

A CONTRASTIVE STUDY OF CATEGORIES OF
COMPLAINTS OF MALAYSIAN AND AMERICAN
CUSTOMERS ON FACEBOOK

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FACULTY OF LANGUAGES AND LINGUISTICS
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A CONTRASTIVE STUDY OF CATEGORIES OF
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CUSTOMERS ON FACEBOOK

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ABSTRACT

Studies of customer complaints are associated with the identification and analysis of all aspects involved in the customer response to a product or a service failure which brings about the feeling of dissatisfaction. The act of complaining can be defined as the way to express feelings of discontentment about something. This study, conducted on Malaysian and American customers is a cross-cultural pragmatic study of the speech act of online complaints. Data for this study is gathered from the most visited social-networking site, Facebook. The study intends to look at the significant differences in the expression of online complaints as realized by Malaysian and American Facebook users (customers). Using the taxonomy of complaint categories proposed by Olshtain and Weinbach (1987) and House and Kasper's (1981) taxonomy of directness level, the complaint categories and level of directness of the online customer complaints are examined in this study. Findings show that there are similarities and differences in the realizations of online complaints by Malaysians and Americans. Americans tend to produce complaints which are longer in words as compared to Malaysians. Apart from that, American customers are found to be more direct than Malaysian customers in communicating their online complaints. Both Malaysian and American customers do not only use the modality markers to mitigate their complaints but they also use these linguistic markers to increase the impact of the complaint towards the complaine.

Keywords: Speech act, online complaint, customer complaint, culture, Facebook

ABSTRAK

Kajian terhadap aduan pelanggan adalah kelangsungan daripada pengenalan dan analisis menyeluruh melibatkan aspek-aspek bersangkutan dengan maklumbalas pelanggan terhadap kegagalan produk atau perkhidmatan yang membawa kepada rasa ketidakpuasan hati. Aduan adalah ditakrifkan sebagai wasilah untuk meluahkan rasa ketidakpuasan hati mengenai sesuatu perkara. Aduan dapat ditujukan kepada seseorang, organisasi atau seumpama dengannya. Kajian yang dijalankan ini adalah melibatkan pelanggan Malaysia dan Amerika serta merentasi kajian pragmatik budaya melalui tindakan lisan secara aduan atas talian. Data kajian yang dikumpulkan adalah bersumberkan laman jaringan social, Facebook. Kajian ini adalah bertujuan untuk melihat perbezaan yang signifikan berkaitan aduan secara atas talian melibatkan pelanggan Malaysia dan Amerika. Kategori aduan dan tahap penghalaan aduan secara atas talian adalah diuji menggunakan toxonomi strategi aduan yang dipelopori oleh Olshtain dan Weinbach (1987) dan taxonomi tahap penghalaan aduan oleh House dan Kasper (1981). Dapatan kajian menunjukkan bahawa terdapat persamaan dan perbezaan yang ketara dalam pemurnian aduan secara atas talian melibatkan pelanggan Malaysia dan Amerika. Pelanggan Amerika berkecenderungan untuk menggunakan ayat yang panjang berbanding rakyat Malaysia dalam membuat aduan. Pelanggan Malaysia dan Amerika tidak hanya menggunakan penanda modaliti dalam mengusulkan aduan tetapi turut menerapkan penandaan linguistik bagi meningkatkan keberkesanan mengenai perkara yang diadukan. Selain itu, pelanggan Malaysia juga didapati membuat lebih aduan di tahap secara langsung berbanding pelanggan Malaysia.

Kata kunci : *Lakuan bahasa, aduan atas talian, aduan pelanggan, budaya, Facebook*

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University of Malaysia

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the background of the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, research questions, significance, scope and limitation of the study as well as the summary of this chapter.

1.1 Background of the Study

What we do with words, or how human beings create a ‘speech act’, was the concept coined by John L. Austin (1962). John Searle (1970) realized that the speaker in a real situation may not always be able to produce the desired effect on the hearer. Based on Austin’s (1962) and Searle’s (1979) Speech Act Theory and their classifications, many researchers have explored the actual forms and functions of different speech acts in different languages and cultures. The study of speech acts can provide us with a better understanding and new insight into the correlation between linguistic forms and sociocultural context (Olshtain and Cohen, 1983).

Numerous cross-cultural studies investigating the speech act performance of native speakers showed that although speech act appear to be universal, their conceptualization and verbalization can vary to a great extent across cultures (Blum-Kalka, House and Kasper, 1989). Although studies on cross-cultural variations in the use of speech acts have generally focused on a variety of acts including mostly apology, request (Blum-

Kulka, House and Kasper, 1989), compliment (Wolfson, 1981), invitation and refusal (Beebe et al.,1990) only a few studies have been conducted on the act of complaining. Thus, the present study is conducted to explore the similarities and differences in the complaint strategies as realized by Malaysian and American customers. This study is important not only for describing how cross-culturally different speakers perform in day-to-day interactions, but also for the purpose of making use of the findings in educational settings. Moreover, although we assume that speakers will use mitigating strategies in *Face Threatening Acts* to maintain the 'face' of the hearer, we cannot discount the possibility that they may sometimes forgo such face-saving strategies with the express aim of getting an effective response from the hearer, particularly in certain situations, such as in making complaints.

The term *customer complaint* is very common in business setting. A *customer complaint* or *consumer complaint* is "an expression of dissatisfaction on a consumer's behalf to a responsible party" (Landon, 1980, p. 14). It can also be described in a positive sense as a report from a customer providing documentation about a problem with a product or service. Customer complaints are usually informal complaints directly addressed to a company or public service provider, and most customers or consumers manage to resolve problems with products and services in this way, but it sometimes requires persistence.

The emergence of the Internet and its communication capabilities has given rise to a number of complaint sites that function as central forums for customers to share their bad experiences with other customers. Internet forums and the advent of social media have provided customers with a new way to submit complaints. Customer or consumer news and advocacy websites often accept and publish complaints. When a complaint is

published by the customer on the internet (online), that complaint is termed as an *online complaint*.

Millions of people are taking service issues to social media channels as their preferred communication route. Online complaints, are also common on a famous social media - Facebook. Facebook is used as the instrument in order to gather data for this study. Complaints specifically posted on Malaysia Airlines' and American Airlines' Facebook pages were collected. Therefore, some brief description on these two airline companies are also presented in this study as well as the history of Facebook.

Online complaints were selected as the focus of this study as millions of people have the access to the Internet. Today, around 40% of the world population has an internet connection. The internet is a new medium for people to do business and it also becomes one of the mediums for customers to voice their complaints. Publishing complaints on highly visible websites increases the likelihood that the general public will become aware of the customer's complaint. If, for example, a person with many "followers" or "friends" publishes a complaint on social media, it may go "viral." Internet forums in general and on complaint websites have made it possible for individual consumers to hold large corporations accountable in a public forum.

1.2 Statement of the Research Problem

Online social networking does not only allow individuals to communicate directly with friends, family, colleagues, and acquaintances using a variety of techniques such as posting online "status" updates, photos, videos, and instant messages but it can also be used as a tool to market a particular product or service. Many companies and individuals

all over the world are using the online social networking for business purposes. Popular online resources such as Twitter, Facebook and Instagram allow members to generate a variety of content for their followers. As a member-based Internet community, Facebook allows its users to post profile information, communicate with others by sending public or private online messages or wall posts, and to share photos online. As a member-based Internet community, Facebook allows its users to post profile information, communicate with others by sending public or private online messages or wall posts, and to share photos online. As a result, its features are constantly changing and being updated.

