies

Opening Strategy	Code
Greeting	G
Linguistic marker	L
Term of address	T
Small talk	ST
Cut	C
Self-identification	S
Pleasantry	PL
Foregrounded object	FO
Variations from established, personal openings	V
Request for feedback	RF
Apology	A

Table 4.3: Opening Sequence Combinations of the Malaysian Vloggers

Vloggers	Opening Sequence Combinations
V1	G + S + FO + L + ST + L
V2	L
V3	G + T + PL + A + ST

V4	V + G + T + G + C + L
V5	FO + G + T + L + RF
V6	L
V7	G + T + L + RF
V8	L + L + A + ST
V9	G + T + S + ST +L
V10	L + G + G + T + S + ST + L
V11	G + T + ST + C + L + ST + C
V12	G + T + C + ST + C + L
V13	G + T + S + D + C + ST + L
V14	G + T + ST + L
V15	V + G + T + S + C + ST + FO + C + L
V16	G + D
V17	G + ST
V18	G + S + C + L
V19	L + G + G + L + L + ST + G + ST + RF + ST + ST + L + L + L
V20	G + C + L + PL + C + L + C + L + ST + C + L
V21	V + C + L + T + PL +C
V22	ST + S + L + T + L + ST + L + L
V23	G + S + C + G + G + T +PL + G + C + L + C + ST + L
V24	G + T + ST + C
V25	V + FO + G + T + C + PL + C + L
V26	G + T + PL + ST + C + L
V27	G + T + S + L
V28	G + T + ST
V29	G + T + L
V30	G + S + ST + L

As seen in Table 4.3, half of the vloggers in this study used a greeting plus term of address 'G + T' structure in their openings (N=15). Examples of this sequence combination include 'hey guys' and 'hello YouTube.' One could infer that it is the most basic form of an opening since it expresses a minimal yet sufficient amount of acknowledgement and graciousness to the viewers. In addition, a number of the vlogs have a cut and linguistic marker 'C + L' before proceeding to the body of the vlog (N=6). The combination of these strategies efficiently marks the end of an opening sequence, thereby allowing vloggers to

move on to their key topics. The following sections present examples of the opening sequences of the Malaysian vloggers.

4.1.2 Discourse Structure of Openings

All of the Malaysian vlogs in the present study have opening strategies, which suggests that the vloggers do consider openings a necessary element in their monologues. Several examples of their opening sequences are shown in the following sections.

4.1.2.1 Opening Sequence of V3 (G + T + PL + A + ST)

In her opening sequence, V3 includes a pleasantry and small talk, which are opening strategies that Frobenius (2011) did not find in her analysis of Western vlogs.

Extract 1 [V3]

Lines	Transcription	Opening Strategies
1	Hey YouTube.	Greeting Term of address
2	**how are you?** {points a pencil at the viewers and clears her throat}	Pleasantry
3	sorry about that,	Apology
4	don't mind the hand, {shows her hand that is streaked with makeup}	
5	**was playing around with makeup.**	Small talk
6	**hoo hoo.** {leans forward}	
7	today I'm going to talk about Eurasians,	Topic

V3 starts her video by greeting her viewers with the informal "hey" and this greeting marks her consciousness and acknowledgment of the viewers' presence. It is not a form of stimulated friendliness that is used to hide the monologic nature of her talk. Instead, the greeting is a way of reaching out to the viewers who are currently watching the vlog. V3

then addresses the viewers as "YouTube" after the greeting (line 1). This term of address reflects the degree of anonymity that is inherent in most online interactions. V3 has no idea who exactly watches her video, especially during the production of the vlog. She only gets an inkling of who her viewers are later on when she browses through the views, comments and video responses.

Although it is somewhat impersonal, the term of address "YouTube" is ultimately a more appropriate way of greeting the viewers since V3 does not know their identity. Her situation is similar to that of participants in chat rooms who tend to select more general structures and lexical items to address one another since they do not actually know each other (Negretti, 1991, p. 84). Despite its impersonality, the term of address "YouTube" is still capable of consolidating the relationship between V3 and her viewers. It achieves this feat by underlining their only known similarity—they are all YouTube users. The emphasis of the similarity facilitates a sense of affiliation, thereby bringing V3 closer to the viewers.

Apart from that, V3 includes a pleasantry that consists of a 'how are you' sequence (line 2). This pleasantry is not a genuine health enquiry but serves phatic purposes. It is used to establish rapport and construct friendship with the viewers. V3 further stresses her intention by pointing a pencil at the camera when she produces the pleasantry. Her non-verbal gesture enables her to specifically locate her audience and enhance the feeling that she is speaking to them directly. This in turn minimizes the gap between V3 and the viewers.

According to Kuang et al. (2011), politeness is a crucial element for all interactions in Malaysia. It has also been shown that Malaysians generally conform to the requirements of their society (Shanmuganathan, 2003). Correspondingly, V3 avoids being labeled as a

deviant by incorporating a pleasantry in her opening sequence. Through this pleasantry, she is able to give the viewers a good impression since it expresses courtesy and respect for them. It is also interesting to note that V3 still inserts the pleasantry despite the fact that reciprocity is impossible in monologues. Her act of including this opening strategy illustrates the strong influence of the norms and practices of her society. She feels obliged to include a pleasantry in her monologue because the norms require her to be polite.

V3 clears her throat right after the pleasantry (line 2) and this non-verbal cue hints at her discomfort in generating a monologue. It could be caused by her unfamiliarity with the absence of salient dialogic elements such as turn-taking and the negotiation of speaker roles in the monologic context. Her uneasiness is logical, given that she experiences and uses these elements frequently in everyday talk. V3 then apologizes for the untidy state her hand is in (line 3) and this apology serves to eliminate the idea that she is a messy person. The apology could also be a sign of her embarrassment of her nervousness and it sheds light on a perception shared by most vloggers, which is they should be fluent in their videos. They basically equate the quality of the vlogs with the level of their fluency.

Besides, V3 makes use of small talk in her opening sequence where she informs the viewers that she had been experimenting with makeup and even shows her streaked hand and face up close to prove her point (line 4 to line 6). Coupland (2000, p. 5) asserted that small talk may appear in new communicative domains due to the increasing awareness for 'relational sensitivity.' His statement is vindicated as this extract illustrates the existence of small talk in vlogs, which is a relatively new multimodal genre of CMC. Similar to the pleasantry, the small talk has phatic functions as it invokes normality and builds as well as maintains the social bond between V3 and her viewers.

The small talk of V3 is also used to fill in the silence. Given the difficult monologic circumstances, she may have struggled in terms of finding an appropriate topic to discuss in her opening sequence. To simplify matters, she opts for small talk to make the situation less awkward. It is basically a resource to keep her talk going and a way of maintaining a sense of camaraderie when there is nothing in particular to say. After that, V3 goes on to the key topic of her vlog and instead of using conventional linguistic markers or cuts, she uses the small talk to accomplish a shift into more content-oriented talk (line 7).

The inclusion of a pleasantry and small talk signals V3's consideration of the positive face of her viewers. As stated by Brown and Levinson (1987, p. 61), positive face is the desire to be appreciated, approved, liked and also to be included in activities and relationships. V3 demonstrates her enthusiasm in engaging the viewers through her pleasantry and small talk. These opening strategies are a means of showing her involvement and willingness to interact with them. In essence, the pleasantry and small talk imply that the viewers are important to her and that is why she takes extra measures to connect with them.

4.1.2.2 Opening Sequence of V5 (FO + G + T + L + RF)

V5 uses the request for feedback strategy in her opening, which materializes in the form of a direct question. Frobenius (2011) did not find this particular opening strategy in her examination of vlog openings.

Extract 2 [V5]

Lines	Transcription	Opening Strategies
1	{puts on a rabbit ear headband that lights up} Hey guys. {smiles}	Foregrounded object Greeting Term of address
2	{waves and listens with her hand near her ear for imaginary feedback}	
3	okay um, {her smile fades and she rubs her left eye}	Linguistic marker
4	**er I have a questions to ask you guys.**	Request for feedback
5	**what is gay?** (.)	
6	serious what is gay=	
7	= maybe you guys can answer me in the comment box so that I can really I can understand what is the definition of gay.	

Before greeting the viewers, V5 puts on a rabbit ear headband that lights up, which immediately commands the attention of the viewers (line 1). An overall check revealed that she did not use it in her other videos and this finding indicates the flamboyant headband is not a trademark of object of hers. Therefore, it is deduced that the headband has some other purpose in her opening sequence. It is in fact a distraction device that is used to reduce her nervousness of generating a monologue in front of the camera. It distracts the viewers by momentarily drawing their gaze away from V5 and this short delay buys her more time to plan out the rest of her monologue. It also enables her to familiarize herself with the monologic context, thereby easing some of her anxiety.

V5 subsequently greets her viewers with a casual "hey" and addresses them as "guys" (line 1). This greeting and term of address convey a feeling of closeness and familiarity as they are commonly used in conversations between multiple parties, typically those amongst friends. It also encourages a quasi-interactive involvement and invites affiliative responses from the viewers. This greeting plus term of address structure fundamentally creates a place

for potential interaction and allows V5 to reach out to her active viewers, despite the fact that they cannot provide immediate feedback. She further demonstrates her desire to bond with them by smiling widely at the camera.

In line 2, V5 waves and listens with her hand near her ear, as if waiting to 'hear' the response of her viewers and moves on with her speech only after 'hearing' their replies. Her non-verbal gesture reflects her belief that she is conversing with a co-present audience. As stated by Smith et al. (2005, p. 1865), envisioning an audience actually helps make the monologue production easier. This method of imagining an audience is also prevalent in other monologic genres such as answering machine talk and media talk. More importantly, V5's non verbal gesture constructs a supposed turn for the missing conversational partner and in this way, momentarily overcomes the lack of turn-taking in her monologic vlog.

Apart from that, V5 uses the flow-monitoring discourse marker "okay" to signal her intention to move out of the opening sequence to the main topic of her vlog. Her transition from the opening to the body of the monologue is also marked by a change in her facial expression. During the entire opening sequence, V5 appears in a friendly mode that is marked by her smile. However, once she utilizes the discourse marker, her affable expression transforms into a rather serious one. Such a change effectively informs the viewers that she is ready to discuss the topic at hand.

After the discourse marker, V5 uses a request for feedback strategy in her opening (line 4 to line 7). In this case, it appears in the form of a direct question where she asks her viewers about the definition of 'gay.' This question illustrates her desire in eliciting responses from her viewers and highlights the significance of viewer feedback in vlogging. She also

strategically places it at the beginning of the body of the vlog and by doing so, she bestows the question with the role of an attention-grabber. It entices the viewers to continue watching the vlog by promising more discussion on the controversial word 'gay.' V5 even highlights the availability of the "comment box" in an attempt to remind and persuade them to respond to her question (line 7).

From a politeness point of view, V5 threatens the negative face of the viewers by making a request (line 7). Negative face refers to the desire not to be imposed upon, intruded or otherwise put upon (Brown & Levinson, 1987, p. 65). Her request conveys an anticipation of some future action of the viewers and hence, restricts their personal freedom. However, she lessens the imposition by inserting "maybe" in the sentence, which implies that the viewers do not necessarily have to answer her. V5 also softens the blow of the request by putting the viewers in a privileged position. She explicitly admits through her request that she does not know what 'gay' means. However, she does believe the viewers know what it means and that is why she asks them about it. This situation suggests that they are cleverer and more knowledgeable than her. She is basically giving the viewers the opportunity to enlighten her about the word 'gay' and this gives them a sense of importance and accomplishment.

Throughout her opening sequence, V5 behaves as though the camera lens is someone else's eyes. She creates an impression of the *other* interlocutor by using eye contact, which is a prominent strategy in real-time face-to-face interactions. Essentially, V5 reconstructs a sense of eye contact for her viewers by looking at the camera at pertinent moments. She avoids prolonged eye contact, which is a sensible decision since it is associated with confrontations and threats. Instead, her eye contact comes and goes naturally during the

entire opening sequence. This technique offers a feeling of ongoing engagement and also specifies her personal commitment to the conversation.

4.1.2.3   Opening Sequence of V8 (L + L + A + ST)

The vlog of V8 starts with a musical sequence before it shows her speech production. She also incorporates small talk in her opening sequence where she chats about what she has been doing on that day.

Extract 3 [V8]

Lines	Transcriptions	Opening Strategies
1	Um okay,	Linguistic marker
2	so what's been going on with me today,	Linguistic marker
3	um excuse the messy hair,	Apology
4	**I just (.)**	Small talk
5	**not,**	
6	**I didn't just woke up,**	
7	**but like um,**	
8	**I woke up up at eleven and I (.)**	
9	**tend to sit around the house in my pajamas um,**	
10	**for a few hours before I actually get ready to go out.**	
11	and I have to um go out in a while.	Topic
12	um my mum made an appointment with a neurologist at um,	

V8 starts her vlog with the boundary marker "um okay" that signals the boundary between the musical sequence and the sequence that shows her speaking. Additionally, she did not use a greeting or term of address in her opening sequence. The absence of these rudimentary opening strategies is attributed to the fact that V8 does not know who her viewers are since the Internet allows people to appear anonymous. She may be insecure about how to greet and address her viewers and thus, chooses to skip these strategies and opts for safer opening strategies like linguistic markers, which do not require her to

pinpoint a specific person. By doing so, her uncertainty regarding the viewers is not blatantly exposed. The exclusion of greetings and terms of address is rarely seen in genres such as telephone conversations or answering machine messages since they are considered compulsory. Nevertheless, as shown in this extract, greetings and terms of address are not obligatory in vlog openings as vloggers can substitute them with other opening strategies that they deem more appropriate for the monologic situation.

In line 2, V8 uses the discourse marker "so" to indicate her transition to the topic. She then includes an apology that is brought forth by the realization of her messy hair (line 3). This apology conveys her regret that the viewers are shown a less becoming side of her and marks her want to appear presentable in front of the viewers. It also implies her awareness of the importance of giving the viewers a good impression, be it physical wise or behaviour wise. Small talk is also used in the opening where V8 informs them about how she went about her day. Her small talk falls under the second category outlined by Drew and Chilton (2000, p. 150). This category involves people reporting something they have just done or something they have done earlier that day. V8 invites the viewers to occupy her world by sharing the happenings in her personal life with them. Her actions resourcefully encourage proximity with the viewers. After all, these are the kind of things that friends would share with one another.

It is undeniable that small talk constitutes an essential part of talk and this notion is verified by its regular presence in different types of talk, be it in face-to-face dialogues or telephone conversations. V8's inclusion of small talk in her monologue reveals her attempt to make the monologue look more dialogue-like. This strategy lessens the rigidness of the monologue and fulfills her intrinsic need for social cohesiveness, despite the fact that there

is no other conversational partner to negotiate the conversation. She ultimately considers small talk a basic communicative requirement that has to be fulfilled. Its occurrence in her monologic opening also shows that she is still bound by the dialogic conventions. This situation is unsurprising since there is a lack of opening conventions for vlogging.

4.1.2.4   Opening Sequence of V20 (G + C + L + PL + C + L + C + L + ST + C + L)

V20 is clearly aware of the restrictions caused by the monologic circumstances and takes certain steps to prevail over them.

Extract 4 [V20]

Lines	Transcription	Opening Strategies
1	*Assalamualaikum semua!* peace be upon you all!	Greeting
2	{cut}	Deletion
3	so yeah,	Linguistic marker
4	*kau orang macam mana*? **how are you?**	Pleasantry
5	*sihat*? {thumbs up sign} **fine?**	
6	**ya?**	
7	**okay.** {thumbs up sign}	
8	{cut}	Deletion
9	ya okay (.) {looks away from the camera}	Linguistic marker
10	{cut}	Deletion
11	okay yeah *memang* awkward. okay yeah it is awkward.	Linguistic marker
12	awkward *sangat cakap depan kamera*= very awkward talking in front of the camera=	Small talk
13	=*memang* okay *sebab dah lama*, =really okay because it's been a long time,	
14	*dah lama sangat tak buat* video. it's been a long time since I made a video.	
15	ya *memang lama*! ya a long time!	
16	{cut}	Transition
17	okay as many of you know=	Linguistic marker
18	=*tahun ini saya akan menduduki peperiksaan* SPM. =I'm going to sit for the SPM examination this year.	Topic

The vlog starts with V20 greeting the viewers with '*assalamualaikum*' that translates into 'peace be upon you' (line 1). This greeting serves as a demonstration of goodwill and reflects the amount of warmth he has for his viewers. After a cut, he employs the discourse marker "so" to mark his shift to another section of his vlog. He subsequently produces a pleasantry that consists of a 'how are you' sequence (line 4). Right after his pleasantry, V20 asks his viewers if they are fine (line 5). He then adds a confirmative "ya?" (line 6) and "okay" that is said with a tone of finality and coupled with a thumbs up sign (line 7). He basically behaves as if his viewers had responded positively to his pleasantry, as though they had replied "yes, we are fine." By doing so, he forges a 'dialogue' with the viewers and successfully minimizes the obviousness of the fact that there is a missing interlocutor.

Besides, V20 uses yet another cut (line 8) and then adds in a "ya okay" (line 9), which is followed by a pause. The "ya okay" is a repetition of his previous "okay" in line 7. Both the repetition and the pause highlight his difficulty in navigating through the process of recording a monologue. The repetition is construed as a strategy for delay, which enables him to obtain more time to think about his next contribution. During the pause that follows, V20 looks uncertainly at the camera, as though expecting a response from his viewers. This particular pause implies that he is momentarily transferred back to the norms of a conversation where one party speaks and the other replies. When confronted with such a foreign monologic situation, his mind automatically goes back to what he is familiar with, which are the conventions found in dialogues.

After the pause, V20 breaks eye contact with the viewers for a moment (line 9). This non-verbal cue reflects his indecision about what to bring up next. His hesitation once again

demonstrates his struggle to generate fluent talk without a second speaker. A cut is used in line 10, indicating V20's transition to his small talk where he openly addresses the awkwardness of speaking in front of the camera and how long it has been since he last vlogged (line 11 to line 15). His explicit confession confirms that vloggers do encounter problems due to their monologic context. He subsequently uses yet another cut (line 16) and the discourse marker "okay" (line 17) to inform his viewers of his move to the content of his vlog.

Throughout the entire opening, V20 does not show any sign of nervousness or hesitation except for the brief pause and breaking of eye contact in line 9. His ease of generating a monologue on camera is attributed to frequent cuts, which enable him to get rid of the unwanted parts of his video, possibly parts that exhibit disfluencies. For example, V20 probably displayed more signs of hesitation in line 9 but by using the cut in line 10, he easily eliminates those parts that will have rendered the vlog less fluent. In essence, these cuts help him to guarantee and enhance the quality of his vlog.

4.1.2.5   Opening Sequence of V15 (V + G + T + S + C + ST + FO + C + L)

The vlog opens with V15 singing in the background and ends with him saying "bitch!"