Facebook is also a medium used by the consumers for self-expression -- they express their dissatisfaction on Facebook. Today, corporate wrongdoings, public gaffes and unsatisfactory service that originate offline migrate into the social media sphere within minutes in the form of angry posts, well-based conversations and activist-orchestrated attacks. When a person expresses a feeling of dissatisfaction about something or a particular event on Facebook, that post is regarded as complaint.

Facebook is one of the popular platforms for customers to post their complaints as it is very convenient to complain online. Moreover, many companies from all over the world do have a Facebook account to update their customers about a particular product or service that they are providing. Although the customers do have the right to complain, they have to express their dissatisfaction ethically using appropriate words and structures so that the company that they are complaining to will get their messages correctly. However, some of the Facebook users (customers) seem to be unethical in posting their complaints and this may lead them to be viewed negatively by other Facebook users. This is because once they post something on the Facebook page of a particular company, their postings are publicly accessible which means other Facebook users can read those

negative comments. Apart from that, by complaining without having the right evidence or using the wrong choice of words, these complainers are exposed to the danger of being sued for defamation.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

This study aims to compare the pragmatic behavior of complaining among customers of different cultural backgrounds. Therefore, the purpose of conducting this study is to examine the complaint categories found in the Facebook comments of the Malaysian and American customers in expressing their dissatisfaction particularly towards airline companies. Malaysian customers complained against Malaysia Airlines on the Facebook page of Malaysia Airlines whereas the American customers complained against American Airline on the Facebook page of American Airline. Airline complaints generally arise out of problems experienced during air travel that were left unresolved.

Complaint is an under-researched speech act in the field of pragmatics. Reviewing the definitions of pragmatics that were used in scholarly articles, Bardovi-Harlig (2013) classified the definition of pragmatics in two folds. In a narrow definition, it is the study of “deixis, conversational implicature, presupposition, speech acts, and conversational structure” (Levinson, 1983). In a larger definition, pragmatics is “the study of language from the point of view of users, especially of the choices they make, the constraints they encounter in using language in social interaction and the effects their use of language has on other participants in the act of communication” (Crystal, 1997, p. 301). In particular, pragmatics is the study of communicative action in its sociocultural context. The same definition, along with Levinson’s (1983) narrow definition of pragmatics is used in this study.

Although pragmatics is a field that has been studied by several researchers, no agreement as to what pragmatics really means has been reached so far (Meinl, 2013). According to Mey, “pragmatics studies the use of language in human communication as determined by the conditions of the society” (Mey, 2004, p. 39). This clearly displays the importance of not only linguistic features, but also of an individual’s position in society.

1.4 Research Questions

The research questions of this study are as follows:

- 1) What are the reasons for complaining as posted by Malaysian and American customers on Facebook?
- 2) Which complaint categories are found in the realization of online complaints by Malaysian and American customers?
- 3) What are the levels of directness of the online complaints made by Malaysian and American customers on Facebook?

1.5 Significance of the Study

This study may provide some form of empirical data for future research in this area. It may also create awareness among the public as how crucial it is to use the appropriate language forms and strategies in posting their complaints online. What seems to be appropriate in America may not be appropriate in Malaysia. This study also aims to educate the customers at large of the negative effects of posting their complaints on Facebook without considering the issue of face-threatening act. With the existence of Computer Mediated Communication (CMC), it is important that the Internet users from

all over the world mainly Malaysians to develop the awareness of language use on the Internet.

1.6 Scope and Limitation of the Study

This study focuses on two groups of people – Malaysian and American – which are culturally different. There are some limitations of the study. Firstly, this study looks into a small corpus of online complaints. Only 80 Facebook comments (which are identified and analyzed as complaints) posted by Malaysian and American customers respectively are used as the data for this study. It is clear that this number could not be generalized to a broader population. Apart from that, this study also focuses only on a single genre (airline services) and only from one social media (Facebook). Hence, it is clear that the findings of this study cannot be extended to all online complaints. On the other hand, since the complaints posted by Malaysian customers in this study are in English, it is believed the findings of this study may differ if the complaints are posted in their national language that is Malay language.

In addition to that, identifying and classifying whether or not a particular Facebook comment is a complaint is a challenging task. It gets even more challenging to identify each complaint category as some of the Facebook complaints are found to be very long. Therefore, it is normal to have a few complaint categories in a single Facebook comment.

In order to triangulate the data, online interviews were designed to be conducted through Facebook. A personal message on Facebook was sent to 20 Facebook users who had posted their complaints on the Facebook page of Malaysia Airlines and American

Airlines. The purpose of the present study and the researcher's background were first introduced. This online interview was aimed to look at the purpose of them posting the complaints, their feelings and emotions as they were posting the complaints and also their expectation from the complaints that they made. However, none of the complainers had responded to the personal message that was sent to them on Facebook and therefore, the researcher was not able to conduct the online interview. The researcher was seen as a complete stranger to the complainers and therefore making them unwilling to participate in this interview.

1.7 Summary

In this chapter, the primary aim of the study is presented with some background of the topics that will be covered in the next chapter. In the next chapter, the framework that is chosen for this study will be explained with the support of other past literatures.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

In this chapter, theories, other studies, and matters related to the present study are presented. It begins with the topics on speech acts, speech acts of complaints, definition of *complaint* and continues with other topics on complaints in business settings. Apart from that, since this study is a cross-cultural study, the definition of culture and some descriptions on politeness across culture are also presented.

2.1 The Speech Act Set

A speech act set is a combination of individual speech acts that, when produced together, comprise a complete speech act (Murphy and Neu, 1996). Often more than one discrete speech act is necessary for a speaker to develop the overarching communicative purpose – or illocutionary force – desired. For example, in the case of a refusal, one might appropriately produce three separate speech acts which are: an expression of regret, “*I’m so sorry,*” followed by a direct refusal, “*I can’t come to your graduation,*” followed by an excuse, “*I will be out of town on business,*” (Chen, 1996). The speech act set is similar to the speech event, which takes into account the speech acts of all interlocutors (Scollon and Scollon, 2001). For example, the speech event “asking for the time,” could be composed of four speech acts. The first speaker may excuse him or herself for interrupting, then, ask the listener for the time. The second speaker will likely state the time, and the first speaker will thank him or her for the information.

Cohen and Olshtain (1981) found that an apology could be comprised of one or more components, each a speech act in its own right: an apology, “*I’m sorry;*” an acknowledgement of responsibility, “*It’s all my fault;*” an offer to compensate, “*I’ll replace it;*” a promise of forbearance, “*It will never happen again;*” or an explanation, “*It was an accident.*” The semantic formula, or speech act set, has also been used to analyze other speech acts, including refusals and complaints.

2.1.1 The Speech Act of Complaint

Trosborg (1995: 311-312) defines a complaint as “an illocutionary act in which the speaker (the complainant) expresses his/her disapproval, negative feelings etc., towards the state of affairs described in the proposition (the complaint) and for which he/she holds the hearer (the complaine) responsible, either directly or indirectly.” Thus, a complaint may be considered a “face threatening act” (Brown & Levinson 1978: 19) because the speaker can potentially dispute, challenge or baldly deny the social competence of the complaine (Edmonson & House 1981).

In a complaint, the events described in the proposition took place in the past; in Longacre’s (1983) terminology the event is “projected”. Whereas the function of directives is to influence the behavior of others, and as such is prospective, the act of complaining is in essence retrospective in that a speaker passes a moral judgement on something which (he/she believes) the complaine has already done or failed to do, or is in the process of doing.

Searle (1969) organized five types of performative verbs performed by speech acts namely representatives, expressives, declarations, directives, and commissives. The third type of performative verbs, expressives, are explained by Yule (1996) as those speech acts that state what the speaker feels - joy, pleasure or pain. The speech act of complaints is also included in this type as complaining itself is about expressing the feeling of discontentment about something.

Hatch (1992) claims that a complaint event consists of a basic structure – an obligatory complaint act and optional responses. Before the initial complaint act, there is a possibility of an opening that contains an explanation of the reasons for the complaint. After the complaint act, the hearer may respond with acknowledgement, deny the offense that he or she has made, or not respond at all. Therefore, in the complaint event, only the complaint act is obligatory and the other components are optional. In addition to that, complaints are one type of face-threatening act. Brown and Levinson (1978) recognized the types of face threaten negative face and those that threaten positive face. The former include requests, orders, suggestions, advice, threats, and warning while the latter include disapproval, criticism, contempt, ridicule, complaints, reprimands, accusations and insults.

The speech act of complaint occurs when a speaker reacts with displeasure or annoyance to an action that has affected the speaker unfavorably (Olshtain and Weinbach, 1987). Like a refusal, it is also a face-threatening act for the listener, and often realized through indirect strategies. A complaint can be mitigated using mitigation strategies.

2.1.1.1 Mitigation in the Speech Act of Complaints

Complaints usually threaten the hearer's (complainee's) face. However, complaints can be mitigated using some form of modality markers such as politeness markers, hedges, understaters and a few others linguistic markers. According to Sauer (2000), the directness of complaining can be controlled by the speaker. The speaker can use different linguistic forms and nonverbal signals in order not to threaten the hearer's face and to remain polite. The perception of threatening and politeness, however, is not always the same and it may also vary cross-culturally.

Trosborg (1994) stated that a number of strategies are available to a complainer who wants to avoid a direct confrontation with the complainee. The degree of involvement of the complainer and the complainee specified in an act of moral censure is decisive in establishing a scale of directness levels of complaints. A very useful strategy for the complainer would be to avoid mentioning the hearer who is nevertheless indirectly held responsible. Thus, a complainer may focus on the undesirable event and the ill consequences, which from his/her point of view, follow from the complainable, and leave out the agent. In the pragmatics literature, mitigation strategies can take the form of external or internal modification. External modification does not affect the utterance used for realizing a speech act (head act), but rather the context in which the act occurs. It is effected through supportive moves (Blum-Kulka et al., 1989), i.e. various devices that may precede or follow the head act (e.g. reasons or justifications for the act), thus modifying indirectly its illocutionary force.

Internal modifiers, on the other hand, are elements within a speech act the presence of which is not essential for the identification of its illocutionary force, but serve to downgrade its potential negative effects (Blum-Kulka et al., 1989:60). In the

pragmalinguistic analysis, downgraders are employed as a means of analyzing the data. Downgraders are markers which mitigate the impact the speaker's utterance is likely to have on the hearer (Kasper, 1981). This function is usually accomplished by means of syntactic (e.g. conditional or interrogative structures, tense and aspect markings) or lexical/phrasal linguistic means comprising a large number of mitigating devices, such as politeness markers (*please*) modal adverbs (*probably, possibly* etc.) mental state predicates (*I think, I believe* etc.) adjectives or degree modifiers (*kind of, sort of, a bit* etc.) and so forth. (House & Kasper, 1981; Faerch & Kasper, 1989). These modifiers are considered multifunctional, in the sense that they may act "both as indicating devices, used to signal pragmatic force, as well as sociopragmatic devices, meant to affect the social impact the utterance is likely to have" (Blum-Kulka et al., 1989).

While the softening of negative effects and the smoothing of social interaction during the negotiation of an face-threatening act is considered to be the primary function of mitigation (Fraser, 1990; Caffi, 1999), the precise nature and politeness functions of both external and internal modifiers is context-specific, i.e. these devices are not inherently polite but may derive their politeness value when employed in certain situations. Advanced learners who often lack the sociopragmatic knowledge are required to effectively employ internal modification devices in order to mitigate the threatening nature of speech acts, such as refusals and complaints.

On the other hand, the inclusion of upgraders has the opposite effect: it increases the impact of a complaint on the hearer (House & Kasper, 1981). By including internal modifiers in terms of downgraders or upgraders it is possible to achieve different degrees of politeness whilst maintaining the same level of directness. Furthermore, a complainer

may want to suppress his/her personal responsibility for issuing the blame by putting forward the criticism as a general blame.

2.2 Definitions of Complaint

A complaint is a face-threatening act. Before proceeding further, it is important to define *complaint*. In general terms, Heinemann and Traverso (2009) define *complaint* as ‘almost any type of comment with even the slightest negative valence’ (p. 2383). Another definition of complaint is offered by Wierzbicka (1991), which leaves open the relationship between addressee and complained-about action. According to Wierzbicka (1991), a complaint is verbal, fully intentional and indicates something bad happened to the speaker. On the other hand, Edmondson and House (1981) define *complaint* as a verbal communication whereby a speaker expresses his negative view of a past action by the hearer for which he holds the hearer responsible of the negative effects or consequences. A more specific and commonly cited definition comes from early work by Olshtain and Weinbach (1987), who explain that a complaint results when a speaker expects a favorable event to occur, and instead his/her expectations are somehow violated; the recipient of the complaint usually is the person responsible for having ‘‘enabled or failed to prevent the offensive event’’ (p. 195). The definition given by Olshtain and Weinbach (1987) is clear and straightforward and thus, this definition of complaint is used in this study. Not only that, the examples of complaints together with the linguistic features of complaints are also given in their study. Therefore, it serves as a good guideline for the researcher to conduct this present study.

In making a complaint, the speaker expresses dissatisfaction to the hearer of a past action by the hearer that the speaker feels dissatisfied about (Laforest 2002). When a complaint

is being made, the negative attitude expressed by the speaker to the hearer threatens the hearer's face, and the speaker runs the risk of losing a friend or causing another person considerable embarrassment or even anger that might affect the hearer's willingness to offer repair. Therefore, the speaker needs to weigh several payoff considerations before performing this face-threatening act (Olshtain & Weinbach, 1993). For example, the speaker should consider whether to make a complaint or to opt out, and by opting out the speaker avoids confrontations with the hearer but it may lead to frustration.

If a complaint is made, the speaker then has to decide whether to explicitly state the offence or to alleviate the interpersonal conflict by hinting. Complaints can be made directly or indirectly, and the directness of complaints may be influenced by the contextual variables, such as social power and social distance. Social power indicates whether the complainer is of lower or higher or equal status to the complainee, while social distance refers to the degree of familiarity between the complainer and complainee.

2.2.1. Direct Complaints

According to Boxer (1993), indirect complaint occurs when the speaker does not hold the hearer responsible for the offense but conveys dissatisfaction about himself/herself or someone/something that is absent. For example, "*She is such a bad cook*". Direct complaints may be threatening for the hearers' positive and negative face because the speakers put the responsibility for their dissatisfaction on the hearers, and blame them for the offense. For example, in a restaurant, a guest may blame a waiter by saying, "*I don't care whether the soup is good or not. This is not what I ordered*". Direct complaints also threaten the speakers' positive face because they impose their bad feelings upon the interlocutors, and consequently, the interlocutors cannot perceive them positively.

2.2.2. Indirect Complaints

While the present study does not focus on indirect complaints, it is noteworthy that indirect complaints comprise a broad range of strategies that fulfill various functions when speakers employ them in social interactions in everyday life. Boxer (1993), who has done the most extensive research on indirect complaints, asserted that indirect complaints can be perceived as phatic communion because people often use them as a means of commiseration to start and to carry on a conversation with strangers or little known interlocutors, which may establish a momentary bond (p. 121) among them. Indirect complaints can be threatening for the hearers' negative face because the speakers impose their feelings upon the hearers, for example, "*I had such a bad day*". At the same time, the speakers risk their positive face. Interestingly, Boxer did not treat indirect complaints as a face-threatening act. She opposed direct complaints, which are intrinsically confrontational, to indirect complaints, which can function as a means to negotiate interaction and work toward —establishing rapport or solidarity among interlocutors.