Extract 5 [V15]

Lines	Transcription	Opening Strategy
1	**Hey what's up boys=**	Greeting Term of address
2	**=SL here**,	Self-identification
3	bringing you a little vlog (.) **bitch!** {snaps fingers}	
4	{cut}	Deletion
5	so have you heard (.) the baby's scream just now?	Linguistic marker
6	I'm sorry about that.	Small talk
7	I live in a very noisy neighborhood.	

8	before I started shooting,	
9	uh there's also dogs barking=	
10	=so ah I'm starting this quite late,	
11	and I'm sorry about the caller audio thing last time.	
12	{cut}	Deletion
13	you all have noticed that I'm wearing my ranting cap today?	Foregrounded object
14	cause I'm just going to do a (.) rant.	
15	{cut}	Transition
16	so yesterday I was uh browsing on the web,	Linguistic marker

In order to determine if a variation exists, the researcher went through the openings of the other vlogs of V15 and found that the opening sequence of this vlog is indeed different from his other vlogs. The difference lies in the use of vulgar language and in this case, he opens this vlog with the crude word "bitch." It is also discovered that such a variation is only seen in his ranting vlogs, which are vlogs in which he complains about a certain issue. In his non-ranting vlogs, ones where he does not complain, there are no signs of cursing and V15 typically begins with a simple greeting and term of address. Thus, it is deduced that the variation performs the crucial function of differentiating his ranting vlogs from his other vlogs.

This vlog starts with V15 greeting and addressing his viewers with "Hey what's up boys" (line 1). The term of address "boys" is an urban slang that refers to a male best friend or homie (*My Boy*, 2013). It is also noted that V15 addresses the viewers as "homies" in his closing sequence (see Appendix A for more reference). The term "homie" is a short version of "homeboy" that refers to a close friend or a fellow member of a youth gang (*Homeboy*, 2013). Both of these terms are frequently used by African-Americans and based on this observation, it is can be assumed that V15 is trying to imitate the African American slang.

This term address also encourages camaraderie between him and the viewers because it implies that they share a bond.

Apart from that, V15 self-identifies in line 2 with "SL here." This self-identification strategy is remarkably similar to those found in the beginnings of answering machine talk, where callers explicitly identify themselves. Such a finding contrasts with Schegloff (1979, p. 50) statement that self-identification by name is the dispreferred way for accomplishing recognition. This concept evidently does not apply to the opening sequences in vlogs. There are two reasons as to why V15 incorporates the self-identification strategy in his opening. Firstly, he self-identifies to personalize the impersonal procedure of talking to the camera. In this way, he reduces the strangeness of talking alone in front of the camera. Secondly, viewers who are new to vlogging may not know who he is and hence, he includes his name in the opening to establish his identity among potential new viewers.

Nevertheless, the sentence "SL here" may not simply function as a self-identification. Vlogs permit audio-visual communication and this means that the identification of the V15 is aided by the accompanying images of him. Regular viewers will instantly recognize him, rendering the self-identification strategy redundant. Thus, the repetition has another purpose, which is to create his own catchphrase. It fundamentally helps him to build a unique character in the vlogging world.

In line 3, V15 uses the vulgar word "bitch" again and even snaps his fingers, a gesture that commands the attention of the viewers. He then employs a cut (line 4) and the discourse marker "so" to show that he is going to another part of his video. Small talk is also found where the V15 reports what he notices in his immediate environment (line 5 to line 15). In

his small talk, he points out that he is wearing his ranting cap and promptly announces his intention to rant. This cap is a significant object because it is his ranting trademark. Whenever he puts it on, the viewers can expect him to rant about a certain matter.

Identity construction is a prominent issue in this vlog. Kang and Yang (2004) as well as Baran (2007) maintained that that identity play is possible in some types of CMC. Individuals can manipulate their identities by exhibiting specific characteristics that they want to be known for. By doing so, they can also create alternative identities. The same situation applies to V15. In his other videos, he seems rather mild-mannered and there is hardly any cursing. In his ranting vlogs, however, he practically changes his identity where he often resorts to vulgarity and uses terms that are associated with an African-American gang-member. This alternative identity conveys a much tougher image with the purpose of emphasizing his extreme dissatisfaction of the issue.

4.1.2.6   Opening Sequence of V25 (V + FO + G + T + C + PL + C + L)

The vlog begins with V25 singing the sentence "gonna make a fucking video." He is not looking at the camera but at his mobile phone.

Extract 6 [V25]

Lines	Transcription	Opening Strategies
1	**oh am I already recording?** {looks at camera and smiles}	Variation from established, personal opening
2	hey what up guys!	Greeting Term of address
3	{cut}	Deletion
4	**hope you're doing fine.**	Pleasantry
5	{cut}	Transition
6	okay first of all thank you so much for the great support on all the previous videos=	Linguistic marker

| 7 | =some of you actually sent in (.) your first ever profile pics, | |

The opening sequence of this vlog differs from the openings of the V25's other vlogs. Such an observation is made based on a check on the openings of his other vlogs. The vlog starts with him singing and this variation makes his opening sequence to stand out as well as to capture the attention of his viewers. Instead of being offensive, the taboo word 'fucking' is in fact a sign of in-group affiliation. Taboo words are often used amongst close friends without any offense being given or taken (*Taboo Words*, 2011). It facilitates a casual environment and denotes that V25 is at ease with the viewers.

At the beginning, V25 looks at his mobile phone and takes no notice of the audience. The mobile phone is a tool for digress, which gives him an excuse to take his attention off the audience for a moment. Afterwards, he gazes directly at the camera and looks shocked that it is already recording (line 1). His realization is also marked by a shift in his facial expression. Once he notices the camera is recording, V25 flashes a wide smile that reflects his joy of 'seeing' his viewers and reinforces the belief that he treasures them.

It is highly possible that V25 intentionally feigned his shock in that he already knew the camera was recording. He begins the vlog differently as he believes that something can be gained from the inconsistency. Monologues can occasionally come across as being dull since there is only one speaker. V25 is clearly aware of this fact and uses the variation as a means of overcoming the problem. In this case, the variation functions as a resource for spontaneity. The act of maintaining the element of surprise enables the vlog to appear less

monotonous and less planned. His supposed spontaneous reaction to his camera helps make the monologue appear more natural to his viewers.

In line 2, V25 returns to his usual opening by greeting his audience. It is followed by a cut that leads to a pleasantry (line 4). He wisely opts for the statement "hope you're doing fine" instead of using a 'how are you' sequence in a question form. On the surface, he appears to be conforming to the typical dialogic model. However, by producing a turn that is not part of an adjacency pair, he alters the model to permit the absence of the interlocutor. The monologue turns out more natural because this technique successfully prevents a question turn that cannot be answered by his absent viewers. In short, the pleasantry in a statement form does not require an answer from the viewers. An unanswered question turn will have starkly highlighted the missing conversational partner and maximized obviousness of the absence of dialogic elements in the monologue. After another cut (line 5), V25 uses the discourse marker "okay" to mark his transition to the body of the monologue (line 6).

4.1.2.7 Opening Sequence of V4 (V + G + T + G + C + L)

The vlogs opens with a voice telling the vlogger "Hey dude, you need to learn to pass around the Kentucky Fried Chicken", to which he responds with a "huh?"

Extract 7 [V4]

Lines	Transcription	Opening Strategies
1	Hey guys.	Greeting Term of address
2	*assalamualaikum*. {salutes} peace be upon you. {salutes}	Greeting
3	{cut}	Transition
4	so::	Linguistic marker
5	lately I've been getting a lot of fat jokes from random ass people from FB,	Topic

The variation in the opening stands out as it demonstrates V4's efforts to adapt in the monologic context. The other voice that tells him to cease eating fried chicken at the beginning of the vlog is in fact the V4 himself. By inserting a voice clip addressed to himself, he succeeds in building a dialogic frame in his monologue. Essentially, he stages a turn-taking process where he and the 'other' interlocutor literally engage in a conversation. Such an approach creates the illusion of a conversational context and successfully reduces the monotony of the monologue. It also serves as an incentive for the viewers to continue watching the vlog. This technique is seen in the monologues of stand-up comedians where they utilize the voicing of multiple parties to create different characters (Glick, 2007).

After the variation, V4 moves back to his typical opening sequence where he greets the viewers. He uses a total of two greetings and these greetings reflect his eagerness of attracting the viewers (line 1 and line 2). This appropriate greeting behaviour also reinforces the establishment and maintenance of the interpersonal relationship between him and the viewers. After a cut, he incorporates the discourse marker "so" to indicate the end of his opening sequence.

4.1.2.8 Opening Sequence of V11 (G + T + ST + C + L + ST + C)

V11 inserts a rather lengthy small talk in her opening sequence where she implicitly acknowledges the fact that she has not been active in vlogging and also slots in affirmative remarks to appeal to the viewers.

Extract 8 [V11]

Lines	Transcription	Opening Strategies
1	Hello YouTube.	Greeting Term of address
2	I'm back (.) for now.	Small talk
3	I'm no longer going to promise that I'm going to (.) upload a video soon,	
4	*atau lagi seminggu lagi sebulan* because, or another week or another month because,	
5	it really depends on (.) when I feel like it.	
6	I realized that I only vlog *bila I rasa I macam nak vlog*, I realized that I only vlog when I feel like vlogging,	
7	*macam hari ini I balik*, like today when I came back,	
8	I went out *lepas itu I balik*, I went out then I came back,	
9	*I rasa macam* okay let's put on my red scarf and see what happens. I felt like okay let's put on my red scarf and see what happens.	
10	so: this is what happens. {gestures to the camera}	
11	{cut}	Deletion
12	anyway,	Linguistic marker
13	Happy Chinese New Year guys,	Small talk
14	happy year of the dragon.	
15	I'm going to try to put on my best dragon face for the new year {puts on a fierce expression}	
16	eh do dragons have claws?	
17	I don't know.	
18	hope you guys enjoyed your long holidays.	
19	um (.) oh and happy new year!	
20	this is my first vlog for the year.	
21	happy 2012!	
22	hope this year brings everybody good news and,	
23	hope this year brings you more reward and blessing than last year,	
24	*Inshallah*. God willing.	
25	I feel like it's a really good year=	
26	=*macam* I have a good feeling about this year. =like I have a good feeling about this year.	
27	well I personally have so many things to look forward to.	
28	{cut}	Transition
29	I'm going to talk about perceptions.	Topic
30	we tend to have perceptions about certain people,	

The vlog of V11 begins with the usual greeting and term of address structure "hey YouTube." This basic structure is followed by small talk where she implies that she has not vlogged in a while—"I'm back (.) for now" (line 2). She then mentions that she will no longer make promises to upload new vlogs and will only do so when she feels like it (line 3 to line 9). Such a blatant and dismissive statement may offend some of the viewers as it gives the idea that they are not of import to her. It appears as though she only considers her own wants and not the wants of the viewers. Still, V11 seems to be aware of the potential offence and takes certain steps to resolve it later in her small talk.

After the linguistic marker "anyway" that marks a shift in the topic of her small talk, V11 wishes the viewers a Happy Chinese New year and incorporates humour where she tries to imitate the fierce expression of a dragon in conjunction with the year of the dragon (line 15 to line 17). The inclusion of humour may be an attempt to compensate and mollify the viewers who may be affronted by her earlier remarks. She subsequently sends her best wishes to them and through these affirmative remarks, shows her concern and interest in them—"hope this year brings everybody good news and" (line 22), "hope this year brings you more reward and blessing than last year" (line 23). The affirmative remarks are essentially strategies to ensure that she remains in the good graces of the viewers, which is important because they have the power to determine the level of her popularity. After a cut that signals a transition, V11 moves on to the topic of her vlog where she talks about race and gender discrimination.

4.1.2.9 Opening Sequence of V19

(L + G + G + L + L + ST + G + ST + RF + ST + ST + L + L + L)

V19 incorporates small talk in her opening sequence and it has other functions aside from establishing rapport with the viewers. In particular, the starting of her small talk functions both as an acknowledgement and a justification.

Extract 9 [V19]

Lines	Transcription	Opening Strategies
1	Well holo people!	Linguistic marker Greeting
2	holo yello mello tello=	Greeting
3	=okay *dah diam*! =okay enough shut up!	Linguistic marker
4	okay I'm back,	Linguistic marker Small talk
5	hi! {waves}	Greeting
6	*macam* I've been, like I've been,	Small talk
7	*aku* busy *ah baru-baru ini*= I've been busy recently=	
8	=*aku baru masuk* U and (.) *rasa macam* busy *ah*. =I've just got into university and (.) feel busy.	
9	and *macam aku tak bawa kamera ke sana*, and I didn't bring my camera there.	
10	so *macam sepi gila*! so I felt terribly lonely!	
11	*sebab tak dapat cakap depan kamera untuk kau orang*. because I couldn't talk in front of the camera for you all.	
12	so *macam* I'm back, so like I'm back,	
13	*sebab saya dekat rumah*, because I'm at home,	
14	*macam ada kamera saya boleh cakap*, there's a camera so I can speak,	
15	so *macam itu la dia*. so that's how it is.	
16	oh *aku buat* this page *dekat* Facebook, oh I made this page in Facebook,	Request for feedback
17	er my page,	
18	so *macam aku harap kau orang pergi* like *ah page itu ya*, so I hope you guys will go like that page yeah,	

19	as your support and *macam*, as your support and like,	
20	thank you for *yang cari-cari aku*, thank you to those who came to find me,	Small talk
21	oh *kenapa kau tak buat* video *baru*? oh why didn't you make new videos?	
22	I'm back!	
23	I'm here!	
24	I *macam* okay *dah*! I was like okay enough!	
25	I want to start.	
26	cheh I want to start! ((laughs))	
27	I *rindulah kau orang*= I missed all of you=	Small talk
28	=and *macam aku* ecstatic *gila nak buat* video. =and like I feel crazily ecstatic to make videos.	
29	okay *lah diam*! okay shut up!	Linguistic marker
30	okay *dah dah start*. okay I'll start now.	Linguistic marker
31	okay okay.	Linguistic marker
32	*tajuk aku*, my title,	Topic
31	*tajuk kita pada hari ini is kaye* so what? our title for today is rich so what?	

V19 starts her vlog with the linguistic marker "well", which is subsequently followed by her customary trademark greetings (line1 and 2). After another two linguistic markers, she includes small talk in her opening sequence—"…I'm back" (line 4). This statement of hers indicates that she has not been vlogging regularly and highlights her consciousness that she has committed a wrongdoing as a vlogger. Essentially, vloggers have the responsibility of producing vlogs consistently as they have a virtual audience. This situation is similar to that of a television series where there is an audience waiting expectantly for the next episode to be aired. It is also the initiative of the vloggers to start vlogging and therefore, they should be responsible in upholding their consistency in churning out vlogs for their viewers. Likewise, in the case of V19, she is clearly aware that there are online viewers who are

waiting for her to upload new vlogs. As such, she inserts an acknowledgment to address her lack of vlogging and to eliminate any negative feelings that the viewers may have. One can also infer that an acknowledgement is the most minimal and basic method for the vloggers to note their absence in vlogging.

The small talk of V19 is momentarily interrupted by the sudden insertion of a greeting (line 5). She then resumes the small talk where she provides a solid justification for her lack of vlogging to further pacify the viewers. This justification serves to clarify and validate her nonappearance in the vlogging world. Specifically, she attributes her absence to her hectic schedule and to her recent enrollment in a university. She even repeats the word "busy" twice to give emphasis to her demanding schedule—" I've been busy recently" (line 7) and "I've just got into university and (.) feel busy" (line 8). She then reveals that she forgot to bring her camera to her university and therefore, she was not able to vlog. The justification of V19 shows that she considers her lack of vlogging a dispreferred scenario, which then entails that she did not intentionally shirk her responsibility of producing vlogs. She accepts that the shortage of vlogs is attributed to her but feels that her circumstances are to be blamed, not her. The justification substantiates her inactive status and defends her image as a good vlogger, thereby securing her reputation.

To compensate for her lack of presence, V19 incorporates several statements that are devised to build rapport with the viewers. She stresses how she was engulfed by loneliness because she could not record a vlog for her viewers—"so I felt terribly lonely" (line 10) and "because I couldn't talk in front of the camera for you all" (line 11). These remarks indicate that she truly treasures their companionship and when deprived of it, she inevitably experiences a sense of lost. She then expresses her utter relief at being able to finally "talk"

to them when she returns to her hometown where a camera is available. These statements build rapport and generate a sense of camaraderie, which play the key role of enhancing the relationship between V19 and her viewers.

Besides, V19 inserts a request for feedback strategy in her opening sequence where she informs the viewers about a new Facebook page that she made and asks them for their "likes" (line 16 and 18). From a politeness perspective, her request potentially threatens their negative face and she avoids threatening their face by adding the hedge "I hope" in the request to soften the imposition—"I hope you guys will go like that page yeah" (line 18). She subsequently resumes her small talk by thanking the viewers who insist that she makes more videos—"thank you to those who came to find me" (line 20) and "oh why didn't you make new videos" (line 21). She seems to be aware that gratitude is fundamental in sustaining relationships and takes care to show her appreciation of the viewers.

Her plan of starting the main topic of the vlog is temporarily interrupted when V19 inadvertently extends her small talk by declaring that she misses the viewers and emphasizes her eagerness to vlog—" I missed all of you=" (line 27) and "=and like I feel crazily ecstatic to make videos" (line 28). This declaration of affection is a marker of solidarity and attends to the positive aspect of the face of the viewers. It is also a persuasive strategy that is used to appeal to them with the hopes of giving a good impression and obtaining more feedback from the viewers. After another three linguistic markers (line 29, 30 and 31), she finally proceeds to discuss the issue at hand, which is about rich people who are stuck up.

4.1.3   Summary

In sum, the opening sequences of the Malaysian vloggers are influenced by social norms and culture. Since politeness is important in Malaysia, the vloggers take care to include strategies that express politeness and this idea is proven with the discovery of small talk and pleasantries in their openings. Additionally, the vloggers utilize methods such as the voicing of multiple characters and forging 'dialogues' to overcome the difficulties caused by the monologic context. Essentially, these methods are used to conceal the restrictive nature of the monologic vlogs.

4.2   Closing Sequences of Vlogs

The closing sequences of the 30 vlogs are examined according to the Coronel-Molina's (1998) closing strategies. Examples of the closings of the Malaysian vloggers are shown in the following sections.

4.2.1   Frequency of the Closing Strategies

Most of the strategies that Coronel-Molina (1998) proposed are discovered in the data, except for new topic introduction. Table 4.4 demonstrates the frequency of the different closing strategies used by the Malaysian vloggers.

Table 4.4: Frequency of the Closing Strategies

Closing Strategies	Frequency
Preclosing	24
Final closing	22
Recapitulation	16
Request for Feedback	12
Self-Identification	4
Apology	3
New topic introduction	0

As shown in Table 4.4, preclosings are used most often by the Malaysian vloggers (N=24) and this finding indicates that they generally provide an indication when they are prepared to terminate their monologues. Preclosings are similar to that of discourse markers in the openings as they both signal a transition. Given that two different frameworks are adopted in this study, words such as "okay" and "so" in openings and closings are assigned different terms, even though they technically carry out the same function. In particular, such words are known as discourse markers in openings where they indicate a shift from an opening sequence to the main topic of the vlog. On the other hand, these words are labeled as preclosings in closing sequences, where they mark a transition from the topic to the closing of the vlog. In short, they are considered as two different strategies, since the researcher is examining the opening and closing sequences separately with two different frameworks.