On the other hand, according to Olshtain & Weinbach (1987), complaining is a speech act where the speaker (S) expresses displeasure or annoyance – censure – as a reaction to a past or on-going action, the consequences of which are perceived by S (the speaker) as affecting her unfavourably. This complaint is usually addressed to the hearer (H), whom the S holds, at least partially, responsible for the offensive action (p. 108).

2.3 Complaints in Business Settings

Many people in business perceive the word *complaint* as a very negative word. They have visions of awful things happening to them or their business when the word is used. The definition of *complaint* may vary from business to business. A complaint is usually about a gap - a gap between what is expected by the customer and what is delivered by the business. Complaints or dissatisfaction can occur regarding many aspects of business including policies, procedures, charges, employees, quality of service or goods provided or sold.

2.3.1 Customer/Consumer Complaint Behaviour

Every day, millions of consumers experience dissatisfaction with products and services all over the world. These experiences often cause consumers to have negative feelings towards the company at fault and sometimes lead to abandoning the particular provider altogether. When consumers are dissatisfied with a purchase, they often contact the retailer or manufacturer from whom they purchased the product to obtain redress for their complaints. However, few consumers actually complain directly to the manufacturer or service provider, so businesses may be unaware of consumer complaint actions (Stephens & Gwinner, 1998).

Consumer complaint behavior is also known as consumer complaint responses (Singh & Widing, 1991). Crie (2003) defined consumer complaint behavior as a process that “*constitutes a subset of all possible responses to perceived dissatisfaction around a purchase episode, during consumption or during possession of the goods or services*”. He argued that consumer complaint behavior is not an instant response, but a process, which does not directly depend on its initiating factors but on evaluation of the situation

by the consumer and of its evolution over time. Broadbridge and Marshall (1995) explained that consumer complaint behavior is a distinct process, which begins when the consumer has evaluated a consumption experience (resulting in dissatisfaction) and ends when the consumer had completed all behavioral and non-behavioral responses.

Customers complain for a variety of reasons. Some complain because of poor quality, failure to deliver the service on time, faulty products, poor communication, inappropriate behaviour of staff and many others. Customer complaints have been treated as an important opportunity for a business to improve. They can help a company to be aware of the problems and to rectify them in a timely and spontaneous fashion (Barlow & Moller, 1996). An effective complaint management system in place can facilitate maximization of customer loyalty (Kemp, 1999).

Complaint behaviour is defined by Jacoby and Jaccard (1981) as an action taken by an individual that involves communicating something negative regarding a product or service. Mowen (1993) stated that complaint behaviour is any one of a number of actions that is triggered by perceived dissatisfaction with a purchase episode. Some scholars have even diagnosed complaint behaviour in terms of action-taking. Day and Landon (1977) proposed a two-level hierarchical classification of actions which defines the complaint behaviour. The first level distinguishes action from no action. The most likely explanation for taking no action is that it is not worth the time and effort (Day et al., 1981). However, Sanes (1993) states that the greatest pitfall of all is the unheard complaint. The second distinguishes public actions from private actions. Public actions include seeking redress or refund from the seller, and private actions refer to word-of-mouth communication to friends and relatives and ceasing to patronize the companies. Grabicke et al. (1981)

further explained that private actions generally do not come to the direct attention of the seller and thus could have a serious impact on sales and profitability.

2.3.2 Cultural issues in customer complaint behaviours

Previous studies in the literature have found that culture is one of the influential factors in complaint behaviour. On one hand, a customer's complaint habit mostly determines his/her motive to make a complaint. On the other hand, the cultural factor may affect a customer's complaint motive. In the Chinese context, a public argument is a face-losing act and damages interpersonal harmony (Gao et al., 1996). Therefore, the Chinese tend to adopt an unassertive style of communication approach. Such a style often leads to avoidance and silence even if they are dissatisfied. Le Claire (1993) articulated that, in the context of a Chinese environment such as Hong Kong, the four Chinese cultural values of harmony, moderation, face and reciprocity shape customer attitude towards this behaviour.

In order to avoid confrontation and maintain social harmony, customers may adopt less confrontational and more indirect modes of complaint behaviour such as doing nothing or using private action. However, the prevailing social climate towards complaint action is related to complaint inclination (Day and Landon, 1977). As the laws for protecting customers become consolidated, and the government body dealing with unfair treatment of customers becomes transparent, Hong Kong customers are prone to complain if they are not satisfied with a business transaction.

2.3.3 Complaint behaviour and demographic variables

The complaint motivation and patterns are complex. Williams et al. (1993) described customer complaint behaviour as a function of dissatisfaction. Singh and Wilkes (1996) also stated that dissatisfaction is a significant factor that attributes to complaints. Kau and Serene (1995) articulated that dissatisfaction was caused by negative disconfirmation of purchase expectations that led to legitimate complaint behaviour. Kivela (1999) further examined the disconfirmation effect on dining satisfaction and its impact on return patronage, and found that they were related to the post-dining behaviour such as bad-mouthing or taking no action.

An evaluation of costs and benefits about a complaint is another factor that turns an affective dissatisfaction into an action. If the costs and time spent on a complaint are perceived as exceeding the benefits as a result of a complaint, customers will tend to remain silent and take no action (Day and Landon, 1977). Non-complainers considered that complaining was done by people with little else to do and believed that it would be futile (Kau and Serene, 1995). Some of the demographic variables were found to be related to complaint behaviours. Female customers are more inclined to complain (Kau et al., 1995), and tell others if they are dissatisfied with the complaint handling (Lewis, 1983). These results contradicted the findings by Manikas and Shea (1997) that the male customers complained more than the female.

Jacoby and Jaccard (1981) found out that customers with a higher education were more likely to complain. Morganosky and Buckley (1986) also pointed out that education is one of the significant characteristics of complainers. Day and Landon (1977) stated that those who publicly complained were younger in age and had a better education and higher income. Beardon and Mason (1984) identified similar results and pointed out that

complaint behaviour was inversely related to age and positively linked to income and education.

In the study of consumer complaint behavior, researchers found consistent impact of demographic variables on consumer complaint. Demographic variables, such as income, education level and age were found to have consistent impact on consumer complaint. Consumers who choose to complain were found relatively younger, earn higher income and more educated (Warland, Herrmann, and Willits 1975; Singh 1989, 1990), although, the discriminatory power was modest (Crie 2003). Higher income consumers tend to have more resources in terms of information and self-confidence to deal with marketplace problems and tend to perceive less risk and embarrassment in complaining. According to politeness theory (Brown and Levinson 1987), the degree to which an individual is polite in a given situation is determined by the relative power and social distance between the parties.

Higher income is generally characterized by a smaller power and social distance between customer and service provider, which is negatively related with the degree of politeness (i.e. higher complaint behavior). However, the role of income on consumer complaint is not quite well understood and prior results have been mixed. For example, Gronhaug and Zaltman (1981) show income to have a weak explanatory power.

2.4 Politeness across Culture

Culture is the deposit of all the material and non-material aspects such as knowledge, experience, belief, attitude and material possessions which are shared, learned and transmitted among the members of society. Once culture is learned it is subconsciously internalised by the members of societies. Learned culture is expressed in both verbal and

nonverbal communication because language both in its written and oral forms is part of culture. This implies that cultural factors greatly affect communication and merely knowing how to speak and write a language does not ensure effective and successful cross-cultural communication.

However, despite its importance for many research areas, the notion of culture has remained very vague, lacking a clear definition until today (Spencer-Oatey, 2000). Despite this vast array of different definitions of culture, most of the anthropological definitions have at least three basic elements in common, precisely that culture is man-made and learnable, it is related to human groups rather than to individuals, and it is found in symbols and action (Koolle and Ten Thije, 1994). When the term *culture* is used in this present report, it is operationalised in terms of national identity, i.e. of Malaysian and American online complainers (the complaints made are in written form on Facebook).

An approach used to maintain the harmonious interpersonal relationship is called politeness and it is like a social phenomenon. People in different cultural backgrounds of society use different standards of politeness. According to Hawisher & Selfe (2000), politeness strategies are varied from one culture to another. The use of various politeness strategies in every society may be influenced by social traditions. Politeness is an aspect of pragmatics in that its use in language is determined by an external context. This external context is the context of communication, which is determined by the social status of the participants. Politeness is a system used by the speaker in order to keep up to the addressee's expectations. According to Brown and Levinson (1987), politeness refers to behavior which actively expresses positive concern for others, as well as non-imposing distancing behavior. In other words, politeness may take the form of an expression

of good-will or camaraderie, as well as the more familiar nonintrusive behaviour which is labeled polite in everyday usage.

2.5 Malaysian Cultural Background

Malaysia is located in Southeast Asia. The country is multi-ethnic and multi-cultural, which plays a large role in politics. About half of the population is ethnically Malay, with large minorities of Malaysian Chinese, Malaysian Indians, and indigenous peoples. The constitution declares Islam the state religion while allowing freedom of religion for non-Muslims.

Malaysians of Malay, Chinese and Indian origins observe a politeness system that embodies specific codes of verbal and non-verbal behavior in their interactions with others. According to Jamaliah (1991), some aspects of the behavior which they consider as polite are:

- i) not being forthright or assertive or aggressive;
- ii) not responding to a request with a direct 'no'; even if a 'no' is used,
- iii) not being blunt or direct in expressing one's views;
- iv) not causing interpersonal conflict or avoiding "loss of face".

Within this politeness system, there are different forms or modes of address for the varying degrees of status, intimacy and deference extended to a person. When someone is being polite, there are many possible features of the use of the language that are being referred to. It is generally observed that polite people tend to phrase their utterances considerately, respond encouragingly and positively to others' talk, and express appreciation generously. They avoid confrontation, public displays of being too forceful

or direct because these are all examples of behaviour which are regarded as impolite, coarse, rude and may even suggest ill-breeding (Jamaliah, 1991).

Jamaliah (1995) stipulates that the norms of society require that we abide by social rules in our daily interactions. 'Face' or 'jaga air muka' is one of the most important factors that Malaysians should observe and adhere to in their daily interaction in order to maintain not only the stability of the interactants but that of the interactions as well. In Malaysian communities, 'face-saving' means saving another person or oneself, from embarrassment. In other words, the speaker tries not to put the listener or himself in a position in which he or she might be embarrassed. The 'face' that a person maintains becomes important especially when it is subjected to risk and assumes significance particularly events are being interpreted and evaluated. Therefore, it must be constantly attended to in the interaction.

2.5.1 Roles and Functions of English in Malaysia

With the independence of the Federation of Malaya in 1957, and subsequently, with the creation of Malaysia in 1963, the newly-independent state inherited an administration, a judicial system and an educational infrastructure which were essentially English-language based. While Malay Language (Bahasa Malaysia) was declared the national language, English continued to be the *de facto* official language. However, rising Malay nationalism led to the *1967 National Language Act* which decreed the gradual removal of the official status of the English language. Implemented in peninsular Malaysia in 1967, the conversion to Malay in diverse official domains took nearly 20 years, and was only completed in 1985 when the official status of the English language in the state of Sarawak was renounced (Asmah, 1996, p. 516). This gradual decline in the status of the former colonial language led to predictions that English would become a foreign language

in Malaysia (Platt, Werber, & Ho, 1983 and Görlach, 1995). The reality however, has not been as straight-forward. More than four decades after Bahasa Malaysia became the official language of Peninsular Malaysia, English remains a vital element of the linguistic landscape of Malaysia.

Perhaps most crucial in ensuring the continuing relevance of the language is its status as a second language in the domain of national education. The National Education Policy (Ministry of Education, Malaysia, 2012) refers to English as one of the two “bahasa utama” (primary languages) that Malaysian students are expected to master, the other being Malay. This policy document however makes it clear that the status of English is intended to be secondary to that of the national language. Besides its role in the domain of education, English is also today very much in evidence in the spheres of business and industry. The dominance of English in the corporate and industrial sectors is best illustrated in Asmah’s (1996) review which notes the overwhelming preference for English as the language used in prospectuses, agreements, contracts, policies and regulations. English also occupies a highly visible position in print and electronic media. English-language newspapers and magazines, radio and television and television programmes, advertisements and more recently, internet websites, form a substantial proportion of Malaysians’ media consumption, whether or not they are active users of English (Asmah, 2000). In fact, Azirah (2009) credits a growing interest in learning English and increased use of the language among the general public to the dominance of English in diverse forms of media.

Hence, although English no longer has an official status in Malaysia, it still plays a very lively role in the society. That it is a key “language of international and regional contacts” (Benson, 1990) and that it is widely regarded as the language for personal advancement

and national progress (Kaur, 1995) are other factors that have resulted in widespread acquisition of the language. Today, Malaysian English is disseminated across various domains and performs diverse instrumental integrative functions alongside other languages within the country (Newbrook, 1997). According to David (2006), Malaysian English is a communicational tool for a significant segment of the multiethnic population, and plays a central role in the domains of family and friendship in the urban areas of Malaysia. The widespread use of English in Malaysia has promoted systematic changes in the linguistic system of the language. These changes have been diversely theorised but several milestone studies have shaped the way we look at variation and change in Malaysian English. Kachru and Smith (2008) states that:

One must remember that when communicating with people who use a different variety of English than one's own, those people will likely use a different pronunciation, intonation and vocabulary. More importantly they will also use their cultural conventions of communication (e.g. politeness strategies, appropriate topics of conversation, sequence of information) as well as speech act functions (e.g. ways of greeting, showing agreement, using directives, making refusals, leave-taking, etc.)

(p.66)

2.6 American Cultural Values

Ferraro (1990) has identified nine characteristics of the average American. He states that the United States places a high value on: (1) individualism, (2) a precise reckoning of time, (3) a future orientation, (4) work and achievement, (5) control over the natural environment, (6) youthfulness, (7) informality, (8) competition, and (9) relative equality of sexes.

According to Ferraro (1990), in American culture, the value of individual as supreme and as having the capacity to shape his or her own destiny is very strong. The individual is seen as capable of assessing his or her own actions and at the same time is responsible for them. To be autonomous and a fully functioning individual in society is the aim of education in the United States. On the other hand, time plays a central role in the life of the American. Promptness is highly valued in the United States. Another value of American culture is the high value that is placed on human energy and action. In America, one's occupation is a powerful force in shaping one's individual personal identity. American also tend to emphasize what is new and young by keeping up with new trends and maintaining a youthful spirit. The United States can be said as a future-oriented society.

2.7 Computer - Mediated Communication (CMC)

Having chosen the World Wide Web as the data source for the present study, a short introduction into CMC is given. This includes a brief description of CMC and its history as well as an illustration of the attempts that have been made to classify the vast variety of CMC forms. According to Herring (2013), linguistic study of computer-mediated communication (CMC) began attracting serious attention only about 20 years ago, with a classification question that is now regarded as overly simplistic: Is CMC more like speech or writing? (e.g., Ferrara, Brunner, and Whittemore, 1991; Maynor, 1994). Those early days were also characterized by a fascination with superficial structural features, such as acronyms, abbreviations, and emoticons, that purportedly characterized CMC (e.g., Murray, 1990) Since then, however, this field of study has grown dramatically.