Frequent examples of the vloggers' preclosings in this study include 'okay' and 'so.' According to Liddicoat (1994, p. 308), preclosings are typically avoided in monologic talk because the negotiation of closings is prevented by the suspension of turn-taking. The results of this study prove that Liddicoat's (1994) claims do not apply to monologues of the vloggers. Based on the frequent usage, it is apparent that the vloggers need preclosings to close their monologues.

Other than that, final closings come in second in terms of frequency in this study (N=22). The vloggers usually employ final closings like 'goodbye', 'thank you' and 'until next time' in their closing sequences as a means of signaling the complete termination of their monologues. Some of them even make use of more unconventional final closings such as the urban slang 'peace' (V4), the Italian equivalent of goodbye '*ciao*' (V14) and the rather

direct 'I'm out of here' (V12), all of which indicate their departure. The vloggers also make use of personal remarks like 'I love you all' and 'take care' as final closings to further appeal to the viewers. Additionally, they regularly make use of recapitulations, which encompass a summary of the topics discussed, arrangements and the sending of best wishes (N=16). Common examples of this strategy also include '*assalamualaikum*' that can also function as a greeting.

Moreover, none of the vloggers introduced a new topic in their closing sequences (N=0). This finding implies that they rarely have the desire to prolong their monologues. In a dialogue, one can respond to a preclosing with another preclosing that will shift the interaction to an end, or introduce a new topic. But in vlogs, there is no one to negotiate the closing with the vloggers. Thus, when they make use of preclosings, the appropriate and preferred response would be to produce a recapitulation or final closing. It is highly unlikely that they will go against their own preclosings and extend their monologues by introducing a new topic.

The data also reveal three closing strategies that are not found in Coronel-Molina's (1998) analysis of telephone conversation closings: (a) request for feedback (N=12), (b) apology (N=3) and (c) self-identification (N=4). Request for feedback and self-identification are also seen in the opening sequences of the vloggers. Like small talk and pleasantries, apologies are related to politeness and take care of the relationship between the vloggers and viewers. Table 4.5 demonstrates the codes for the closing strategies whereas Table 4.6 shows the closing sequence combinations of the Malaysian vloggers.

Table 4.5: Codes for the Closing Strategies

Closing Strategies	Code
Preclosing	P
Final closing	F
Recapitulation	R
Request for feedback	RF
Self-identification	S
Apology	A
New topic introduction	N

Table 4.6: Closing Sequence Combinations of the Malaysian Vloggers

Vloggers	Closing Sequence Combinations
V1	P + P + R + P + S + P + R + P
V2	P + R + F
V3	P + RF
V4	F
V5	P + P + R + P + P + P + R + P + F + F + F + P + F
V6	R
V7	R
V8	Example containing none of the elements
V9	RF + P + F + F + F
V10	P + F + F
V11	P + R + P + F
V12	F
V13	P + F
V14	P + RF + P + F + F
V15	P + S + R + F
V16	RF + F
V17	RF + P + F + F
V18	P + R + R
V19	P + R + P + R + F + F + RF + F
V20	RF + P + R + A + R
V21	P + RF + P + S + F
V22	P + P + P + R + P + F +A + RF + P + F
V23	P + RF + P + S + F
V24	P + A + F
V25	P + P + R + F
V26	P + P + R + F
V27	P + RF
V28	P + F
V29	P + RF + P + RF + P + F + R + R + F
V30	P + P + F + F

The results show that majority of the Malaysian vloggers insert closing strategies in their vlogs, in spite of their monologic context. As stated by Raclaw (2008, p. 13), closing strategies such as preclosings, arrangements and final closings mark dispreferred action within the discourse. The vloggers interpret closings as face-threatening acts and therefore, incorporate closing strategies to avoid any negative feelings that may appear within the viewers. In short, these strategies prevent them from coming across as disrespectful or rude. A conversation that is closed down appropriately also establishes grounds for rapport between the vloggers and their viewers.

Besides, the preclosings of the Malaysian vloggers are frequently combined with recapitulations (N=12). An example of this combination include 'so I'll talk to you all very soon.' The combination of these strategies is reminiscent of those in the closings of talk show interviews (Martínez, 2003). The regular use of preclosings and recapitulations portrays the aim of the vloggers to end their videos on a good note. In addition, the data shows that the preclosings of the vloggers generally do not lead to new topic introductions. This finding differs from Schegloff and Sacks's (1973, p. 269) assertion that preclosings tend to lead to the start of a new topic. Rather than introducing a new topic, the vloggers make a recapitulation or final closing, which effectively leads the monologue to an end.

4.2.2   Discourse Structure of Closings

The vlogs of all of the Malaysian vloggers contain closing strategies and such a discovery indicates that these strategies are deemed crucial by the vloggers. Several examples of their closing sequences are shown in the following sections.

4.2.2.1   Closing Sequence of V5 (P + P + R + P + P + P + R + P + F + F + F + P + F)

V5 employs multiple preclosings and final closings in her closing sequence. These numerous closing strategies serve specific purposes that help her cope with the constraints of the monologic context.

Extract 10 [V5]

Lines	Transcription	Closing Strategies
65	**okay** um,	Preclosing
66	**so I guess that's all.**	Preclosing
67	ya my camera is not gay too= {points to the camera}	Recapitulation—
68	= don't ever say my camera is gay {frowns}	*Summary*
69	**okay.** {smiles}	Preclosing
70	**I guess that's all**=	Preclosing
71	= **so** guys enjoy this video and just stop talking about gay if you're always talking about it.	Preclosing Recapitulation— *Summary*
72	**so yeah that's all.**	Preclosing
73	**thank you guys**=	Final closing
74	**= thanks for watching.**	Final closing
75	**thanks.**	Final closing
76	**okay,**	Preclosing
77	**bye.**	Final closing

The closing sequence of V5 verifies the notion that preclosing gambits exist even in monologues. In fact, a total of ten vloggers in the present study made use of more than one preclosing in their closing sequences. In this case, V5 uses a total of seven preclosings to assist her in terminating her monologue (line 65, 66, 69, 70, 71, 72 and 76). This finding concurs with Coronel-Molina's (1998) assertion that several preclosings are required to end a conversation. The multiple preclosings illustrate V5's difficulty in ending her monologue and such a difficulty is attributed to her unfamiliarity with the absence of a second speaker as well as the lack of vital dialogic elements like turn-taking. In a typical conversation between two individuals, one person speaks and the other replies and that is the type of talk

that V5 is familiar with. However, in the monologue context, she has to navigate through the entire conversation on her own, which results in multiple preclosings. These preclosings also underline the individuality and unpredictability of the communication process where a single preclosing does not necessarily guarantee the end of a vlogger's monologue.

While they may come naturally to her, the multiple preclosings simultaneously remind V5 of her aim to close the monologue. They are ultimately a strategy for leading the vlog to a complete close. Unlike dialogues, monologues are reduced to the productive part and deprived of the receptive part. This situation means that there is no one to negotiate the closing with V5 and hence, she may be easily distracted while in the midst of closing her vlog. She may have intended to finish her monologue straightaway but ends up extending it by adding on to her previous discussion (line 67 and line 68).

In her discussion, V5 asks the viewers about the meaning of 'gay' and condemns the fact that some people use it too frequently to describe certain things. She ends the discussion by advising them to stop using the word 'gay' repeatedly if they have a habit of doing so (line 71). In line 67 and 68, after the preclosings, V5 adds on to her discussion where she warns the viewers against calling her camera 'gay.' During her warning, she frowns but right after that, she resumes smiling once more. Given her immediate change of behaviour and the unrealistic topic, it is evident that V5 is joking. She uses the joke as a resource of lightening the somewhat dull and monologic atmosphere. The preclosings that follow her discussion remind her of her own intention to end the monologue and guide her back to the path of ending it.

V5 could have ended her monologue without the hassle of preclosings, given that she is alone in her speech production. However, she still tries to create a proper and organized closing sequence by adding in preclosings. Her efforts insinuate her consciousness of a virtual audience and her awareness that closings can be interpreted as face-threatening acts (Pojanapunya & Jaroenkitboworn, 2011, p. 3594). The act of closing a talk may be offensive to the viewers as they may not want the conversation to stop at that moment. Moreover, ending a conversation in an abrupt manner can be deemed an act of disrespect or rudeness. Hence, a suitable closing strategy is required to save the face of the viewers and to sustain a positive relationship with them. The preclosings enable V5 to end her conversation appropriately, thereby maintaining the face of her viewers. These preclosings also allow her to establish grounds for a good on-going relationship with them. All in all, her actions show that she takes the concept of 'face-saving' seriously, despite the fact that she is communicating with a virtual audience.

In addition, the numerous preclosings portray behaviour that is typical of Malaysians as they tend to prolong the leave-taking process. This observation is made based on the researcher's own experience as a member of the Malaysian society and culture. The prolonged closing sequences do not encompass the introduction of a new topic but the repetition of closing strategies such as preclosings and final closings. It is essentially a way of enhancing the bond between the interlocutors. Similarly, by using several preclosings, V5 implies to the viewers that she genuinely enjoys their company and that parting with them is dispreferred.

V5 also employs multiple final closings that comprise 'thank you' sequences in her closing sequence (line 73, 74 and 75). According to Bartlett et al. (2011), gratitude is vital in

constructing and sustaining social relationships. The multiple final closings express V5's deep appreciation of the viewers and this in turn gives them a sense of satisfaction. In essence, these strategies address the positive face of the viewers by fulfilling their want to be appreciated. Furthermore, the repeated final closings confirm the inexistence of a new topic. They are a sign that V5 is done with her monologue and that there is nothing further to discuss.

The additional preclosings and final closings shed light on the complexity in closing a vlog. They could be caused by the nervousness or uncertainty of V5 in terms of how to terminate her monologue without immediate feedback from the viewers. Monologues lack important dialogic components and therefore, she is forced to use other methods like repeating closing strategies to manage the monologic context. The repetition of closing strategies is also seen in telephone conversations (Coronel-Molina, 1998; Takami, 2002) and chat-based virtual meetings (Markman, 2009).

4.2.2.2   Closing Sequence of V19 (P + R + P + R + F + F + RF + F)

V19 makes use of a request for feedback strategy where she asks the viewers to follow her various social networking sites.

Extract 11 [V19]

Lines	Transcription	Closing Strategies
219	=so *macam itu sahaja lah* for now, =so that's all for now.	Preclosing
220	and I'll be back with a new video soon I hope.	Recapitulation—*Arrangement*
221	so *macam assalamualaikum* and thank you people for your support. so like peace be upon you and thank you people for your support.	Preclosing Recapitulation—*Best wishes* Final closing

222	I love you all!	Final closing
223	**follow my blog,**	Request for feedback
224	**my (.) my twitter,**	
225	**my Facebook account *semua* okay?**	
	my Facebook account all okay?	
226	bye! {waves}	Final closing

V19 begins her closing sequence with a preclosing statement that marks her readiness in ending her conversation (line 219). This kind of preclosing statement is also found in the closings of news bulletin programs (Montgomery, 2007). V19 uses several recapitulations in her closing, which serve to achieve a cooperative parting in which any feeling of rejection within the viewers is mollified. In other words, the multiple recapitulations have the crucial function of reassuring the relationship between V19 and her viewers.

In line 220, V19 makes an arrangement with the viewers—"and I'll be back with a new video soon I hope." Rather than interpreting the hedge "I hope" as her unlikelihood of ever posting a new video, this hedge marks her uncertainty if she can record a new vlog soon. She is implying that she is busy at the moment and it may be a while before she posts up another vlog. V19 reassures the viewers that although they may not hear from her soon, they will definitely see her again. The recapitulation fundamentally highlights her interest in future contact and entails a current relationship.

V15 produces another recapitulation by sending her best wishes to the viewers (line 221). After a final closing, she produces a final closing which explicitly expresses her love to them—"I love you all" (line 222). This declaration of love plainly communicates her approval of the viewers and reflects the amount of affection she has for them. In this way, the recapitulation attends to the positive face of the viewers. It is also fascinating to note

that V15 does not know the identities of her viewers and yet they share a certain sense of connection, which is most likely brought forth by the fact that they are all members of the same video-hosting website.

Besides, the request for feedback strategy is included in the closing sequence of V15 (line 223 to line 225). More specifically, it comes in the form of various requests where she tries to convince the viewers to follow her in her different social networking sites. She is aware that the requests threaten the viewers' negative face and mitigates the threat by ending her requests in a question form—"my Facebook account all *okay*" (line 225). Essentially, the requests appear less forceful and direct when it is structured as a question. The viewers are given a sense of freedom as well as space for consideration. By using this method, the imposition on the freedom of the viewers is effectively minimized. V15 subsequently uses the final closing "bye" to finish her monologue (line 226).

Coronel-Molina (1998) did not find the request for feedback strategy in her analysis of telephone conversation closings. Its absence in her data is attributed to the different circumstances of each genre. In typical dialogues, feedback from the other interlocutor(s) is required for the continuation of the conversation. In vlogs, however, vloggers need feedback from the viewers for more than just an on-going communication. They also need it to boost their popularity since popularity in vlogging is associated with the number of subscribers and views. The request for feedback strategy reminds the viewers that the vloggers need their help and convinces them to respond to the vloggers' requests.

Moreover, V15 reassures the viewers of the bond they share through her non-verbal behaviour. To be more precise, she employs direct visual address in her leave-taking

process where she gazes straight at the viewers. This technique is also used by news presenters in broadcast news programs (Montgomery, 2007). It constructs and projects the idea that the relationship between V15 and the viewers is long-lasting and that ending the vlog is considered *temporarily* breaking co-presence with them.

4.2.2.3 Closing Sequence of V21 (P + RF + P + S + F)

V21 includes the request for feedback strategy by asking the viewers several questions and also self-identifies in his closing sequence. Coronel-Molina (1998) did not find any self-identification strategy in her study of telephone conversation closings.

Extract 12 [V21]

Lines	Transcription	Closing Strategies
115	so everyone in Malaysia,	Preclosing
116	especially my subscribers=	
117	=you right there watching my videos, {points to camera}	
118	**I just want to ask you guys a question.**	Request for feedback
119	**if you're given a choice free house,**	
120	**let's say you're given amount,**	
121	**unlimited amount of money.**	
122	**so the person will buy a house for you,**	
123	**and you had to pack,**	
124	**and you had to pack and move,**	
125	**like which type of house is your dream home?**	
126	**and you can tell me below,**	
127	**in the comments or actually give me a video response.**	
128	basically that's about it guys!	Preclosing
129	**this is me H.**	Self-identification
130	*ciao*! bye!	Final closing

The closing of V21 is marked by the preclosing "so" that signals his preparation to end the vlog (line 114). After the preclosing, he specifically addresses the viewers as "everyone in Malaysia", which reflects his perception that most of them are Malaysians. By using this

term of address, he highlights the similarity that they share—their country of residence. He may have gauged the nationality of his viewers from the various comments or video responses he received. The mention of the shared trait primarily serves as a marker of solidarity. Since they hail from the same country, V21 and the viewers are bound to share certain social and cultural experiences. For instance, given that both parties are from a multilingual society, there is a possibility that they would be at least bilingual. They are all Malaysians and thus, a sense of kinship transpires.

The term of address "everyone in Malaysia" simultaneously underscores the anonymity of the audience. Apart from their country of residence, V21 does not know any other characteristics that the viewers may possess. Nonetheless, such ambiguity does not prevent him from connecting with the viewers and he uses this term of address to develop rapport with them. V21 subsequently gives special prominence to his subscribers by deliberately singling them out from the pool of audience (line 116). By doing so, he shows his gratitude and appreciation of the support of his subscribers, thereby attending to the positive aspect of their face.

Line 118 to line 127 constitutes a request for feedback strategy where V21 asks the viewers for their opinions. The main topic of his vlog concerns the hassles of packing and moving from one house to another, where he complains about how much effort goes into moving. He ends the discussion by requesting for the opinions of the viewers regarding the types of houses that they would like to move into. Based on the conditions he has given in his questions—"if you're given a free house" (line 119), "let's say you're given amount, unlimited amount of money" (line 220 and 221)—it appears that V21 thinks the viewers share the same perception that he has, which is moving to a new home is troublesome.

Consequently, he includes these conditions as a means of diluting their dislike of packing and moving, thereby encouraging them to give their feedback.

The questions of V21 convey the impression that he is interested in their thoughts and this gives them a feeling of significance. He then informs them that they can reply by leaving a comment or video response (line 127), which reminds them of the availability of YouTube's communicative channels. These questions are essentially a persuasive strategy that gives the viewers a good reason to respond to him.

V21 conjures yet another preclosing statement to realize his aim of terminating his monologue (line 128). A self-identification strategy follows the preclosing statement—"this is me H" (line 129). This strategy is reminiscent of the closings of news bulletin programs where the newscasters state their names before ending the program (Montgomery, 2007). Other than that, V21 repeatedly uses the personal pronoun 'you' towards the end of his vlog. This particular pronoun assists him in grabbing the attention of the viewers and directly engaging them in the talk. The pronoun 'you' also entails in-group affiliation and suggests mutual interests and experiences. He then generates a final closing "*ciao*" to steer his vlog to a close (line 130).

4.2.2.4   Closing Sequence of V24 (P + A + R)

In her closing sequence, V24 incorporates an apology, which is another closing strategy that is not seen in the data of Coronel-Molina (1998).

Extract 13 [V24]

Lines	Transcription	Closing Strategies
143	so (.) that's all now=	Preclosing
144	**=I'm sorry for the very long video,**	Apology
145	but I love you guys!	Final closing
146	muah! {gives a flying kiss}	

The closing of V24 begins with the preclosing statement in line 143. More specifically, the preclosing "so" is made with a falling low tone and an elongation of the vowel. It is then followed by a pause. This technique facilitates the creation of 'space' for the turn of the absent interlocutor. It is as though V24 feels a linguistic obligation to pause at the point where the conversational partner would usually say his or her part in the sequence. Her pause makes it look as if she is waiting or perhaps even hearing the necessary turn of the missing interlocutor before continuing with "that's all for now." This prosodic and pausing structure is typically used in the closings of telephone calls and also answering machine talk (Gold, 1991).

In line 144, V24 apologizes for the length of her video as she is regretful that her video takes up too much of her viewers' time. The apology indicates her acknowledgement that a violation has been committed and highlights her consciousness of the face-wants of the viewers. She reckons she has threatened their negative face by imposing on their time. Godard (1977, p. 217) asserted that French telephone callers tend to interpret the answer to a summons as "an indication of the answer's availability to be interrupted…" Likewise, although it is the viewers who chose to watch the vlog, V24 thinks she has interrupted their availability in some way and thus, she apologizes to restore equilibrium between them.