The internet enables new kinds of participation, new kinds of fragmentation, and new ways of co-constructing meaning that transcend traditional notions of conversation, narrative, exposition, and so forth. The issue of classifying Internet language into types has been a focus of linguistic CMC research, initially in relation to speech and writing and later in terms of technological modes such as email, chat, blog, real-time chat, instant messaging, text messaging, mobile phone communication and synchronous voice-based computer mediated communication. CMC refers to natural language messaging that is transmitted and/or received via a computer connection via the Internet or through mobile phone connections. It encompasses at the end, writing that is similar to traditional texts and at the other end, dialogue that resembles speech. Some of the genres are monologues and others dialogues.

Following Herring's (1996) definition of CMC, it is defined in this study as "communication that takes place between human beings via the instrumentality of computers" (Herring 1996). As the present examines electronic complaints from Facebook, using analytical tools of speech act theory for its data analysis, it is located in the area of CMC. However, since the position of the collected complaints in discourse and their situational context are also investigated in the present analysis and taken into account when discussing the received results, this study is similarly situated in the area of computer mediated discourse (CMD), a sub branch of CMC, distinguished by its use of methods of discourse analysis (Herring, 2001).

By regarding CMD as one consistent type of communication which somehow has to be posited next to speaking and writing, followers of this early approach clearly overgeneralised about computer-mediated language. Despite this obvious drawback of

this “globalizing approach” (Herring, 2007), there are still researchers advocating this view in recent years. Crystal (2001), for instance, regards “Netspeak” as a global variety of online language, sharing specific features regardless of the Internet situation (Crystal, 2001). Examples of these features include the use of specific abbreviations and word formations, emoticons, new spelling conventions, and a minimal use of punctuation. In light of the ever continuing progress in computer technologies, the area of CMC research is always extending. Nonetheless, most CMC currently in use is still text-based, i.e. messages are typed on a computer keyboard and read as texts on the computer screen, either immediately after their production (synchronous CMC) or at a later point in time (asynchronous CMC).

2.8 Past Research on the Speech Act of Complaints

Pragmatic principles are perceived quite differently by people in different countries. This has driven the pragmaticians to study cross-cultural and contrastive pragmatics. Han (1992) has found that studies on speech acts have revealed that people of various cultures may realize the same speech act quite differently. In addition to that, Wolfson (1981) stated that the realization of speech acts of complaint also differs in their distribution. Not only that, the frequency of occurrence, as well as the functions that they serve are also different. Furthermore, studies in this area have also indicated that people use different approaches in expressing their dissatisfactions. Four semantic formulas are involved when complaining - an explanation of purpose, a complaint, a justification, and a request (Murphy and Neu, 1996).

The complaint speech act has been attracting an increasing amount of attention. While much of the original research work was carried out in native English (NE) speaker

settings, cross cultural studies on complaints have gradually emerged in a number of non-native English (NNE) speaking contexts (Tatsuki 2000; Olshtain & Weinbach 1993; Murphy & Neu 1996; Mulamba 2009; Henry & Ho 2010). These studies have mainly focused on cross-cultural comparisons between native speaker and non-native speaker norms in complaints and polite behaviour. Conclusions drawn from these studies have found differences in the way different cultures and ethnic groups perceive polite behaviour in complaints and have made recommendations on how to help non-native speakers of a language understand and cultivate the native speaker's perception of what constitutes polite behaviour.

In a study of native speakers and advanced learners of Hebrew, Olshtain and Weinbach (1987) pointed out five categories as the speech act set of complaints. The researchers developed five categories of speech acts that were based on severity of the complaint for a specific scenario, in which one colleague had waited for another colleague, who arrived late to a scheduled appointment. The five categories were: (1) below the level of reproach, *"No harm done, let's meet some other time;"* (2) disapproval, *"It's a shame that we have to work faster now;"* (3) complaint, *"You are always late and now we have less time to do the job"* (4) accusation and warning, *"Next time don't expect me to sit here waiting for you"* and, (5) threat, *"If we don't finish the job today I'll have to discuss it with the boss"*. They found that both groups, regardless of first language, made use of each strategy, while – at least for this particular scenario – tending to prefer the middle of the scale – disapproval, complaint and accusation – rather than the extremes of the continuum (below the level of reproach and threat), avoiding being either too soft or too confrontational. According to this study, social status is viewed as significant among the native speakers of Hebrew.

Murphy and Neu (1996) applied the speech act set to complaints produced by American and Korean speakers of English. They identified the semantic formula as (1) *an explanation of purpose*, (2) *a complaint*, (3) *a justification*, and (4) *a candidate solution: request*. They found a high correlation between native and non-native speakers when producing three of the four speech act components – explanation of purpose, justification, and candidate solution: request. Native and non-native speakers differed in production of the second component, the complaint. The American subjects produced a complaint in each instance, i.e., “*I think, uh, it’s my opinion maybe the grade was a little low,*” whereas most Korean subjects tended to produce a criticism, i.e., “*But you just only look at your point of view and uh you just didn’t recognize my point*” (p. 200). Such criticism was reported to have the potential of offending the interlocutor or shutting down the interaction in an American context.

In more recent studies, Tanck (2002) investigated the differences between native and non-native English speakers' production of refusals and complaints. The author used a group of participants from varying first languages. To generate data for this study, the participants were given a discourse completion task (DCT) wherein they were asked to write their responses to six prompts, resembling the two acts of complaint and refusal as well as two distracters, within familiar, equal and superior/inferior relationships. Responses of native English speakers were reviewed for evidence of common components of speech act sets to establish a set of baseline responses. The responses made by the non-native speakers were then evaluated for the presence and quality of the speech act components as compared to the native speakers. The results of the study showed that although native and non-native speakers produced almost the same speech act set components, the quality of their responses were different. It was also found that nonnative

speakers' responses were generally linguistically correct. However, they were pragmatically ill-formed, hence not perceived by the hearers as appropriate.

Another study using DCTs and a few role plays were used as the instruments by Spees (1994) in a cross-cultural study of complaint strategies between Japanese and Americans. In this study, Japanese were found to be more direct than Americans in situations where the interlocutors have equal status with each other. Apart from that, the Japanese responded differently toward interlocutors. This was influenced by their social distance with the interlocutors and it was also demonstrated that they were generally more indirect to out-group members.

Moon (2001) investigates the speech act of complaint as produced by native and non-native speakers of English also through a DCT. The data were analyzed based on the notion of the *severity of the complaint*. The results of this study apparently show that nonnative speakers are not always successful in complaint and in communication, in general. These failures of nonnative speakers in complaints are primarily caused by their grammatical and linguistic limitations, but mainly caused by the limitation of sociopragmatic knowledge.

Another study on the speech act of complaint was conducted by Hyoshim (2004). This study looked at the linguistic and cultural differences in American and Korean complaint events. The data were taken from TV shows and analyzed according to four factors; power, distance, severity of the offense and age. Brown and Levinson's politeness strategies and Ting-Toomey's assumption about high-context and low-context cultures were also used as a basis for the analysis. The results of the data analysis showed that the

American and Koreans employ different kinds of politeness strategies in complaint events due to different cultural values. Among the four factors, severity of offense is the most important element in American complaints, whereas power, age, and distance are crucial elements in Korean complaints.