Interestingly, V24 offers a justification after her apology by exclaiming "but I love you guys" (line 145). With the conjunctive 'but' in this final closing, she implies that the viewers are the cause of her lengthy vlog. She obviously does not mean to offend them but is in fact addressing their positive face. By including the justification, V24 implies that she truly enjoys talking to the viewers, so much so that she did not notice time flying by, which then resulted in the long vlog. She even blows them a kiss to emphasize her fondness of them and to further mitigate any negative feelings that may arise due to the lengthy vlog (line 146).

On top of that, this example projects a fascinating phenomenon: the absence of final closings. V24 ends her video with a recapitulation and this finding contradicts the claims of researchers who insist that final closings are compulsory to terminate a conversation (Coronel-Molina, 1998; Pojanapunya, & Jaroenkitboworn, 2011). The necessity of final closings clearly does not apply to the closings of monologic vlogs. Still, the lack of final closings is compensated through the use of other closing strategies like preclosings and recapitulations. V24 most likely thinks that explicitly expressing her love for her viewers in the form of a recapitulation is the best way to end her vlog as compared to final closings After all, this strategy does attend to their positive face.

4.2.2.5 Closing Sequence of V23 (P + RF + P + S + F)

V23 makes extensive use of spatial deixis markers and gestures in his closing sequence. He also employs a rather unique final closing "signing off."

Extract 14 [V23]

Lines	Transcription	Closing Strategies
91	so *itu saja daripada saya*. so that's all from me.	Preclosing
92	click location *dekat sini untuk* previous videos, {points to his right} **click this location over here to view previous videos, {points to his right}**	Request for feedback
93	*dan* click location *dekat hujung sana untuk* next video, {points to his left} **and click that location over there to view the next video, {points to his left}**	
94	*kalau ada nantilah*. if there is one later on.	
95	so that's it!	Preclosing
96	this is A.	Self-identification
97	**signing off!**	Final closing

After his preclosing, V23 uses the request for feedback strategy by informing his viewers where they can find his previous and later videos (line 92 and line 93). These notifications promote his other videos and potentially increase the number of his views. V23 also points out the location of his videos by literally pointing to his left and right. To assist his directions, he uses numerous spatial deixis markers such as 'this', 'that', 'here' and 'there.' These markers maximize co-presence and offer a sense of what Moores (2000) call 'intimacy at a distance.' They stimulate a much needed feeling of proximity and make the viewers feel as though they are conversing in an actual face-to-face conversation.

V23 generates another preclosing and then self-identifies (line 96). It is noted that he did mention his name in the opening sequence of his vlog. The repetition of his name in the closing sequence reminds new viewers of his identity, which in turn increases the chances of them remembering his name and checking out his other vlogs. This enhances V23's odds of securing more subscribers and views, both of which are important to boost his popularity.

As compared to other vloggers, the final closing of V23 is rather unique. Instead of saying the archetypal 'bye' or 'thanks for watching', he opts for a more unconventional one—"signing off" (line 97). This closing message normally appears when participants in chat rooms or instant messenger log off. V23 basically resorts to borrowing his final closing from other online mediums to make up for the lack of closing conventions in vlogging. This distinctive final closing also makes his ending more impactful and memorable.

4.2.2.6   Closing Sequence of V29 (P + RF + P + RF + P + F + R + R + F)

In his closing sequence, V29 incorporates the request for feedback strategy, which appears in two forms—a direct question and request for subscriptions.

Extract 15 [V29]

Lines	Transcription	Closing Strategies
39	so yeah seriously,	Preclosing
40	**what do you guys think about this situation?**	Request for feedback
41	**has it ever happened to you?**	
42	**if it does,**	
43	**how did you guys react on this?**	
44	**what did you guys do?**	
45	**did you freak out and go "why did you call my sister?"** {waves his hands in the air}	
46	**or you're just like "ya so?"**	
47	**just don't go and sleep with my sister or brother.**	
48	**or what?**	
49	**please leave a comment down here,** {points downwards}	
50	**down there.**	
51	**alright leave a comment there.**	
52	**uh leave a comment there and um,**	
53	**tell me how did you deal with this,**	
54	**and also do not forget to subscribe.** {points upwards}	
55	**there there there's a button up there,**	
56	**the yellow one which says there subscribe.**	
57	anyway,	Preclosing

58	don't forget to subscribe to my channel.	Request for feedback
59	because why?	
60	because it's free!	
61	it's free baby!	
62	you're not going to have to pay me any money to subscribe to my channel=	
63	=it's free!	
64	so until then,	Preclosing
65	have a good life,	Recapitulation—*Best wishes*
66	God bless your soul and bye bye! {salutes and winks}	Recapitulation—*Best wishes* Final closing

V29 concludes his discussion about the complicated issue of one's ex-boyfriend or ex-girlfriend calling up one's family members with the preclosing statement "so yeah seriously" (line 39). From line 40 to line 48, he gamely includes his viewers in the monologue by asking them several questions. He then asks them to leave their comments and even goes to the extent of simplifying the replying process by offering them some examples of possible responses (line 45, 46 and 47). In this way, they do not have to wrack their brains thinking of the answers to his questions. All they have to do is choose from the potential responses that he has lain out. The extra mile that he takes illustrates his intense desire for viewer feedback.

At the same time, V29 reminds the viewers to subscribe to his channel and even specifically mentions the color of the subscribe button (line 53). He then reiterates his hopes for the subscriptions of the viewers. He takes his persuasion a step further by giving the reason why they should subscribe to him. Line 56 to line 58 constitutes a fascinating phenomenon where V29 answers his own question. The concept of responding to one's own question is known as a 'dialogic couplet' (Gold, 1991, p. 250). It highlights his efforts

to create a conversational context and is also a means of internalizing the turn-taking aspect of a dialogue, which is an aspect that is severely lacking in monologues. The dialogic couplet overcomes the restrictions of the monologue by bringing a sense of turn-taking.

Furthermore, V29 continuously stresses the fact that subscribing to him would not cost the viewers any money. He also repeatedly uses the adjective "free" in an attempt to convince them that the subscription process is simple and not troublesome (line 57, 58 and 60). His persistence in getting the comments and subscriptions of the viewers specifies the high value of viewer feedback in vlogging. After all, this is what vlogging is about—connecting and bonding with others online. V29 produces a preclosing and final closing (line 61), which is followed by several recapitulations (line 62 and line 63). These recapitulations communicate a certain level of intimacy and his concern for the viewers. V29 ends his monologue with a final closing and towards the end, he actually salutes the viewers. This gesture is primarily associated with armed forces and fundamentally displays respect. The saluting gesture of V29 portrays the respect he has for his viewers and by explicitly showing his respect, he expects to gain their favour.

4.2.2.7 Closing Sequence of V1 (P + P + R + P + S + P + R + R + P)

The dullness of monologues can sometimes negatively affect the ways in which viewers evaluate vlogs. In an attempt to avoid this scenario, V1 incorporates humor in her closing sequence with the hope that her vlog will come across as more entertaining to the viewers.

Extract 16 [V1]

Lines	Transcription	Closing Strategies
126	Okay,	Preclosing
127	so that's all my advice.	Preclosing

128	be careful with your cyber world,	Recapitulation—*Summary*
129	social networking thing.	
130	number two,	
131	keep those gadgets away when you're with real people please.	
132	{cut}	Deletion
133	that's all from me.	Preclosing
134	I'm M, {gestures to herself}	Self-identification
135	and I'm all about chill ya'all!	
136	okay,	Preclosing
137	*assalamualaikum*= peace be upon you=	Recapitulation—*Best wishes*
138	= *kalau tak jawab dosa, kalau jawab sayang*. = if you don't answer it's a sin, if you answer I love you.	
139	↑**and I'm having tea with Harry Potte::r** ↓ {holds up the Harry Potter pillow}	Recapitulation—*Summary*
140	okay {waves}	Preclosing

V1 begins her closing sequence with two preclosings that give the viewers an indication that she is ready to terminate her vlog. She proceeds with a recapitulation in the form of a summary where she summarizes her discussion of the bad influence of social networking websites and electronic gadgets that prevent meaningful interaction between individuals (line 128 to line 131). After that, she utilizes another preclosing statement that is followed by a self-identification strategy (line 134).

V1 also includes a statement that provides hints about her personality and offers the viewers the opportunity to know her better —"I'm all about chill ya'all" (line 135). In this context, the word "chill" is an urban slang that refers to someone who does whatever he or she likes without bothering about the current trends (*Chill*, 2013). Based on this personal statement, the viewers can gauge that V1 cares more about maintaining social relations than following the latest social fads. She then generates yet another preclosing (line 136), possibly to remind herself to terminate the vlog. To end on a good note, she conveys her

best wishes to the viewers via the Muslim statement "*assalamualaikum*" and provides her

signature remark, which is a means of establishing her identity (line 138).

Towards the end of her vlog, V1 makes use of a Harry Potter pillow to introduce humour

(line 139). In a fake high-pitched voice, she informs the viewers that she is having tea with

Harry Potter. The deliberate alteration of her voice and the improbability of having tea with

an inanimate pillow make the situation humorous. The incorporation of humour serves two

purposes. Firstly, V1 uses it to make her closing more interesting and less boring. It is

basically a way of enhancing the viewers' enjoyment of the video. Secondly, humour is

employed to minimize V1's anxiety when she is recording her monologue. It achieves this

feat by distracting her from any feelings of discomfort.

4.2.2.8   Example containing none of the closing strategies

The closing sequence of V5 is shown in this example. She did not use any closing

strategies during her speech production and ends her vlog by turning off the camera.

Extract 17 [V8]

Lines	Transcription	Closing Strategies
145	They [her parents] are still overprotective,	-
146	maybe even more.	
147	and people say that they will change after some time,	
148	of you not being home,	
149	but I don't see any changes at all,	
150	like (.) is it ever going to change?	
151	I have no idea=	
152	=my parents are like special or something.	
153	I don't know.	

As seen in the extract, V8 did not include any closing strategies but ends her vlog with her doubts that the restrictive behaviour of her parents will change (line 153). As mentioned previously, vlogs are a fairly new type of CMC and consequently, there are no opening and closing conventions to which vloggers can refer to. In addition Hastrdlová (2009, p. 113) argued that the lack of closings in chat rooms is forgivable as participants appear anonymous to one another. The same condition applies to vlogging because vloggers do not know the identities of their viewers. This situation is due to the fact that the viewers can create usernames that conceal their identities, much like the participants in chat rooms.

The decision of V8 to leave out closing strategies is mostly likely caused by the anonymity of her viewers. She does not know who they are and because of that, she may be unsure of how to say goodbye to them. Therefore, she simply resorts to turning off the camera as a means of leave-taking. In fact, she may even consider the turning off of her camera as an actual closing. Other than that, the absence of closing strategies in the vlog of V8 has another function, which is to give emphasis to the gravity of the issue she is discussing. By terminating her vlog abruptly, she displays her intense dissatisfaction of her parents' controlling behaviour.

Besides, there is another way of interpreting the nonexistence of closing strategies in this vlog. According to Spilioti (2011), interlocutors do not expect closings in some genres such as SMS messages. V8 may have adopted this perception by thinking that a closing sequence is not necessarily expected by the viewers because of the fact that she is generating a monologue. There is no other conversational partner with her during her speech production and hence, she may have recorded her speech without an audience in

mind. In her perception, the absence of closing strategies is permissible because face-threatening acts do not occur, given that there is no audience with her.

4.2.3   Summary

All in all, the Malaysian vloggers typically include closing strategies in their vlogs. Except for new topic introduction, all of Coronel-Molina's (1998) strategies are available in the data. This observation suggests that the closings of the Malaysian vloggers resemble the closings of face-to-face conversations (Schegloff & Sacks, 1973) and telephone calls (Coronel-Molina, 1998). Like the opening strategies, the closing strategies are affected by social and cultural expectations and this notion is verified by the existence of apologies in the closing sequence of the vloggers.

4.3   Viewer Perception of Openings and Closings in Vlogs

So far, the analysis of this study has revealed the different types of opening and closing strategies used by the Malaysian vloggers. To make the research even more informative and comprehensive, the opinions of the vlogs viewers are taken into account. The thoughts of 40 viewers are obtained through online interviews. This section is further categorized into two parts, which reflect the results of the interviews. The first part shows the frequency of the viewers' agreement or disagreement of the importance of opening and closing sequences in vlogs. Meanwhile, the second part shows the justifications that the viewers give for their agreement or disagreement of the importance of openings and closings.

4.3.1   Importance of Openings and Closings in Vlogs

This section holds the findings for the first interview question that seeks the extent of the viewers' agreement or disagreement of the importance of openings and closings in vlogs.

Essentially, the viewers are asked to respond to this statement—"Opening sequences (e.g.

hi, hello guys, hi everyone) and closing sequences (e.g. okay bye, thanks for watching) play

an important role in vlogs." They are required to respond based on a five-point Likert scale

that ranges from 'strongly agree' to 'strongly disagree.'

The results that are derived from the first interview question show an overwhelmingly

positive response towards the significance of opening and closing sequences. In general,

majority of the viewers either agree or strongly agree that these sequences are crucial in

vlogs. Figure 4.1 illustrates the extent of the viewers' agreement or disagreement of the

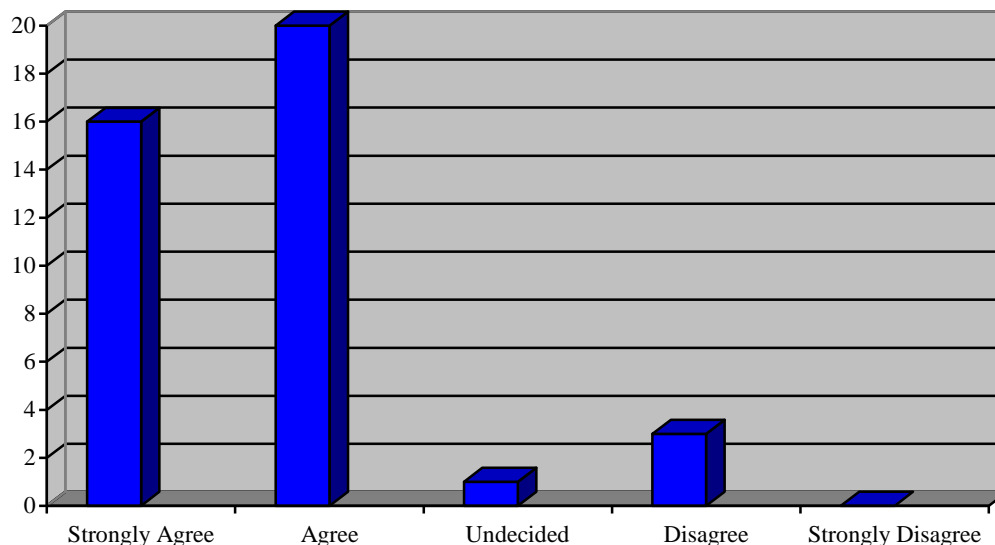importance of openings and closings.

Figure 4.1: The Viewers' Agreement or Disagreement of the Importance of

Openings and Closings

As shown in Figure 4.1, the viewers who agree that openings and closings are important

take up the biggest portion of the overall results (N=20). Next in line are those who

strongly agree with the significance of opening and closing sequences (N=16). Based on such findings, it is apparent that most of the viewers are inclined towards having these sequences in vlogs. Only a few of them disagree that openings and closings play crucial roles in vlogs (N=3). None of them chose the 'strongly disagree' category (N=0) and only one of them remains undecided on whether openings and closings are essential (N=1). The fact that only a small handful of viewers disagree or have doubts regarding the recommended notion indicates that Malaysian viewers generally believe openings and closings execute considerably significant work in vlogs.

4.3.2 The Viewers' Justifications for Their Agreement or Disagreement of the Importance of Openings and Closings

This section reveals the results of the second interview question, which requires the viewers to justify their agreement or disagreement of the importance of openings and closings, after they have answered the first question. Content analysis is used to study their justifications and it allows the researcher to extract the lexical items or phrasings from the viewers' justifications that reflect their agreement or disagreement of the proposed notion. The patterns that emerge from the examination of the lexical items are then categorized accordingly. This section is further divided into two parts. The first part contains the justifications of the viewers who either *agree* or *strongly agree* that openings and closings are significant whereas the second part consists of the justifications of the viewers who *disagree* with the proposed notion.

4.3.2.1 Agreement

As shown in the findings, majority of the viewers either agree or strongly agree that openings and closings play a vital in vlogs. In fact, many of them offered more than one

reason for their agreement (see Appendix D and Appendix E). Several elements emerged from the content analysis of the viewers' justifications. Essentially, these elements are the result of the classification of the lexical items that are extracted from the justifications. A total of eight different elements are derived from the justifications of the viewers: politeness, structure, rapport, respect, sense of communication, attention-grabber, publicity tool and identity construction. Figure 4.2 shows the frequency of the elements that reflect the viewers' agreement of the importance of opening and closing sequences in vlogs.
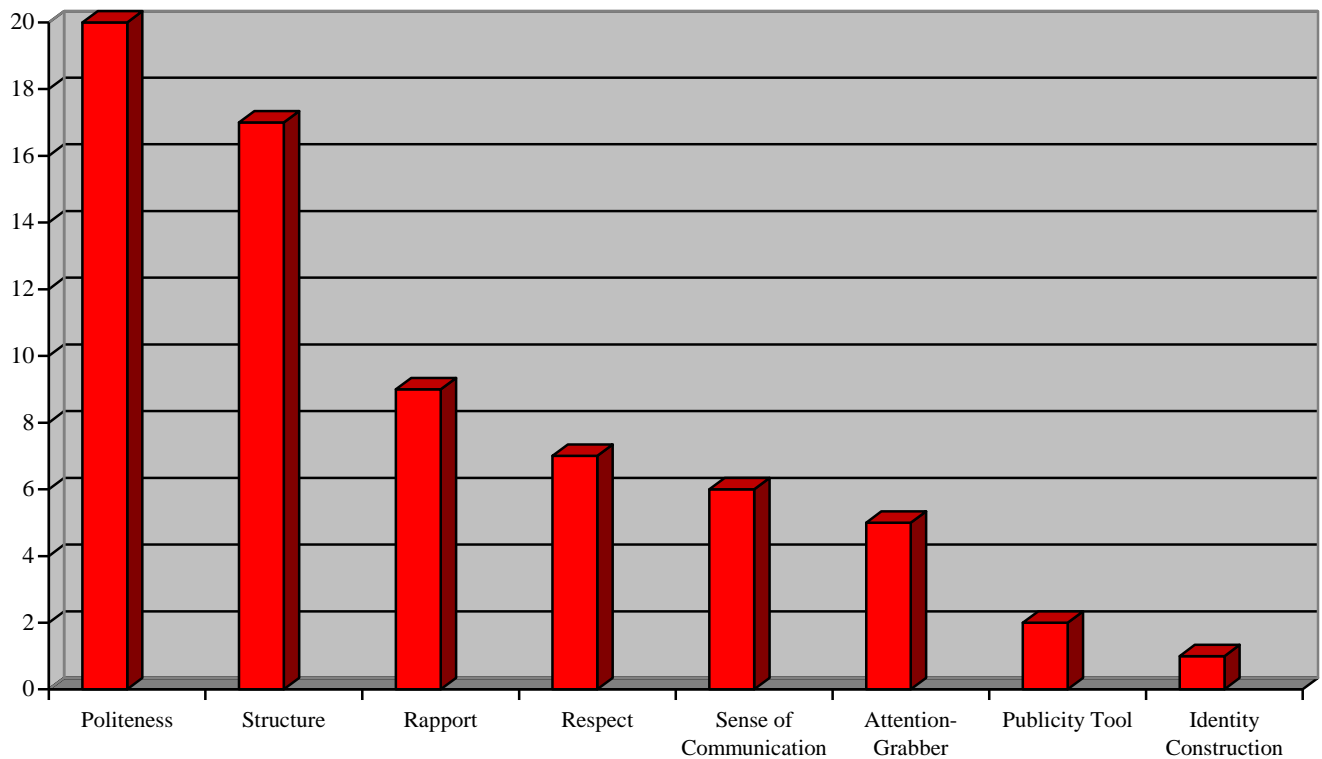

Figure 4.2: Elements that Reflect the Viewers' Agreement of the Importance of Opening and Closing Sequences in Vlogs

On the other hand, Table 4.7 illustrates in detail the frequency of the elements and the extent of the agreement of the 36 viewers, where they either *strongly agree* or *agree* with the importance of openings and closings in vlogs.

Table 4.7: The Frequency of the Elements and the Extent of the Viewers' Agreement

Elements	The Extent of the Viewers' Agreement		
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Total
Politeness	11	9	20
Structure	8	9	17
Rapport	4	5	9
Respect	5	2	7
Sense of Communication	1	5	6
Attention-grabber	3	2	5
Publicity tool	2	-	2
Identity construction	-	1	1

On the whole, politeness appears as the dominant reason as to why openings and closings are important in vlogs (N=20). This particular result confirms that the Malaysian viewers highly regard politeness. They most likely feel that the vloggers should offer some indication of courtesy and in this case, they believe that the indication should appear in the form of opening and closing sequences. The second most frequent justification given by the viewers is structure (N=17). They clearly perceive openings and closings as crucial factors for the vlogs to be well-structured. Meanwhile, the element that comes in third in terms of frequency is rapport (N=9). According to the viewers, opening and closing sequences facilitate the development of rapport by allowing the vloggers to establish a connection with them. The fourth reason that the viewers gave is respect (N=7). They fundamentally interpret the presence of openings and closings as a sign of respect for them.

Apart from that, the viewers stated that opening and closing sequences lessen the detached feeling between them and the vloggers (N=6). These sequences accomplish this feat by projecting a sense of proximity. Some of the viewers also claimed that opening sequences function as attention-grabbers (N=5). These openings are vital because they capture the

interest of the viewers and entice them to continue watching the vlogs. Furthermore, closing sequences are thought of as a publicity tool by a few of the viewers (N=2). In their closings, the vloggers usually ask the viewers for feedback in terms of comments and subscriptions, thereby securing the chance to promote and advertise their vlogs. Only one viewer gave 'identity construction' as a reason for the importance of opening and closing sequences (N=1). She believes that these sequences allow vloggers to build the identity they want to be known for.

4.3.2.1.1 Politeness

Politeness predictably turns out to be the most given justification amongst the Malaysian viewers (N=20). They take the issue of politeness seriously because it is a much esteemed value in the Malaysian culture and society. A total of three lexical items are extracted from the justifications of the viewers. Table 4.8 shows the different lexical items that support the category of 'politeness.'

Table 4.8: Lexical Items that Support the Category of 'Politeness'

Lexical Items	Manners	Polite	Courtesy
Number of viewers	9	7	4

According to the Merriam-Webster dictionary, 'manners' refers to the "habitual conduct of an individual." Most of the viewers in this study specifically used the phrases "good manners" and "well-mannered" (N=9), both of which can be related to courtesy and one's good upbringing. Meanwhile, some of them claim that vloggers seem more polite with opening and closing sequences (N=7) while others state that these sequences are a way of showing courtesy (N=4). The word 'courtesy' stands for a behaviour marked by polite

manners. These lexical items are clearly associated with politeness and thus, they are classified under the category of 'politeness.' Some of the justifications of the viewers are shown in Extract 18.

Extract 18

> **P20**
> At the beginning, it is necessary to greet everyone, because it is a **basic expression of courtesy**. You need to greet everyone to show your sincerity then make them continue listening to you. When you end your video, you need to say thank you to show that you appreciate those who are watching your video. Your good attitude may make them feel like watching your next vlog again.
>
> **P29**
> …Without that (openings and closings) a viewer may tend to think that the person who created the vlog may not have some **sense of politeness** and so on. Adding to that, in Malaysia many look at proper openings and closings otherwise they would just turn away from it…

P20 strongly feels that opening sequences are a basic expression of politeness. Her specific use of the adjective "basic" indicates her belief that greetings are necessary when one initiates communication with others. In her opinion, politeness is conveyed by the vloggers when they show their sincerity and appreciation of the viewers in their openings and closings. By doing so, the vloggers address the positive face of the viewers and this makes the viewers feel treasured. P20 also effectively points out the correlation between the vloggers' attitude and the number of viewers in her last sentence—"Your good attitude may make them feel like watching your next vlog again." Based on this statement, she appears to be aware that the vloggers are dependent on the viewers in terms of their popularity. The display of politeness benefits the vloggers because it portrays them in a

good light and appeals to the viewers. It then increases their chances of getting more views and subscribers, which are essential for them to obtain fame.

Meanwhile, P29 asserts that vloggers are considered rude if they leave out opening and closing sequences. This situation is interpreted in such a way because the omission of these sequences indicates the vloggers' ignorance of the viewers' presence. It is true that the viewers are not with the vloggers during the recording of the vlog. Despite this circumstance, the viewers would very much like to be acknowledged, as verified by P29's response. He takes it a step further by bluntly mentioning that most Malaysian viewers will reject vlogs without proper openings and closings. His statement implies that the vloggers are supposed to be polite because the social norms require them to be so. The presence or absence of openings and closings ultimately reflects their cultural values and upbringing. Therefore, those who exclude opening and closing sequences are evaluated disapprovingly, since these sequences are deemed customary.

Based on the responses of the viewers, it is clear that politeness is highly valued in Malaysia. This notion is further verified by the *Budi Bahasa Budaya Kita* (Being Polite is Our Culture) campaign, which is being promoted throughout the country (*Budi Bahasa Budaya Kita*, 2013). Given that politeness is such a crucial element in interactions, the viewers do not take its absence lightly. As such, it would do the vloggers much good if they insert opening and closing sequences in their vlogs.

4.3.2.1.2   Structure

The regular presence of opening and closing sequences in daily interactions offers a clue on the extent of their importance in maintaining the structure of a conversation. The same can

be said of the openings and closings in vlogs. The viewers in the study obviously agree with this idea as 'structure' emerged second place in terms of frequency (N=17). A total of two lexical items/phrasings are derived from their justifications. Table 4.9 demonstrates the lexical items/phrasings that support the 'structure' category.

Table 4.9: Lexical Items/Phrasings that Support the Category of 'Structure'

Lexical Items/Phrasing	Start and an End	Organized
Number of viewers	16	1

In general, the viewers feel that opening and closing sequences are required to ensure the structure of the vlogs. Many of the viewers argued that without a proper indication of a start and an end, the vlogs appear to be disorganized (N=16). Besides, one of the viewers used the word 'organized' to describe vlogs with openings and closings. This adjective is typically used to refer to something that is arranged in a systematic way. It is apparent that both lexical items are linked to the structure of the vlogs. As such, they are classified under the category of 'structure.' The justifications of several viewers are shown in Extract 19.

Extract 19

P1
Vlogs with openings and closing sequences appear more **organized**. This reflects on the level of ethics and professionalism of the owner.

P18
…yet without it will make people feel that the video like been chopped because no **starting or ending**.

P37
… It would be **a bit strange without opening and closing statements**…

P1 gives credit to opening and closing sequences for the organized structure of vlogs and negatively regards those without such sequences. She then connects the presence of these sequences with the vloggers' level of ethics and professionalism. Given that vlogging is their initiative and that they have a virtual audience, vloggers have the responsibility of making sure that their vlogs appear systematic and presentable in terms of structure. The inclusion of openings and closings also demonstrates their efforts in producing good vlogs. After all, just like a good speech, a good vlog ought to have an appropriate opening and closing sequence. By inserting these sequences, the vloggers convey the impression that they take their vlog-making seriously and want the best for their audience. On the contrary, those who fail to incorporate openings and closings come across as unprofessional because it appears as though they are indifferent towards the quality of their vlogs.

On the other hand, P18 straightforwardly condemns vlogs that lack opening and closing sequences. She even uses the word "chopped" to describe such vlogs because there is no start and end in the vlogs. This word gives the idea that vlogs without openings and closings are coarse and unrefined. They appear odd and somehow do not seem complete because it is as though some vital part is missing. P37 backs up this notion by stating that vlogs without openings and closings are strange. This situation can be likened to that of a conversation: Imagine meeting an individual for the first time and going straight to the topic without any greetings and then leaving without so much of a 'goodbye.' Likewise, the sudden start of a vlog without an appropriate opening sequence may leave the viewers disoriented and confused. As for vlogs without closings, they inevitably lack a feeling of finality as they appear to be left hanging. Ultimately, opening and closing sequences are important because they bring a sense of completeness of the vlogs as a unit.

4.3.2.1.3 Rapport

Rapport is required if one aims to construct a lasting relationship with others. Tickle-Degnen and Rosenthal (1990, p. 285) claimed that a high level of rapport between conversational partners creates "powerful interpersonal influence and responsiveness." Vloggers too attempt to establish rapport with their viewers and according to the viewers in this study, rapport is developed via the opening and closing sequences (N=9). A total of four lexical phrasings are retrieved from the justifications of the viewers. Table 4.10 shows the lexical phrasings that support the category of 'rapport.'

Table 4.10: Lexical Phrasings that Support the Category of 'Rapport'

Lexical Phrasings	Establish Familiarity	Feel Comfortable	Develop Relationship/ Connection	Feel Important	Establish Rapport
Number of Viewers	3	2	2	1	1

The lexical phrasings that are taken from the justification of the viewers reflect efforts to establish rapport. The viewers maintain that opening and closing sequences establish familiarity between the vloggers and viewers (N=3) and enable the viewers to feel comfortable (N=2). They also claim that these sequences aid the development of a relationship between the vloggers and viewers (N=2). Furthermore, openings and closings make the viewers feel important (N=1) and builds rapport (N=1). All in all, these lexical phrasings have the function of constructing a harmonious relationship and drawing the viewers closer to the vloggers. Therefore, they are grouped under the category of 'rapport.' The justifications of the viewers who claim that openings and closings are used to build rapport are shown in Extract 20.

Extract 20

P6
In my opinion, opening and closing sequences r important to help the vlogger to **establish rapport** with the audience. It brings them together…

P39
Opening and closing sequences for important for **establishing familiarity** with the viewers.

Based on her justification, P6 evidently believes that openings and closings help to establish rapport between the vloggers and viewers. Developing rapport is essential because vlogs are asynchronous in nature. This condition means that there is no chance for immediate feedback from the viewers. As a result, vloggers have to take extra measures to build rapport as it is what encourages the viewers to respond to them. The viewers are more likely to give feedback if they take a liking to the vloggers.

Furthermore, P6 claims that rapport brings the vloggers and viewers together. According to Nyowe (1993, p. 47), greetings measure the amount of warmth available in interpersonal and inter-group relationships. Similarly, the openings and closings in the vlogs reflect the vloggers' warmth towards the viewers and thus, enable rapport to be developed. When the vloggers greet them, it is as though they are being received by friends and this sensation makes them feel accepted. Meanwhile, closing strategies such as recapitulations convince the viewers that they are treasured by the vloggers and this strengthens the bond between them. Once a close interpersonal relationship is constructed, vloggers can easily persuade their viewers to respond to their requests for comments and subscriptions.

P39 maintains that opening and closing sequences are crucial for establishing familiarity. She seems to be aware that not all of the viewers will know the identity of the vloggers, especially if they are new to the vlogging word. It is difficult to build rapport if the feeling of unfamiliarity exists between the vloggers and viewers and this condition prevents the formation of a relationship. Opening strategies like self-identification and small talk allow the viewers to get to know the vloggers. Once they are familiar with the vloggers, they may discover similar interests and this in turn cultivates a sense of rapport as well as affiliation.

The significance of constructing and maintaining a cordial relationship with others in Malaysia is highlighted by Pramela, Marlyna Maros, and Siti Hamin Stapa (2012). The results of the present study concur with their statement as the category of 'rapport' comes in third in terms of frequency and this finding shows that the Malaysian viewers do consider rapport important. Essentially, they also believe that it can be established through opening and closing sequences.

4.3.2.1.4   Respect

Respect is a critical component of social relationships because it has the power to determine whether or not a relationship flourishes and also promotes harmony among individuals. Anderson (2013) underscored the importance of closings in communicating one's respect for another. Correspondingly, the viewers in this study claim that openings and closings are an indication of the vloggers' respect for them (N=7). The lexical item 'respect' is found in all seven justifications of the viewers. Extract 21 demonstrates the justifications of some of the viewers in the study.

Extract 21

P10
…is good to have opening and closing as a **respect** and greeting.

P29
…We greet as **respect**, so that's another whole issue as people here may look into those aspects in whatever they do.

According to P10, opening and closing sequences are a sign of respect for the viewers. These sequences acknowledge the presence of the viewers even though they are not present with the vloggers and in this way, the vloggers show their appreciation of them. Apart from that, P29 points out that Malaysians perceive respect as a required element in social interactions. Hence, his justification implies that Malaysian viewers may deem vloggers disrespectful if they omit the openings and closings. Respecting the viewers is definitely a beneficial move for the vloggers. Since it addresses their positive face, the viewers will feel gratified and in return, they may reciprocate by providing feedback that is desired by the vloggers. The show of respect through the openings and closings also reinforces the bond between them, thereby enabling the relationship to thrive.

4.3.2.1.5   Sense of Communication

Due to the asynchronous nature of vlogs, a feeling of detachment exists between the vloggers and viewers. More specifically, the detached feeling is caused by physical separation and delayed viewer feedback. Some of the viewers in the present study asserted that opening and closing sequences overcome the problem by minimizing this type of feeling (N=6). A total of two lexical phrasings are extracted from the justifications of the

viewers. Table 4.11 illustrates the lexical phrasings that support the category of 'sense of communication.'

Table 4.11: Lexical Phrasings that Support the Category of 'Sense of Communication'

Lexical Phrasings	Sense of Communication	Draws the Gap Between the Vloggers and Viewers Closer	Direct Address
Number of viewers	3	2	1

The retrieved lexical items portray the role of opening and closing sequences in reducing the detached feeling between the vloggers and viewers. Some of the viewers maintain that these sequences offer them a sense of communication (N=3) while others state that they reduce the gap between the vloggers and viewers (N=2). Only one viewer asserts that openings and closings make it appear as though the vloggers are addressing them directly (N=1). The lexical items that are extracted are grouped under the category of 'sense of communication.' The justifications of the viewers are shown in Extract 22.

Extract 22

P9
…Greetings in videos would give viewers a **sense of communication**…

P6
…I would personally feel that the vlogger is **addressing me directly** if he/she uses these greetings/closings.

P30
When the vloggers greet their viewers with a simple hello, it **draws the gap between the vloggers and viewers closer**…

P9 claims that openings and closings offer a sense of communication and her claims are supported by P6, who states that opening and closing sequences make her feel as though the vlogger is addressing her directly. Her justification indicates her awareness of the disconnected feeling that lingers between the vloggers and viewers. Harley and Fitzpatrick (2009, p. 685) argued that vloggers have to deal with a disconnected sense of the viewers. Viewers face the same condition too because they are not with the vloggers during the making of the vlog.

However, the disconnected feeling is significantly reduced with the assistance of opening strategies (e.g. greetings, term of address) and closing strategies (e.g. recapitulations, final closings), which engage the viewers in a direct manner. Such strategies are commonly found in daily face-to-face conversations and the implementation of these strategies in vlogs helps to stimulate an environment that is similar to face-to-face talk, which then constructs a sense of interaction. Consequently, it diverts the viewers' attention away from the fact that they are not able to interact with the vloggers simultaneously. This notion is clearly supported by P30, who insists that openings and closings lessens the gap between the vloggers and viewers. In essence, opening and closing sequences promote a feeling of proximity and efficiently diminishes the starkness of the medium's asynchronous nature.

4.3.2.1.6   Attention-Grabber

Several viewers stated that opening sequences function as attention-grabbers (N=5). Just like in a written piece or speech, the openings play a key role in capturing the attention of the viewers. A total of two lexical items are retrieved from the justifications of the viewers. Table 4.12 shows the lexical items that support the category of 'attention-grabber.'

Table 4.12: Lexical Phrasings that Support the Category of 'Attention-Grabber'

Lexical Phrasings	Attention	Attract the Audience
Number of viewers	3	2

The lexical items that are derived from the justifications of the viewers are evidently associated with the function of openings in capturing the interests of the viewers. As such, they are classified under the category of 'attention-grabber.' Extract 23 shows the justifications of some of the viewers in the study.

Extract 23

P26
Because the first 10% of videos are the parts that **captures its audience attention**.

P36
…It is very important because it will **attract the listeners** and the listeners will get the interest to listen or watch the video…

Both P26 and P36 recognize that opening sequences are of utmost importance because not only do they capture the attention of the viewers, they also give the viewers their first impression of the vlogs. In short, openings are the determining factor in the viewers' choice to continue watching the vlogs. It only takes a few moments for them to decide if the video is worth their time. An opening sequence can pique their interest and further encourage them to continue watching the vlog. Once their attention is within the vloggers' grasp, they can be led to the more content-oriented part of the vlog. If the vlogs were to start without an opening, the viewers may evaluate the vlogs negatively and choose to stop viewing them.

This highly possible scenario all the more stresses the importance of having an opening sequence in vlogs.

4.3.2.1.7   Publicity Tool

Publicity is obligatory for genres that need something in return from the audience. In the case of vlogs, vloggers need to publicize their videos to garner more viewer support in the form of views, comments and subscriptions. A total of two viewers maintain that closing sequences in vlogs serve as publicity tools (N=2). The vloggers' act of advertising their vlogs is more apparent in the closings as compared to openings. On the whole, a total of two lexical items are derived from justifications of the two viewers. Table 4.13 shows the lexical phrasings that support the category of 'publicity tool.'

Table 4.13: Lexical Phrasings that Support the Category of 'Publicity Tool'

Lexical Phrasings	Create Anticipation	Tool of Publicity
Number of viewers	1	1

As seen in Table 4.11, the extracted lexical phrasings underscore the role of vlog closings as publicity tools. They are basically a means for the vloggers to obtain feedback from the viewers, which is vital for the level of their popularity. The justifications of two viewers are demonstrated in Extract 24.