Kozlova (2004) investigates the structure and cultural styles of indirect complaints in Russian and American English, and politeness strategies used by native speakers of these languages when complaining. It has been found that although indirect complaints in these languages are structured similarly, in some instances Russian complaints lack the problem solution component and optimistic attitude towards the resolution of the problem in the centre of the complaints. Humorous complaints in American English and laments in Russian reflect different styles of expressing indirect complaints in these cultures. The politeness strategies used by native speakers of Russian and American English demonstrate that Russians prefer positive politeness, whereas Americans favour negative politeness in the realisation of indirect complaints. The data for this study were collected by tape-recording natural conversations through participant-observation. Awareness of the cultural differences of indirect complaints will help learners to avoid intercultural miscommunication.

In a study conducted on Malaysian ESL learners on the realization of speech act of complaint, it was revealed that Malaysians behaved differently with people of different social status (Farnia, Buchheit, & Shahida Banu, 2009). Using DCT and verbal reports, their findings presented that indirect strategies are used by Malaysian ESL learners in high-social status situations as compared to equal-status situations. The results also indicated that social status is valued by Malaysians when interacting in Malay and

English. Studies on the speech acts among Malaysians specifically on the speech act of complaints are still very limited. Therefore, this study would like to add an insight on the realization of the speech act of complaints among Malaysian customers specifically in business settings.

Though there are numerous studies conducted on complaints, complaints in CMC are still largely undiscovered. Vásquez (2011) conducted a CMC study. Using a data set of 100 customer complaints on the website TripAdvisor, the study found that a significant proportion of complaints tended to juxtapose overall negative evaluation with some positive appraisal, and that a similar proportion of the complaints made explicit reference to reviewer's expectations not being met. The study also found that complaints tended to occur as a speech act set. According to Vásquez (2011), although previous studies have found that complaints tended to co-occur with speech acts such as warnings or threats, in this particular context, complaints tended to co-occur more frequently with advice and recommendations. Finally, the study found that while the majority of the complaints on TripAdvisor can be considered indirect (or third party) complaints, there were nevertheless some examples that blur the direct/indirect dichotomy.

Another study on the speech acts of complaints was conducted by Meinel (2013). This study was done by comparing British English and German complaints in CMC, precisely on eBay. The aim of this study is to compare the British English and German production of computer-mediated complaints and, consequently, a description of similarities and differences, of which the latter may lead to misunderstandings in cross-cultural electronic communicative situations. Specifically, the collected complaints were analysed according

to five categories: the use of complaint strategies, the chosen level of directness, the employment of modification, the use of pronouns, and the handling of features of CMC.

Meinl (2010) investigated the different complaint strategies speakers use to formulate their complaints. There are 8 strategies identified in the study. eBay users either use a single strategy or combinations of them to formulate their electronic complaints. The strategies are (1) expression of disappointment, "*item never received and no refund given by seller. very disappointing*" (2) expression of anger and annoyance, "*too useless for words*" (3) explicit complaint, "*item was water damaged tried to contact seller no reply to emails*" (4) negative judgement, "*No reply from seller. Thumbs down*" (5) drawing one's own conclusion, "*Will not buy from you. Never again!*" (6) warning others, "*AVOID!*" (7) threat, "*I am reporting you to eBay the goods you sold me are scrap*" and (8) insult, "*NEVER RECEIVED ITEM. DID NOT REPLY TO EMAILS. ROBBERS*". In this study, British English traders show a tendency to choose direct strategies in case they have *not received the item*, in that they use the strategies *negative judgement, drawing one's own conclusion, threat and insult*. German traders show a clear tendency to use the more *direct strategies warning others, threat and insult*. Moreover, the reason for complaining also has some impact on the amount of strategy combinations German speakers use.

The present study would like to extend the CMC study of customer complaints by focusing on the online complaints posted on a social media, Facebook. As Benwell and Stokoe (2007) point out, CMC data offer the following advantages for discourse analysts: they are "unmediated by the transcription process" and they also lack "the problems bound up with the observer's paradox," so they represent a source of "authentic" data.

Previous studies on CMC used emails, websites and online forums to elicit data. Studies on a social media, specifically on the speech act of complaints on Facebook are not yet discovered.

2.9 The Directness Levels of Complaints

Another aspect of analysis concerns the directness level that Facebook users choose to formulate their complaint, whereby the term 'directness' signifies the degree of face-threat for the complaine. According to Trosborg (1994), complaints can be expressed at varying levels of directness ranging from hints and mild disapprovals to severe challenges in which the complaine is explicitly declared incompetent and irresponsible as a social member.

Leech (1983: 123-124) has formulated the indirectness scale from the speaker's as well as from the hearer's point of view:

Speaker's point of view : The indirectness scale on which, from s's point of view, illocutions are ordered with respect to the length of the path (in terms of means – ends analysis) connecting the illocutionary act to its illocutionary goal.

Hearer's point of view : The indirectness scale can also be formulated from h's point of view, in terms of the length of the inferential path by which the force is derived from the sense.

The utterance in a complaint may only indirectly express the complainer's ill feelings towards the complaine, or these may be phrased in terms of a straightforward accusation or in terms of moral judgement. In the former case, the complaine has to perform an inference process to establish a link between what is said and what is truly intended on the basis of the situational context. By choosing a particular level of directness, the complainer is able to decide on the conflict potential of the complaint.

Trosborg (1994) stated that characteristically complaints are statements, but this characteristic by no means distinguishes complaints from other indicative sentences. Neither can we point to particular modal verbs as indicators of abusive force. Instead, the directness scale of complaints is formulated according to a semantic scale which express the severity of the offence. The criteria used for establishing the scale of directness are the following:

P = Propositional content (complainable)

C = Complainer

A = Accused (complaine)

According to Trosborg (1994), these are the factors determining the directness level of a complaint:

- i. The complainable is or is not expressed directly in the propositional content. (P describes/ does not describe the complainable)
- ii. The complainer's negative evaluation of the propositional content is implicitly or explicitly expressed. (P is bad – articulated or implied)

- iii. The agentive involvement of the complaine is implicitly or explicitly expressed. (A has done P – articulated or implied)
- iv. The complainer's negative evaluation of the complaine's behavior is implicitly or explicitly expressed. (C evaluates A's action as bad – articulated or implied)
- v. The complainer's negative evaluation of the complaine as a person is implicitly or explicitly expressed. (C evaluates A as a bad person – articulated or implied)

2.10 The Background of Malaysia Airlines

Malaysia Airlines Berhad (MAB) formerly known as Malaysian Airline System Berhad; branded as Malaysia Airlines is a major airline operating flights from Kuala Lumpur International Airport and from secondary hubs in Kota Kinabalu and Kuching to destinations throughout Asia, Oceania and Europe. Malaysia Airlines is the flag carrier of Malaysia and a member of the oneworld airline alliance. The company's headquarters are located at Kuala Lumpur International Airport. In August 2014, the Malaysian government's sovereign wealth fund Khazanah Nasional—which then owned 69.37% of the airline—announced its intention to purchase remaining ownership from minority shareholders and de-list the airline from Malaysia's stock exchange, thereby renationalising the airline.

The airline began as Malayan Airways Limited and flew its first commercial flight in 1947. A few years after Singapore's independence, the airline's assets were divided in 1972 to form Singaporean flag carrier Singapore Airlines and Malaysian flag carrier Malaysian Airline System. Its logo is the wau bulan, a traditional Malaysian kite design.

In 2014, Malaysia Airlines lost two aircraft—Flight 370 and Flight 17—less than five months apart, exacerbating the airline's financial troubles and leading to the renationalisation of the airline. Prior to 2014, MAS had one of the world's best safety records—just two fatal accidents in 68 years of operation, including the hijacking in 1977 of Flight 653 that resulted in 100 casualties.