Extract 24

> **P19**
> …A closing is important to round up and end the vlog, as well as to **create anticipation** for the next vlog uploaded.

> **P33**
> …Sometimes, speakers do end with "please subscribe or please like" and this helps the speakers get more audience. Therefore, closing sequences are important as a **tool of publicity**.

P19 credits closing sequences for their role as publicity tools and states that they create anticipation for the next vlog. Anticipation is essential because if the viewers are looking forward to watching vlogs, it is highly likely that they will return to the vlogger's channel to watch his or her other videos. Vloggers can post up as many videos as they like in their YouTube channel but if the viewers do not respond or view the videos, then it is all in vain. Consequently, they have to rely on their closings to promote their vlogs. As mentioned by P33, the vloggers typically make requests like "please subscribe" or "please comment" in their closing sequence. Such requests remind the viewers that the vloggers are very much dependent on them and this reminder creates a sense of importance within the viewers and motivates them to react to the requests. The publicity brought by the closings ultimately increases the vloggers' chances of getting more viewers and subscribers.

4.3.2.1.8   Identity Construction

In the present study, only one viewer gave 'identity construction' as a reason for the significance of opening and closing sequences in vlogs (N=1). The concept of identity construction is advocated by Kang and Yang (2004) and Baran (2007), who asserted that identity play is likely in some types of CMC. The lexical item 'identity' is retrieved from the justification of the viewer, which is shown in Extract 25.

Extract 25

> **P11**
>
> …It can also create a different impression to the audience when someone is greeted in different accents and intonation. It also helps to indicate one's **identity**.

P11 believes that different accents and intonation in the openings can help the vloggers establish their identities. Other than that, openings and closings can also be used to create alternative identities. For instance, a vlogger may be good-natured in real life but in order to stand out and to introduce humour, he may resort to developing another identity in which he is fond of cursing. He can do so by incorporating more vulgar words or by adopting a foreign accent to sound tougher. The inclusion of features that define the vloggers' identity is best inserted in the openings and closings. After all, the first thing that viewers see is the opening sequence whereas the last thing that they see is the closing sequence.

4.3.2.2   Disagreement

Out of the 40 viewers, only three of them disagree that opening and closing sequences are important in vlogs (N=3). The lexical item that stands out in all three responses are the words 'information', 'content' and 'topic.' The justifications of the three viewers are shown in Extract 26.

Extract 26

> **P16**
> 1. **Disagree**.
> 2. cause the main reason people watching vlog is to get **information** or have their own purpose to be there, so the open and close sequence are not really important in that situation.

P28
I **disagree**. I think what matters to viewers is the level of controversy of a vlog **topic**, they are too busy concentrating on the **content** and wouldn't really care about the sequences.

P34
2, disagree. I feel people will focusing on the **topic**, not the opening and closing.

The three viewers overtly dismiss the significance of opening and closing sequences in vlogs. Instead, they give emphasis to the topic of the vlogs by arguing that the viewers will only concentrate on the content and do not bother about the openings and closings. However, the findings of the present study prove otherwise. A total of 50 percent of the viewers agree while 40 percent of them strongly agree that opening and closing sequences are vital in vlogs. This largely positive response shows that the Malaysian viewers do prefer and care about openings and closings in vlogs.

4.3.3   Summary

In general, the Malaysian viewers do consider opening and closing sequences important and the results of the study have confirmed this stance. The opening and closing strategies perform a variety of functions, all of which ultimately improve and enhance the quality of the vlogs. Most of these strategies are also infused with social and cultural values that are designed to impress and please the viewers. This finding suggests that the viewers do have some form of power over the vloggers.

4.4   Power of the Vloggers and Viewers

Power is a social variable that affects the ways in which people communicate with one another. As stated by Fairclough (2001, p. 38), "power in discourse" involves powerful participants controlling and constraining the contributions of non-powerful participants.

Due to the nature of vlogs, both vloggers and viewers possess power. The notion of power in this study does not concern the element of status. Rather, it revolves primarily around one's ability to influence another person. Essentially, the vloggers and viewers have different types of power that are shaped according to their circumstances.

4.4.1 Vloggers

The vloggers have the power to attract the viewers to watch their videos. They may use various kinds of persuasive strategies to convince the viewers that their vlogs are worth watching. For example, they may use humor as a means of attracting the viewers to continue watching the vlogs. The vloggers also have power in terms of the production of their vlogs. For instance, they have the authority to decide whether or not to include openings and closings, choose the topics to be discussed and determine the layout of the vlog. The viewers usually have no say in such matters because they are not present during the production of the vlogs. As a result, they cannot interrupt or change the content of the vlog in any way. The viewers may occasionally offer some suggestions on the types of topics that they would like to hear about. But in the end, it all boils down the choice of the vloggers—whether or not they want to accommodate the requests of the viewers or carry it out another way.

4.4.2 Viewers

The viewers have the power to decide whether or not the vlogs are worth watching and whether or not they buy the ideas of the vloggers. More importantly, they have the power to determine the success of the vloggers. Popularity in the vlogging world is associated with the number of subscribers and views. Vloggers are considered popular if they have a lot of

subscribers and views whereas they are deemed a failure if they have very few subscribers or views. Due to such circumstances, they are basically at the mercy of the viewers.

A number of researchers have demonstrated the play of power relations in CMC, particularly in emails (Sherblom, 1988; Bou-Franch, 2006; Waldvogel, 2007). They claimed that opening and closing strategies are politeness markers that signal one's acknowledgement of the difference in power. Likewise, majority of the Malaysian vloggers include opening and closing strategies in their videos. Some of these strategies efficiently cater to the viewers' face wants. For example, opening strategies such as greetings, pleasantry and small talk, and closing strategies like preclosings, apologies and final closings are used to show the vloggers' politeness and respect towards the viewers. Meanwhile, strategies such as terms of address and recapitulations are employed to develop rapport with the viewers.

The presence of opening and closing strategies in the Malaysian vlogs reflects the vloggers' consciousness of the viewers' considerable power in determining the level of their success. Based on the selection of strategies, it is clear that the vloggers realize the importance of giving a good impression. After all, the viewers are the ones who decide their fate in vlogging. The opening and closing strategies serve to appeal to the viewers by improving the overall condition of the vlogs. If the viewers like the vlogs, they are more likely to give feedback. The responses of the viewers in Extract 27 vindicate this conception.

Extract 27

| **P24** |
| Manners are important if you want people to continue watching your vlogs. |

> **P4**
> I think it would sound more appropriate and polite to their viewers if vlogs started out their opening sequence with greeting and ended with one as well. **This will attract more viewers to go back to the vlogs and watch videos in future as people always prefer to stay in touch with polite and friendly people.**

P24 agrees that opening and closing sequences are important and she links these sequences to the politeness of the vloggers. She obviously takes the presence of politeness seriously, even giving vloggers an ultimatum: Be courteous or else the viewers will not watch the vlogs. Her response portrays her awareness of her power as a viewer. P4's perception is akin to P24's as she claims that viewers generally prefer to go back to vlogs with openings and closings because they appear more polite. Based on justifications of the viewers, it is obvious that Malaysian viewers do favor vlogs that adhere to social expectations and this notion entails that they prefer vlogs with opening and closing sequences.

Aside from influencing the popularity of the vloggers, the viewers have another form of power. The vloggers need them to make vlogging a meaningful process. This situation is similar to that of broadcast media such as radio and television. For example, the audience is the essence of the act in radio talk. Some of the radio programs are even shaped according to the preferences of the audience. The whole thing is rendered pointless if no one is listening. Likewise, without viewers, the vloggers will merely be talking to their inanimate camera. It does not matter if they imagine an audience because the fact remains that they have none. It is a different thing to imagine an audience and actually have one, albeit one that is not present during the production of the vlog. The presence of viewers is required to provide a sense of social connection and their absence defeats the purpose of vlogging, which is to bond with a large number of people.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION

5.0   Introduction

This chapter presents the conclusions that are drawn from the overall findings. The conclusions are subsequently followed by the discussions and implications of the study. The following paragraphs also offer recommendations deemed appropriate to be undertaken in the future.

5.1   Conclusions

On the whole, this study has given an in-depth account of the opening and closing sequences of the Malaysian vloggers. It set out to determine the strategies that the vloggers use to open and close their vlogs and is also designed to investigate viewer perception regarding the importance of openings and closings in vlogs. The present study successfully answers the proposed research questions and makes several contributions by discovering opening and closing strategies that are unique to the Malaysian society and culture. Another contribution of this study comes in the form of the discussion of power between the vloggers and viewers. The following conclusions can be drawn from the study.

Firstly, Malaysian vlogs generally have opening strategies and the regular presence of these strategies reflects their importance in ensuring the well-being of the vlogs. At the very least, Malaysian vloggers are mindful enough to include greetings, which acknowledge the presence of the viewers. In addition, the opening strategies of the vloggers are subjected to social and cultural influences. Four other opening strategies that are unique to the

Malaysian context emerged in the data: small talk, pleasantries, request for feedback and apologies. This finding is consistent with the claims of Godard (1977), Halmari (1993) and Lee (2006), who maintain that openings are culture-specific. As politeness is crucial in the Malaysian society, the vloggers take care to incorporate small talk and pleasantries that attend to the positive face of the viewers. The discovery of pleasantries in the vloggers' openings also opposes Liddicoat's (1991, p. 286) claim that 'how are you' sequences are usually omitted in monologic talk due to its reciprocal nature.

Secondly, closing strategies are considered essential by the Malaysian vloggers, given that majority of them incorporate closing strategies in their vlogs. In fact, they used a total of three strategies in their closings, which Coronel-Molina (1998) did not discover in her Western data: (a) apologies, (b) request for feedback and (c) self-identification. Like the opening strategies, the closing strategies of the vloggers are also affected by social and cultural expectations. This idea is proven through the existence of apologies in their closings that address negative face of the viewers. Such a result is parallel with Okamoto (1990) and Paltridge's (2000) theory that closing strategies are shaped by culture. Furthermore, the vloggers were shown to use preclosings most frequently and this finding refutes Liddicoat's (1994, p. 308) claim that preclosings are usually avoided in monologic talk due to the suspension of turn-taking. It confirms that the idea that Liddicoat's (1994) conjecture cannot be applied to the monologues of the vloggers.

On the other hand, the request for feedback strategy, which is more prominent in closings, highlights the significance of viewer feedback in vlogging. The vloggers need feedback from the viewers to boost their popularity and to make vlogging a meaningful process. This study also uncovered another phenomenon, which is the absence of final closings. Unlike

most genres that require final closings, vloggers do not need them to end their monologues. This finding contradicts the assertions of Coronel-Molina (1998), Montgomery (2007) and Pojanapunya and Jaroenkitboworn (2011), who stated that final closings are compulsory in the termination of talk. In this case, the vloggers replace final closings with other closing strategies that better serve the interests of the viewers.

Thirdly, Malaysian viewers do consider opening and closing sequences important. The results of the online interviews have confirmed this particular notion. The viewers deem opening and closing sequences obligatory because they believe these sequences perform a variety of key functions. The roles of the opening and closing strategies range from enabling the vloggers to appear more polite to assisting them in establishing their identities. Essentially, opening and closing sequences are significant because they improve the overall condition of the vlogs, thereby enhancing the viewers' impression of the vloggers. A good impression is vital as it is what motivates the viewers offer their feedback.

Fourthly, both the vloggers and viewers possess power. However, the notion of power in this study does not encompass the element of status. Instead, it revolves mainly around one's capability of influencing other individuals. The power of the vloggers is limited to their ability to influence viewers to watch the vlogs and also to the production of their vlogs. Meanwhile, the viewers wield significantly more power than vloggers as they determine the success of the vloggers. Their presence is also needed to ensure the development of social connections because communication with others is the essence of vlogging. Moreover, the results have shown that most of the Malaysian vloggers' opening and closing strategies cater to the face wants of the viewers. The vloggers are aware of the power difference between them and thus, insert these strategies to please the viewers.

5.2   Discussions

Since vlogs are a comparatively new type of CMC, there is a lack of linguistic and discourse conventions in vlogging. In other words, there are no conventionalized opening and closing strategies to which vloggers can coordinate their actions. As a result, they suffer from discrepancies in their knowledge. They resolve this problem by borrowing the communication practices of other genres to compensate for the lack of conventions. The vloggers typically derive strategies from dialogic genres and more conventionalized monologues, namely from telephone calls, face-to-face conversations, answering machine talk and media talk. This finding is parallel with the results of Liddicoat (1994), Pappas and Seale (2009) as well as Frobenius (2011).

Apart from that, the vloggers have to rely on certain techniques to cope with the monologic context. These techniques minimize the obviousness of the medium's constraints and make the process of generating a monologue easier, Examples of such methods include imagining a co-present audience, the use of dialogic couplets, the voicing of multiple parties to form different characters and the use of non-verbal cues such as pauses. These methods create a conversational context in the monologues, which gives the illusion of turn-taking. In this way, the rigidness of the monologues is reduced significantly. Furthermore, the fact that the vloggers take the effort to make their monologues appear more dialogue-like indicates that they are still attached to dialogic conventions. This observation all the more underscores the novelty of vlogging as a genre. As there are no standardized guidelines for vlogging, the vloggers turn to conventions that they are familiar with to manage the monologic context. In general, the findings of the study concur with

Garrod and Pickering (2004) statement that monologues are more difficult to produce than dialogues.

Besides, the present study has shown that the opening and closing sequences of vlogs occasionally resemble media talk. However, they are more personalized as compared to the ones in media talk. This deduction is confirmed through the occurrence of personal remarks such as "I love you all" and "I miss you guys" in the monologues of the vloggers. Such intimate words are rarely found in media talk, even though both genres address a largely unknown audience. In addition, some of the vloggers used vulgar words in their openings and closings and this shows that they are comfortable with their surroundings as well as with the viewers. Unlike media talk where speech is recorded in a studio, vloggers record their monologues in the comfort of their own homes. In short, they have their own private space when producing their vlogs. As such, they feel more at ease and can afford to make more personalized remarks in their openings and closings. These remarks also encourage the viewers to keep on watching the vlogs as they indicate the vloggers' interest in establishing a bond with the viewers. All in all, the multifaceted structure of the vlog openings and closings is attributed to its entertainment-seeking purpose and the presence of a virtual audience.

5.3   Implications

This study contributes to the field of Pragmatics by demonstrating the ways in which the Malaysian vloggers adapt their speech in the monologic context. Unfortunately for the vloggers, they cannot directly apply dialogic conventions to their monologues. They are forced to modify some of the strategies and have to utilize specific techniques in their openings and closings to successfully overcome the obstacles presented by the monologic

circumstances. In a more general sense, this study contributes new data to the body of knowledge regarding CMC. It has been shown that there is hardly any research on vlogs, which a fairly new CMC genre. The present study fundamentally adds to the somewhat lacking literature on vlogs by revealing the various strategies that Malaysian vloggers use to open and close their vlogs.

5.4   Recommendations

Being a new form of CMC, vlogs offer a wealth of information for researchers. The data of the present study can be used for the purpose of future research. One could look at the non-verbal cues of the vloggers such as silences, pauses and gestures. After all, they are merely touched upon in passing in this study. One can also do research on the topics or content of the vlogs to shed light on, for instance, the structures of spontaneous monologues in vlogs. It is also possible to conduct a study on how vloggers convey their identities and roles through their common lexical choices and expressions. Evidently, much work remains to be done on this relatively new CMC genre that is subjected to its own potentialities and restrictions.

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APPENDIX A

Transcriptions of Opening and Closing Sequences of the Malaysian Vloggers

A. Opening Sequences

V1

1   *Assalamualaikum*=

      Peace be upon you=,
2   =I'm M and,
3   say hi to Harry Potter here. {holds up a Harry Potter pillow}
4   hah haha,
5   okay, {lowers the Harry Potter pillow}
6   just joking.
7   it's my favourite *bantal*.
      it's my favourite pillow.
8   anyway,
9   just a quick question.
10   has this ever happen to you?

V2

1   {scratches face} So I've just watched Breaking Dawn part one,
2   and if you're a fan of Twilight New Moon=
4   =Eclipse=
5   =Breaking Dawn or whatever face of the moon,
6   book you like to read,
7   you should not be watching this video,

V3

1   Hey YouTube.
2   how are you? {waves a pencil at the viewers and clears her throat}
3   sorry about that,
4   don't mind the hand, {shows her hand streaked with makeup}
5   was playing around with makeup. {leans forward}
6   hoo hoo.
7   today I'm going to talk about Eurasians,
8   and Eurasian is a person whose one parent is white and one parent is Asian.

V4

The vlogs opens with a voice telling the vlogger "Hey dude, you need to learn to pass around the Kentucky Fried Chicken" to which the vlogger responds with a "huh?"

1   Hey guys.
2   *assalamualaikum*. {salutes}
        peace be upon you. {salutes}
3   {cut}
4   so::
5   lately I've been getting a lot of fat jokes from random ass people from FB,

V5

1   {puts on rabbit ears headband} Hey guys. {smiles}
2   {waves and listens with hand near the ear for imaginary feedback}
3   okay um, {rubs left eye with fingers}
4   er I have a questions to ask you guys.
5   what is gay? (.)
6   serious what is gay=
7   = maybe you guys can answer me in the comment box so that I can really I can understand what is the definition of gay.

V6

1   Okay, {not looking at the camera}
2   I'll just start out by (.)
3   telling (.)
4   talking about,
5   um,
6   what happened to me (.) {looks at the camera}
7   yesterday morning.
8   it was (.)
9   really like a series of (.) misfortunate events.

V7

1   Hey guys. {waves}
2   let me ask you a question.
3   so what do you think is the most painful thing?
4   for me I would say it's the ulcer,

V8

1 Um okay,
2 so what's been going on with me today,
3 um excuse the messy hair,
4 I just (.)
5 not,
6 I didn't just woke up,
7 but like um,
8 I woke up up at eleven and I (.)
9 tend to sit around the house in my pajamas um,
10 for a few hours before I actually get ready to go out.
11 and I have to um go out in a while.
12 um my mum made an appointment with a neurologist at um,
13 a hos- at the nearby hospital for me to just um,
14 to diagnose my problem and I hope it turns out alright.

V9

1 Hi everyone.
2 this is W here.
3 I'm sorry but I've been kind of busy at work lately and I've not been able to post any new video for my YouTube subscribers.
4 so,
5 uh,
6 I didn't really have time to think of what to talk about on my next video blog and I didn't really have time to go around to interview a lot of my friends.
7 Well today I came home from work and again my car is filthy.

V10

1 Okay,
2 hi hello and good day to everyone.
3 this is me SK,
4 um long time no see.
5 er, {clears his throat}
6 okay,
7 er yesterday I went out with JR,
8 to the mall to have lunch with him together.

V11

1 Hello YouTube.
2 I'm back (.) for now.
3 I'm no longer going to promise that I'm going to (.) upload a video soon,
4 *atau lagi seminggu lagi sebulan* because,
   or another week or another month because,
5 it really depends on (.) when I feel like it.

6   I realized that I only vlog *bila I rasa I macam nak vlog*,
        I realized that I only vlog when I feel like vlogging,
7   *macam hari ini I balik*,
        like today when I came back,
8   I went out *lepas itu I balik*,
        I went out then I came back,
9   *I rasa macam* okay let's put on my red scarf and see what happens.
        I felt like okay let's put on my red scarf and see what happens.
10   so: this is what happens. {gestures to the camera}
11   {cut}
12   anyway,
13   Happy Chinese New Year guys,
14   happy year of the dragon.
15   I'm going to try to put on my best dragon face for the new year {puts on a fierce expression}
16   eh do dragons have claws?
17   I don't know.
18   hope you guys enjoyed your long holidays.
19   um (.) oh and happy new year!
20   this is my first vlog for the year.
21   happy 2012!
22   hope this year brings everybody good news and,
23   hope this year brings you more reward and blessing than last year,
24   *Inshallah*.
        God willing.
25   I feel like it's a really good year=
26   =*macam* I have a good feeling about this year.
        =like I have a good feeling about this year.
27   well I personally have so many things to look forward to.
28   {cut}
29   I'm going to talk about perceptions.
30   we tend to have perceptions about certain people,

V12

1   Hey guys! {waves}
2   {cut}
3   my brother just came back from Singapore,
4   {cut}
5   Singapore and he brought me,
6   {cut}
7   looks like chocolate. {holds up a bar of chocolate}
8   {cut}
9   but I tried yesterday
10   this,
11   {cut}
12   the content,
13   {cut}

14   this chocolate is super,
15   {cut}
16   this size,
17   {cut}
18   it's peanut butter cup.
19   if you can smell,
20   {cut}
21   what The Rock is cooking,
22   {cut}
23   beautiful.
24   I don't know=
25   =I would say it's a quality chocolate.
26   cut
27   and he also brought me this. {holds up a box of sweets}
28   {cut}
29   I laughed at first.
30   {cut}
31   after I tried,
32   it's amazing.
33   {cut}
34   yes it is a candy but (.) yummy!
35   {cut}
36   anyway today I don't really want to talk about what my brother brought me as a souvenir.

V13

1   Hey guys.
2   K here,
3   and it's the 5th of May.
4   {cut}
5   about one week I'm not making any videos.
6   well,
7   I caught flu.
8   I got (.) a very bad flu.

V14

1   Hey what's up guys!
2   it's er been a while since I've vlogged last and it's probably because I've been making so many excuses not to vlog.
3   so yeah,
4   I guess consistency of one of those things that I need to work on,
5   and it's been like a month since I vlogged last but uh,
6   ANYWAY,
7   this is I think vlog number 5 or so,
8   and today I am going to go on a little bit of a rant,
9   and it's mainly about Maxis,

10   my beloved network provider.

V15

The vlog opens with the vlogger singing and ending with a 'bitch!'

1   Hey what's up boys=
2   =SL here,
3   bringing you a little vlog (.) bitch! {snaps fingers}
4   {cut}
5   so have you heard (.) the baby's scream just now?
6   I'm sorry about that.
7   I live in a very noisy neighborhood.
8   Before I started shooting,
9   uh there's also dogs barking=
10   =so ah I'm starting this quite late,
11   and I'm sorry about the caller audio thing last time.
12   {cut}
13   you all have noticed that I'm wearing my ranting cap today?
14   cause I'm just going to do a (.) rant.
15   {cut}
16   so yesterday I was uh browsing on the web,
17   you know checking on the FB and shit,

V16

1   Hi,
2   today is the 26th of February 2011 on a Saturday.
3   I am so:: dead! {rubs forehead}
4   I slept,
5   instead of doing work I slept.

V17

The vlog starts with V17 looking away from the camera without a smile. She subsequently looks at the camera and smiles.

1   Hi,
2   um,
3   I'm quite (.) free lately.
4   first of all,
5   this is a video response to um (.) user F7MX,
6   whatever that (.) means.

V18

1   Hi and *assalamualaikum*!
     hi and peace be upon you!
2   I'm S.
3   {cut}
4   *salaam Ramadan.*
5   well,
6   people always whine,
7   I don't want to sweat,
8   I'll be tired because I'm fasting.

V19

1   Well holo people!
2   holo yello mello tello=
3   =okay *dah diam*!
     =okay enough shut up!
4   okay I'm back,
5   hi! {waves}
6   *macam* I've been,
     like I've been,
7   *aku* busy *ah baru-baru ini*=
     I've been busy recently=
8   =*aku baru masuk* U and (.) *rasa macam* busy *ah.*
     =I've just got into university and (.) feel busy.
9   and *macam aku tak bawa kamera ke sana*,
     and I didn't bring my camera there.
10   so *macam sepi gila*!
     so I felt terribly lonely!
11   *sebab tak dapat cakap depan kamera untuk kau orang*.
     because I couldn't talk in front of the camera for you all.
12   so *macam* I'm back,
     so like I'm back,
13   *sebab saya dekat rumah*,
     because I'm at home,
14   *macam ada kamera saya boleh cakap*,
     there's a camera so I can speak,
15   so *macam itu la dia.*
     so that's how it is.
16   oh *aku buat* this page *dekat* Facebook,
     oh I made this page in Facebook,
17   er my page,
18   so *macam aku harap kau orang pergi* like *ah page itu ya*,
     so I hope you guys will go like that page yeah,
19   as your support and *macam*,
     as your support and like,
20   thank you for *yang cari-cari aku*,
     thank you to those who came to find me,

21 oh *kenapa kau tak buat* video *baru*?
 oh why didn't you make new videos?
22 I'm back!
23 I'm here!
24 I *macam* okay *dah*!
 I was like okay enough!
25 I want to start.
26 cheh I want to start! ((laughs))
27 I *rindulah kau orang*=
 I missed all of you=
28 =and *macam aku* ecstatic *gila nak buat* video.
 =and like I feel crazily ecstatic to make videos.
29 okay *lah diam*!
 okay shut up!
30 okay *dah dah start*.
 okay I'll start now.
31 okay okay.
32 *tajuk aku*,
 my title,
33 *tajuk kita pada hari ini is kaye* so what?
 our title for today is rich so what?

V20

1 *Assalamualaikum* semua!
 peace be upon you all!
2 {cut}
3 so yeah,
4 *kau orang macam mana*?
 how are you?
5 *sihat*? {thumbs up sign}
 fine?
6 ya?
7 okay. {thumbs up sign}
8 {cut}
9 ya okay (.) {looks away from the camera}
10 {cut}
11 okay yeah *memang* awkward.
 okay yeah it is awkward.
12 awkward *sangat cakap depan kamera*=
 very awkward talking in front of the camera=
13 =*memang* okay *sebab dah lama*,
14 *dah lama sangat tak buat* video.
 it's been a long time since I made a video.
15 ya *memang lama*!
 ya a long time!
16 {cut}
17 okay as many of you know=

18   =*tahun ini saya akan menduduki peperiksaan* SPM.
        =I'm going to sit for the SPM examination this year.

V21

1   What?
2   {cut}
3   haven't seen,
4   {cut}
5   someone eating bread before?
6   {cut}
7   so Malaysians=
8   =how're you guys doing today?
9   {cut}
10   I just got myself a copy of unchartered faith today.

V22

1   *Saya tahu saya dah lama* (.) *menyepi* okay.
        I know I've been gone for a long time okay.
2   uh *ini adalah satu* comeback *yang terbaru dari*=
        uh this is the latest comeback from=
3   =*daripada* V. ((laughs))
        =from V. ((laughs))
4   okay,
5   uh guys, ((laughs))
6   guys.
7   okay uh,
8   *terlebih dahulu*,
        first of all,
9   *saya ingin memohon maaf lah*.
        I would like to apologize.
10   *sebab saya tak* update *sangat* vlog *saya ataupun* v-log *saya ini*=
        because I didn't update my vlog or v-log=
11   =*tapi tak apalah*.
        =but it's okay.
12   um,
13   *hari ini saya* update *sebab saya fikir yang*,
        I updated it today because I think,
14   *esok adalah hari jadi* birthday *saya*,
        tomorrow is my birthday,
15   so uh,
16   okay lah,
17   *kita mulakan dengan* vlog *ataupun* v-log *yang* (.) *yang* latest *daripada Van*.
        we shall start with the latest vlog or v-log by V.
18   {cut}
19   *esok adalah* birthday *saya*.
        tomorrow is my birthday.

V23

1   *Assalamualaikum wa rahmatullahi wa barakatuh*,
    peace be upon you and so may the mercy of Allah and His blessings
2   my name is AZ and you're watching This Is AZ.
3   {cut}
4   *assalamualaikum.*
    peace be upon you.
5   hey guys!
6   *apa khabar*?
    how are you?
7   and *salam sejahtera bagi yang bukan agama Islam.*
    and greetings to those are not Islamics.
8   {cut}
9   ok so guys and girls,
10 *apa nak cerita hari ini ya*?
    what should I talk about today?
11 {cut}
12 ah *kau orang tahu tak pasal video baru* Rebecca Black "My Moment"?
    ah do you all know about Rebecca Black's new video "My Moment"?
13 and *pasal* (.) Niga Higa *kena nombor satu lagi dekat* YouTube tahu?
    and about (.) Niga Higa getting the number one spot in YouTube?
14 and *juga pasal* CST Production.
    and also about CST Production.
15 you know,
16 company *yang buat* HDSLR,
    the company who makes HDSLR,
17 *pakai* DSLR *di* Malaysia,
    using DSLR in Malaysia,
18 coming to Malaysia.
19 *ha dia pakai* DSLR *biasa macam yang saya buat sekarang ini.* ((points to the
    camera and pauses for a few seconds))
    they are using the normal DSLR like what I'm using now. ((points to the camera
    and pauses for a few seconds))
20 but *itu bukan yang saya nak cakap hari ini*.
    but that's not what I want to talk about today.
21 okay okay serius *sekarang*.
    okay okay serious now.
22 *serius*.
    serious.
23 {cut}
24 *jadi kau orang semua*,
    so all of you,
25 *sudah sampai masanya semula untuk kita yang beragama Islam*,
    the time has come once more for us Islamics,
26 *untuk melakukan perkara yang selalu kita lakukan,*
    to do what we always do,

V24

1	Hello my fellow YouTu:ban people!
2	I realized that most of my previous videos=
3	=I (.) tend to begin them with apologizing about not making a video for so long,
4	I've been busy blah blah blah!
5	so,
6	I'm going to make it a point that I'm not going to do that any more.
7	{cut}
8	in the name of the Girls Scouts promise,
9	I pledge that I'll never,
10	never ever ever apologize about not making videos,
11	and making excuses in my future videos.
12	{cut}

The vlogger shows a video recording which documents her attending a book fair.

13	{cut}
14	you know that little clip you just saw a while ago,

V25

The vlogger begins by singing the sentence "Going to make a fucking video." He is not looking at the camera but at his hand phone.

1	Oh am I already recording? {looks at camera and smiles}
2	hey what up guys!
3	{cut}
4	hope you're doing fine.
5	{cut}
6	okay first of all thank you so much for the great support on all the previous videos=
7	=some of you actually sent in (.) your first ever profile pics,

V26

1	Hey guys.
2	how are you?
3	I know that I've been missing for a really really long time.
4	so that is why I figured that it is very appropriate for me to start brand new,
5	with something a little less dramatic than the usual which is makeup tutorials perhaps.
6	I have so much ideas for makeup tutorials.
7	I'm currently on holiday.
8	I'm having three months holiday.
9	so it's a very very long one,
10	hopefully I'll be able to make full out of it and maybe just make some tutorials,
11	videos and all that stuff.

| 12 | {cut} |
| 13 | so today I'm going to be doing the Get to Know Me tag, |

V27

1	Hey YouTube! {claps}
2	I'm MK=
3	=I'm the Y (username).
4	uh,
5	so um,
6	I created this account in uh,
7	let me think this through. {snaps fingers}
8	{cut}
9	I created this account September 28 2009,

V28

1	Hello everyone.
2	it's been a (.) while since my last vlog,
3	and (.) what happened yesterday,
4	I lost my motorcycle keys.
5	and how did I lose it?
6	Here goes the story.

V29

1	Greetings fellow YouTubers! {salutes}
2	and welcome to my channel.
3	today is what I like to call a lovey Wednesday,
4	where we talk about love,
5	relationships or breakups or make ups or anything that is related to it.
6	right so,
7	today I'm interesting to talk about what my friend had posted on her Facebook status.

V30

1	Hi it's L and I do Wednesdays,
2	which is whenever I make a video,
3	Wednesdays.
4	halfway through the week so keep smiling!
5	anyways,
6	today since the week is (.) the topic is random stuff,
7	I'm going to talk about my trip to Redang.

B. Closing Sequences

V1

126   Okay,
127   so that's all my advice.
128   be careful with your cyber world,
129   social networking thing.
130   number two,
131   keep those gadgets away when you're with real people please.
132   {cut}
133   that's all from me.
134   I'm M, {gestures to herself}
135   and I'm all about chill ya'all!
136   okay,
137   *assalamualaikum*=
       peace be upon you=
138   = *kalau tak jawab dosa, kalau jawab sayang.*
139   ↑and I'm having tea with Harry Potte: :r↓ {holds up the Harry Potter pillow again}
140   okay {waves}

V2

95   so that wraps up Breaking Dawn.
96   girls=
97   =if you find a guy who is willing to go watch it with you,
98   treasure him for the rest of your life.
99   if you find a guy who is willing to watch it without you,
100   {cut}
101   you might want to rethink what you're doing to this guy.
102   {cut}
103   Breaking Dawn part one was the most messed up movie I've ever seen
104   so part two (.)
105   you can go break your own freaking dawn.
106   okay?

V3

60   so,
61   tell me,
62   do you think that only getting veejays who are Eurasian,
63   do you think that's a form of discrimination=
64   = ˚cause I think it is˚. ((whispers))

V4

88   (   ) if they fuck things up.
89   {cut}
90   What?
91   can't deal with it?
92   {cut}
93   I've got a fat ass you can kiss to it! {throws a punch}
94   {cut}
95   peace! {gives a peace sign}

V5

65   okay um,
66   so I guess that's all.
67   ya my camera is not gay too= {points to the camera}
68   = don't ever say my camera is gay {frowns}
69   okay. {smiles}
70   I guess that's all=
71   = so guys enjoy this video and just stop talking about gay if you're always talking about it.
72   so yeah that's all.
73   thank you guys=
74   = thanks for watching.
75   thanks.
76   okay,
77   bye.

V6

124   it's like this guy is taking advantage of my misery,
125   and I was really upset about it.
126   but I was thinking to myself,
127   you know,
128   er you know (.)
129   at least for one jerk like him,
130   you know,
131   there's three other nice guys who came over to help me.
132   and I was really grateful about that.
133   and if any of these three guys watch YouTube,
134   and they recognize me from this video,
135   I just want to say I really really want to thank you.

V7

41   And why I said salt is the most effective way?
42   it's because the salt can clear the surface bacteria, {points at her mouth}
43   let the ulcer recover more quickly.

44   ya ::
45   make sure you do that when you have an (.)
46   ulcer.

V8

145   They [her parents] are still overprotective,
146   maybe even more.
147   and people say that they will change after some time,
148   of you not being home,
149   but I don't see any changes at all,
150   like (.) is it ever going to change?
151   I have no idea=
152   =my parents are like special or something.
153   I don't know.

V9

77   but regardless=
78   =whether you've taken that quiz or not,
79   I'd like you to tell me as a friend,
80   uh,
81   in the text comment at the bottom or um, {points downward}
82   send me a video response,
83   what your weird pet peeves are.
84   if you can't name five I'm fine with it.
85   just give one really really weird pet peeve of yours.
86   okay,
87   thank you everyone for watching.
88   see you next time. {waves}
89   bye!

V10

85   *I malas nak buat* vlog *sekarang*. {shakes his head}
       I feel too lazy to make a vlog now. {shakes his head}
86   my bad (.)
87   okay that's all.
88   bye bye.
89   take care.

V11

180   so anyway,
181   *itu je I nak membebel hari ini*.
       that's all I want to rant about today.
182   I just (.) wanted to get it out there,

183 {cut}
184 you shouldn't judge someone based on what race they are,
185 what gender they are or how they look like on the outside.
186 {cut}
187 just because somebody doesn't look like you,
188 or talk like you,
189 doesn't mean they're any less better than you.
190 it doesn't mean that they're below you,
191 and it definitely doesn't mean that you're better than them.
192 {cut}
193 alright,
194 bye guys! {waves}

V12

115 keep on trying,
116 {cut}
117 trying,
118 {cut}
119 trying,
120 {cut}
121 means cannot convert to the video format.
122 you understand?
123 I'm out of here.

V13

31 because (.) you know,
32 that the video needs a bit more editing,
33 and after I edit it I will post it on YouTube.
34 that's all from me.
35 um peace out. {salutes}

V14

119 so yeah let me known what you think. {points to the camera}
120 er let me know if I'm overreacting,
121 let me know if I'm just being a little too *kiasu* for my own good,
  let me know if I'm just being a little too overly competitive for my own good
122 and er let me know if you AGREE with me.
123 especially if you agree with me alright.
124 so until next time,
125 *ciao*!
  bye!

V15

76   well I guess that's it for today.
77   My name is SL,
78   stay fly homies!
79   peace!

V16

22   if I watch TV,
23   maybe I could write better scripts.
24   whatever. ((sighs))
25   I'm so:: in a dilemma right now.
26   could you some (.) could someone please tell me what to do?
27   thanks!

V17

274   uh so,
275   FM what's your name?
276   FM7X uh keep up those videos,
277   and I hope that you subscribe to my (.) channel cause I enjoy your videos a lot.
278   so till next time,
279   bye! {waves}

V18

74   so let us all start fasting,
75   for the better quality and a better understanding of the true meaning of Ramadan.
76   may Allah bless us all.
77   *assalamualaikum* and *salaam Ramadan*!
       peace be upon you and *salaam Ramadan*!

V19

219   =so *macam itu sahaja lah* for now,
       =so that's all for now.
220   and I'll be back with a new video soon I hope.
221   so *macam assalamualaikum* and thank you people for your support.
       so like peace be upon you and thank you people for your support.
222   I love you all!
223   follow my blog,
224   my (.) my twitter,
225   my Facebook account *semua* okay?
       my Facebook account all okay?
226   bye! {waves}

V20

142   *tapi kalau kau orang semua nak contact* S *lagi senang*,
          but if you wan to contact S it'll be easier,
143   {cut}
144   just follow *dekat Twitter*.
          just follow me in Twitter.
145   {cut}
146   yeah *sebab* S *selalu online* Twitter *daripada* Facebook.
          yeah because S is more frequently online in Twitter than in Facebook.
147   so yeah,
148   {cut}
149   oh and *Selamat Hari Raya*,
150   *maaf zahir and batin*.
          forgive my physical and emotional wrongdoings.
151   S *nak minta maaf kalau* S *ada silap kata dalam* video,
          S wants to apologize if S said anything wrong in this video,
152   *atau buat salah dekat sesiapa yang* S *kenal=*
          or if Shahrin did anything wrong to anyone whom S knows=
153   *=yang tengah tengok* video *ini*.
          =the ones watching this video.
154   {cut}
155   *minta maaf*! {hands clasped together in praying gesture}
          I'm sorry!
156   {cut}
157   *assalamualaikum*!
          peace be upon you!

V21

115   so everyone in Malaysia,
116   especially my subscribers=
117   =you right there watching my videos, {points to camera}
118   I just want to ask you guys a question.
119   if you're given a choice free house,
120   let's say you're given amount,
121   unlimited amount of money.
122   so the person will buy a house for you,
123   and you had to pack,
124   and you had to pack and move,
125   like which type of house is your dream home?
126   and you can tell me below,
127   in the comments or actually give me a video response.
128   basically that's about it guys!
129   this is me H.
130   *ciao*!
          bye!

V22

128   okay lah,

129   *itu saja yang saya nak cakap dekat sini.*
        that's all that I want to say here.

130   {cut}

131   okay lah,

132   *mengira detik-detik hari jadi saya yang akan* er,
        counting down the seconds to my birthday er,

133   *berlaku* (.) *lagi dua jam.*
        which would happen in two hours' time.

134   so: um,

135   *baik lah terima kasih kerana menonton* video vlog *yang* (.) *daripada Van.*
        alright thanks for watching the video vlog by Van.

136   *sangat* boring *dan sangat* er *membosankan dan,*
        it's boring and very boring and,

137   *ya lah sangat memboringkan dan membosankan,*
        yeah very boring and boring,

138   *jadi harap maaf lah,*
        so please forgive me,

139   *sebab saya pun* (.) *saya pun tak banyak* idea *sangat lah* okay.
        because I also (.) I also don't have a lot of ideas okay.

140   *tapi* er,
        but er,

141   *kau boleh add* Facebook er,
        you can add Facebook er,

142   ya *lah* profile Facebook profile,
        ya profile Facebook profile,

143   profile Facebook *saya di:* Facebook.
        my Facebook profile in: Facebook.

144   of course *lah mesti dekat* Facebook *kan*?
        of course it's in Facebook right?

145   er *ada tertera di bawah ataupun di atas.*
        er it's shown on the top or the bottom.

146   okay *it saja setakat ini.*
        okay that's all for now.

147   *terima kasih kerana menonton* video *yang bodoh sekali*!
        thanks for watching this most stupid video!

V23

91   so *itu saja daripada saya.*
        so that's all from me.

92   click location *dekat sini untuk* previous videos, {points to his right}
        click this location over here to view previous videos, {points to his right}

93   *dan* click location *dekat hujung sana untuk* next video, {points to his left}
        and click that location over there to view the next video, {points to his left}

94   *kalau ada nantilah.*

if there is one later on.
95 so that's it!
96 this is A.
97 signing off!

V24

143 so (.) that's all now=
144 =I'm sorry for the very long video,
145 but I love you guys!
146 muah! {gives a flying kiss}

V25

148 yeah but uh,
149 that's it for now,
150 and I'll see you guys in a couple of days.
151 peace!

V26

234 so that is it for today.
235 so I'll talk to you all very soon.
236 bye! {waves}

V27

47 so please subscribe and watch out for my later videos.
48 like right now,
49 up there somewhere {points upwards}
50 yeah click there,
51 subscribe,
52 look for my latest videos.
53 and like,
54 and CLICK that like button down there! {points downwards}
55 seriously!

V28

54 go and enjoy it.
55 don't think too much.
56 okay that's all.
57 peace!

V29

39	so yeah seriously,
40	what do you guys think about this situation?
41	has it ever happened to you?
42	if it does,
43	how did you guys react on this?
44	what did you guys do?
45	did you freak out and go "why did you call my sister?" {waves his hands in the air}
46	or you're just like "ya so?"
47	just don't go and sleep with my sister or brother.
48	or what?
49	please leave a comment down here, {points downwards}
49	down there.
49	alright leave a comment there.
49	uh leave a comment there and um,
50	tell me how did you deal with this,
51	and also do not forget to subscribe. {points upwards}
52	there there there's a button up there,
53	the yellow one which says there subscribe.
54	anyway,
55	don't forget to subscribe to my channel.
56	because why?
57	because it's free!
58	it's free baby!
59	you're not going to have to pay me any money to subscribe to my channel=
60	=it's free!
61	so until then,
62	have a good life,
63	God bless your soul and bye bye! {salutes and winks}

V30

190	so that basically it!
191	and (.) yeah,
192	I feel like I'm talking too much.
193	no one is going to watch seven minutes of me rambling!
194	ok,
195	thank you so much for spending your time and watching me.
196	see you!

APPENDIX B

Interview Questions

Hello, how are you? I'm currently doing research on the openings and closings of Malaysian video blogs (vlogs). I would appreciate it if you could participate in the survey. Your identity will remain anonymous and your responses will only be used for research purposes. Your help is very much appreciated.

1. Please respond to the following statement.

"Opening sequences (e.g. hi, hello guys, hi everyone) and closing sequences (e.g. okay bye, thanks for watching) play an important role in vlogs."

Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
5	4	3	2	1

2. Please explain the reason for your response.

Thank you for your time.

APPENDIX C

The Viewers' Responses to the Interview Questions in the Pilot Study

P1

strongly agree… with all these sequences, the video will sound **friendlier** and might gain interest for viewer to continue watchin\

P2

1. Agree
2. Cause is like gesture, greeting people that is what we do everyday. An opening and ending sent people know when is **starting and end**

P3

agree
in my opinion, this kind of opening and closing sequences can make the viewers **feel that they are somehow communicating to them**, as it's always a good thing for the viewer to feel good, especially vblog, which reinforce them to continue watch the vblog.

P4

I agree. I find those vlogs with d opening and closing sequences r more **polite/friendly** user? They somehow catch my attention to the links, I would feel like the videos r recommended/worth to watch.

P5

Strongly agree. I feel that vlogs with openings and closings are better thought-out. They makes vlogs more efficient as there is a systematic **structure**. To me, those without openings and closings seem messier and disorderly.

The Viewers' Responses to the Interview Questions

P1

☺
My answer to your first 'Q': **Agree**
My answer to your second 'O': Vlogs with opening and closing sequences appear to be more **organized**. This reflects the level of ethics and professionalism of the owner.

P2

Agree, because….. what's a 'vlog' without a proper greeting? I admit that it can be annoying sometimes to hear the same greeting everytime, but once you get use to it, it shouldn't be a problem.

To me, having an opening and a closing will make you **feel welcomed**, makes you **feel as though that person is talking to you**, greeting you in a **well-mannered** way. Put it simply, a 'vlog' won't be a 'vlog' without the opening and closing. Just imagine: Someone comes up to you for the 1st time and goes straight to the topic.

P3

Hi, I'm fine here ☺. I would be glad to help you in this survey.

1. **Strongly agree**.
2. The opening and closing sequences play an important role as an application of **good manners**. In a vlog, the person addressing the audience with opening and closing sequences would sound **polite** and **draws the attention** of his/her audience. It indicates that the person **respects** the audience before presenting his views or ideas in the vlog.

P4

Hi there. I'm fine.
Well for no.1, I chose **strongly agree**.
2. The reason I chose that was because, I think it would sound more appropriate and **polite** to their viewers if vlogs started out their opening sequence with greeting and ended

with one as well. This will attract more viewers to go back to the vlogs and watch videos in the future as people always prefer to stay in touch with **polite** and friendly people.

P5

Agree. By acknowledging the vlog viewers, they will **feel engaged in a conversation with the vlogger**. This will encourage more interaction between the vlogger and its audience while also cultivating a loyal viewership.

P6

1. **Strongly agree**.

2. In my opinion, openings and closing sequences r important to help the vlogger to **establish rapport** with the audience. It brings them together. I would personally feel that the vlogger is **addressing me directly** if he/she uses these greetings/closings.

P7

agree, give me a good impression and I will feel the guy is **polite**. ☺ if without the closing, I may feel blur **whether it is the end or still got another part**.

P8

Agree, it is a **basic manner** to greet others…
mm…if without all those opening and closing sequences, its **like too sudden to start or end a statement**…(my opinion la > <)

P9

Agree. With the availability of the extensive internet access, people are communicating lesser in person. Greetings in videos would give viewers a **sense of communication**. This somehow fills the pea-sized gap in our lives.

P10

1. **4**

2. is good to have opening and closing as a **respect** and greeting

P11

1) **4**. 2) to show **respect** and also a way to **inform the audience about the beginning and closure of the vlog**. It can also create different impression to the audience when someone is greeting in different accents and intonation. It also helps to indicate one's **identity**.

P12

1)**5**. 2) to create a more **personal relationship** with the audience by greeting them. It is also a way of showing **courtesy** and **respect** in communication.

P13

1. answer is **4**

2. To show **courtesy** towards the viewers and also as an **act of signing in and out** ☺

P14

1)**4** 2)it provides **indication to the viewers about the start and the end** of the video. Plus, it is **basic in greeting**.

P15

Question 1
5. **Strongly Agree**

Reason: Opening and closing is just like **"Start" and "The End"** of the video in Vlogs. I can't imagine if someone just suddenly "appear" and talking grandmother story, so scary…Just like a person having some mental problem. Also, it shows **politeness** of a person.

P16

1. **disagree**.
2. cause the main reason people watching vlog is to get **information** or have their own purpose to be there, so the open and close sequences are not really important in that situation.

P17

1. **4**
2. Opening and closing sequences brings about a **connection** between the vlogger and the audience. It indicates a **start and an end** of a conversation/announcement to the audience. The opening sequence, in a way, prepares both the vlogger and the audience for the message that is to be presented, quite like taking a breath before going into the message. However, the closing sequence plays different role from the opening. Besides indicating the end of a vlog, sometimes it may be an advice or opinion that the vlogger wants to declare to make an impact towards the audience.

P18

1. **4**
2. for me its just a **good manner**, yet without it will make people feels that the video like been chopped because no **starting or ending**.

P19

1. **5**

2. I think that opening sequence is important coz it's important for the vlogger to introduce him or herself to the viewers. Some viewers may not know who they are. It is also **common courtesy** for the vloggers to greet the viewers and **build rapport** before vlogging.

A closing is important to round up and end the vlog, as well as to **create anticipation** for the next vlog uploaded.

P20

1) **5 Strongly Agree** 2) At the beginning it is necessary to greet everyone, because this is a **basic expression of courtesy**. You need to greet everyone to show your sincerity and then make them continue listening to you. When you end your video, you need to say thank you to show that you appreciate those who are watching your video. Your good attitude might make them feel like watching your next vlog again.

P21

4, agree. It is because **polite** greeting to the audience who support and follow their vblog.

P22

1. **4 agree**
Because I think it brings **proximity** with the viewers and also creates a less formal and amiable atmosphere so that we could enjoy watching the videos.

P23

1. **4 agree**
2. I don't usually pay attention to the opening and closing of a video as I am more interested in the topic and content of the vlogs. However, I can't deny that they shouldn't be missing from vlogs as they serve as greetings and make viewers more **comfortable** with the vloggers.

P24

1.**4**
2. **manners** is important if you want people to continue watching your vlogs.

P25

Strongly agree. This is because vlog is like a phone call in that the **first word we say when we pick up the phone is hello and the last word will be goodbye.** The opening sequence plays an important role because it shows that we are starting a new topic and it's not a continuation from our previous video. As for the closing sequence, it indicates the ending of our video and it also shows that the video does not overlap with the second one.

P26

4

Because the first 10% of videos are the parts that **captures its audiences attention**

P27

5 Strongly Agree opening sequences is like a kind of **manner**, sure when u **start** a video have to greet ur audience 1st, n closing sequences oso important to tell the audience it's the **end** of the video, if not the audience will feel weird y suddenly stopped the video.

P28

okay sure

I **disagree**. I think what matters to viewers is the level of controversy of a vlog **topic**, they are too busy concentrating on the **content** and wouldn't really care about the sequences.

P29

Sorry **5**

Well, in my opinion, a good piece of work needs a **proper introduction and conclusion**. Without that a viewer may tend think that the person who created the vlog may not have some **sense of politeness** and so on. Adding to that, in Malaysia many look at proper openings otherwise they would just turn away from it. We greet as **respect**, so that's another whole issue as people here may look into those aspects in whatever they do.

P30

1. **4 agree**. When vloggers greet their viewers with a simple hello, it **draws the gap between vloggers and viewers closer**. It's also shows **good manners** from the vlogger.

P31

5..Strongly agree
Well, it simply acts as an opening for the vlogger to start writing. Or to show the **starting point of interaction** that the vlogger wish to produce when the viewers view his or her vlog.

P32

5. it's a important **manner** to every audience that watched the video. if I am the audience, I will be feeling good when I'm being thanked after watched the video blog

P33

I'll give it a **5**. It is important to have opening sequences so that people are **informed about the speaker and the topic**. Audience might have to use more time to get what the speaker is trying to convey without the opening sequences. Closing sequences are also important because it is part of **manners**. It will be very rude for a person to end a video without saying goodbye. Audience will feel appreciated when the speaker says "thanks for watching". Sometimes, speakers do end with "please subscribe or please like" and this helps the speakers to get more audience. Therefore, closing sequences are important as **tool of publicity**.

P34

2, disagree. I feel people will focusing on the **topic**, not the opening and closing.

P35

> **3**, the opening and the closing sequences are a standard way to indicate the beginning and the ending of a speech or a presentation. However, the standard sequences have deviated from the norm. The viewer can know exactly how long the video will be through the video process bar itself. Also, the speaker may try a different approach to capture the viewers' attention or create an impactful ending rather than the usual "hi" and "bye".

P36

> 1. **5 Strongly Agree**
>
> 2. The given example shows it is a casual or informal opening sequence and closing sequence. It is very important because it will **attract the listeners** and the listeners will get interest to listen or watch the video. The listeners also will get a good impression on the video because they are being respected by saying hai or hello.

P37

> I rate it **5**. I'm **strongly agree** with this. I think is a kind of **respect** to greet the people at the beginning. Greeting also has already been part of our daily action. I think most of us use to greet each other when see each other around. Beside that, closing statement would be crucial as well. I think should thank people for willing to spend time to watch the video. It would be **a bit strange without the opening and closing statements.** I hope that I have answer your question.

P38

> Question 1: **5 strongly agree**
> Question 2: The opening and closing sequences play an important role in vblog because it show **politeness** of the host and **indicates the opening/closing** of a vblog. It can **attract the attention** of the audience and show the partion of the vblog.

P39

> 1. **4**
> 2. Opening and closing sequences are important for **establishing familiarity** with the viewers.

1. **4**
2. I believe that when one is involved with this whole vlogs thing, it is important to address the audience and to **attract** them. One of the ways is actually to make the audience feels that each and every one of them is **important**.

APPENDIX E

The Justifications of the Viewers Who Agree or Strongly Agree that Openings and Closings are Important in Vlogs

Viewers	Justifications							
	Politeness	Structure	Rapport	Respect	Sense of Communication	Attention - Grabber	Publicity Tool	Identity Construction
P1		✓						
P2	✓	✓	✓		✓			
P3	✓			✓		✓		
P4	✓							
P5					✓			
P6			✓		✓			
P7	✓	✓						
P8	✓	✓						
P9					✓			
P10				✓				
P11		✓		✓				✓
P12	✓		✓	✓				
P13	✓	✓						
P14	✓	✓						
P15	✓	✓						
P16	Disagree							
P17		✓	✓					
P18	✓	✓						
P19	✓	✓	✓				✓	
P20	✓							
P21	✓							
P22					✓			
P23			✓					
P24	✓							
P25		✓						

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
P26						✓		
P27	✓	✓						
P28	Disagree							
P29	✓	✓		✓				
P30	✓				✓			
P31		✓						
P32	✓							
P33	✓		✓				✓	
P34	Disagree							
P35	Undecided							
P36				✓		✓		
P37		✓		✓				
P38	✓	✓				✓		
P39			✓					
P40			✓			✓		
Total	20	17	9	7	6	5	2	1

APPENDIX F

The Links of the Vlogs

Vlogs	Links
V1	http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5UyPrGFGzBY&list=UUR8wDNtrnrL8o DvnHmifK-Q&index=3&feature=plcp
V2	http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gvoRU12Uh24&list=UUgDVvfU8a_RQ A60jhWWPeJw&index=1&feature=plcp
V3	http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Io372qIt5YY
V4	http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZMruTHG4dUA&list=UUkSNBVynAB RlQ0JeYUMpACg&index=26&feature=plcp
V5	http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ecnNT17AH6c&list=UUjVX8Jj1qMqWe 2_-rFg8aRg&index=8
V6	http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zPd-enWJusA&feature=plcp
V7	http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q4sN4xvgI-U&list=UUg9bmxrgDHWBK yD_LYUh3iQ&index=24&feature=plcp
V8	http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OjMBKfjERUE&feature=plcp
V9	http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2tcT8XQVby8&feature=plcp
V10	http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IRatqA9MdEw&list=UU67JroEFs5A8qs xTnVFxUZQ&index=1&feature=plpp_video
V11	http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WWiCckTUtzY
V12	http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mDE-4jdN08U&feature=plcp
V13	http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dLkH0c8JlBg&list=UUhS6IDY9elYVpo 9XeookYsg&index=6&feature=plpp_video
V14	http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m_qLwGaZ1iw&list=PLC17C20407AF7 1C06&index=3&feature=plpp_video
V15	http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2sltdHLqM74&list=UU_-DZaw4N0NCA oHRBPpbHig&index=9&feature=plcp
V16	http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bVfTLH0DjvE&feature=relmfu
V17	http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e-1gHrnVCTg&list=UUfvao89wTJxV23 dcGeE6JjA&index=2&feature=plcp
V18	http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JcEYWjkasuM&list=UUyzMoOHsRQe6 ZRqBQo1qJqw&index=6&feature=plcp
V19	http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Mu7rALFEMO0&list=UUVmIhQM1LK MdYeH7iAm0rUg&index=2&feature=plcp
V20	http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=55YzpdyLOBw&list=UUx8ol0j_0i6Qsk ZYe8yEGKg&index=5&feature=plcp
V21	http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hzKlYmUr1yk&list=UUAW4DJHOskosr TlCOe2y9sg&index=7&feature=plcp
V22	http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N18hs8ihVxI&feature=watch_response
V23	http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7kaunfoDDvA&feature=plcp
V24	http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Iw19HOiDTB0&list=UUIImJoCoiK8aur ucZSr87hw&index=24&feature=plpp_video
V25	http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V_D8B1lFd5s&list=UUU399-dkQZz54E Bkpd9Edyg&index=10&feature=plcp

V26	http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3vHFQyJrSCM&feature=related
V27	http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iVlInW9grkk&list=PL175EF4671C101F90&index=2&feature=plpp_video
V28	http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_mjMcCn1DJ0
V29	http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=866bR1jJcoU&list=UUr4dG-ENy9eZ42MPH7_bN8A&index=10&feature=plcp
V30	http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P6hSBCx1RWA&list=UUwu4kGldD0V8Bp6ipJkjUQw&index=5&feature=plcp