2.11 The Background of American Airlines

American Airlines, Inc. (AA) is a major American airline headquartered in Fort Worth, Texas. Operating an extensive international and domestic network, American Airlines is the world's largest airline by fleet size and revenue, and the second largest by number of destinations served, after United Airlines. It operates from its main hub at Dallas/Fort Worth, and its hubs at Charlotte, Chicago-O'Hare, Los Angeles, Miami, New York-JFK, New York-LaGuardia, Philadelphia, Phoenix, and Washington, D.C., while its primary maintenance base is at Tulsa International Airport.

American Airlines is a founding member of the Oneworld airline alliance, and coordinates fares, services, and scheduling with fellow alliance partners British Airways, Iberia, and Finnair in the transatlantic market and with Japan Airlines in the transpacific market.

Regional service is operated by independent and subsidiary carriers under the brand name American Eagle. It is a wholly-owned subsidiary of American Airlines Group.

2.12 The History of Facebook

Facebook was founded in 2004 by Mark Zuckerberg at Harvard University. It is a web-based social utility that was designed to facilitate efficient communication between family, friends, and coworkers. Seven years later, total membership is estimated to be over 700 million active users, making Facebook the third largest 'country' in the world and the most visited site on the Internet. As people visit Facebook to share personal observations, photos and videos in intimate settings, advertising and blatant commercialism may be seen as intrusive and distracting. In 2006, Facebook, invited ten elite companies, including Apples, Amazon.com and Electronic Arts, to set up company profiles. A year later, they extended the invitation to all companies, then thousands of whom saw immediate benefits and logged in. A company on Facebook can establish a rapport with existing and potential clients, post sales information, promotions, new product announcements and promote those products with engaging drawings and giveaways. A company can educate its customers by posting research data and relevant articles, encouraging followers to donate to a supported cause, and informing customers of upcoming corporate events.

Facebook in particular is expanding the ways users are able to interact online. As the New York Times puts it, "Facebook is rapidly becoming the Web's dominant social ecosystem and an essential personal and business networking tool in much of the wired world" (Stone 2009). Facebook has a number of tools that allow one to talk with other users. It has its own internal instant messaging system and email message system, but also allows

users to comment on each other's pages (i. e. post on their 'wall') so that others can see the conversation and engage as well. One of the few peer reviewed articles dealing with Facebook discusses how individuals view others based on what they post on their Facebook pages, or ' profiles' (Walther et al. 2008). The article shows that individuals will view other individuals differently based on the type of information they post describing themselves (are they more introverted, etc.). In particular, the study looked at those things users cannot manipulate (attractiveness in profile pictures, what other people post on your wall, etc.), versus those they could (your own descriptions of hobbies, etc.). They concluded that postings from other people have a greater impact on how individuals are viewed. But what is clear is that postings do have a clear impact on how people are viewed—whenever anything is posted (by yourself or from another person about you) there is a clear perlocutionary effect. Because the social networking sites have this sort of social impact on how a person is perceived, it is undeniable that the linguistic exchange online has a greater dimension to it than simple locution. Not surprisingly, with these new tools and their greater social dimension, we find pragmatic force playing a heavier role. As the Internet has become more of a social platform, users participate more regularly in speech acts with clear illocutionary force.

2.13 Summary

In this chapter, theories pertaining to the speech act of complaints are presented as well as the past studies on the act of complaining. It can be concluded that most of the studies conducted on the speech act of complaints referred to the act of complaining between native and non-native speakers of English. In other word, previous studies put more attention on the language acquisition of second language learners but less focus was put on the difference of the participants' cultures. Apart from that, many studies on

pragmatics employed discourse completion tasks (DCT) as the instrument to elicit data for the studies. Some studies also used role play technique in order to collect data. Studies on computer mediated discourse (CMC) are still not largely discovered and the literatures on the CMC studies specifically on Facebook are hardly found. Therefore, the present study would like to add insight to the existing body of pragmatics knowledge concerning the realization of the speech act of complaints by Malaysian and American customers on Facebook.

University of Malaya

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter describes the methods used to collect data in this study and explains their appropriateness to the exploration of the three research questions outlined at the end of the previous chapter. The literature reviews have assisted the researcher to focus on the type of research method that is relevant for this area of study.

3.1 Theoretical Framework

The theoretical frameworks of this study are based mainly on the taxonomy of complaints proposed by Olshtain and Weinbach (1987) and the taxonomy of directness levels by House and Kasper (1981). In investigating the directness levels of the complaints, the modality markers for complaint act as proposed also by House and Kasper (1981) was employed in this study. Although these frameworks are from 1980s, the descriptions and the linguistic features of each category – complaint categories, directness levels of complaints, modality markers for complaint act - as well as the examples are given clearly by the researchers and therefore it serves as a good guideline in analyzing the data in this study. Thus, this is why these frameworks are chosen for the purpose of this study.

3.1.1 The Taxonomy of Complaints by Olshain and Weinbach (1987)

This taxonomy is used to categorize the online complaint categories as applied by Malaysian and American customers on Facebook. This taxonomy is a scale of the severity of complaints consists of five categories. These five categories are in fact the five main strategies which make up the speech act of complaining. It is classified and defined in terms of the complainer's position with respect to the hearer's face and in terms of its linguistic features.

The table below shows the descriptions of each complaint category and its examples as presented in the study of Olshain and Weinbach (1987).

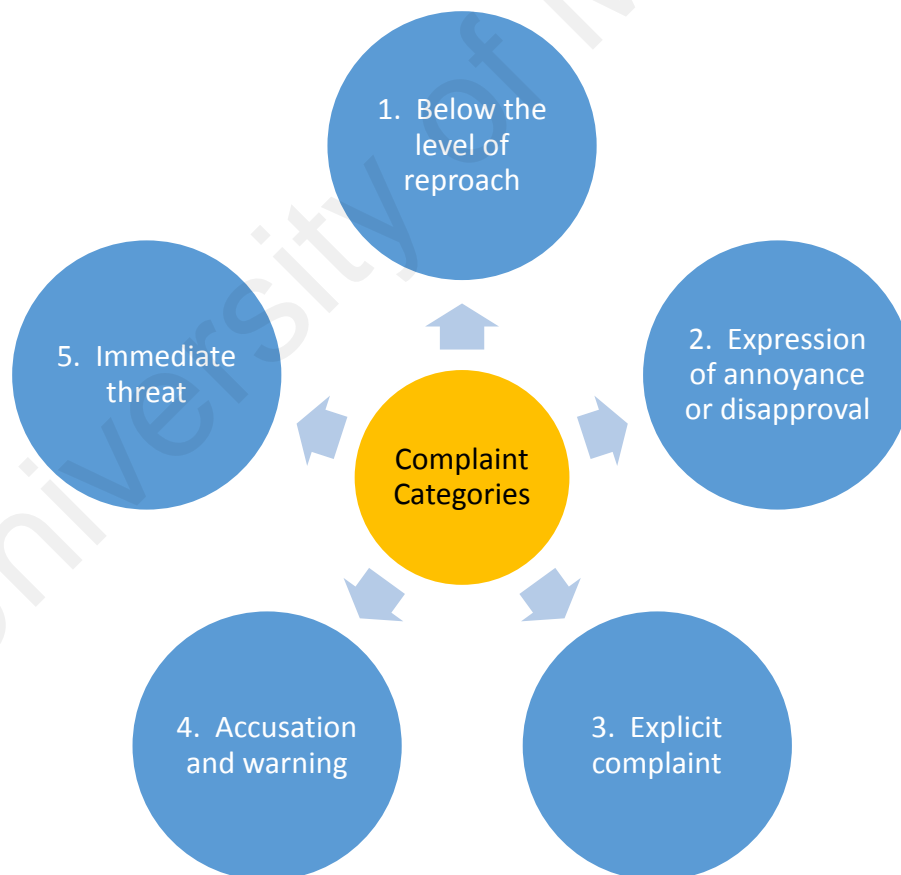


Figure 3.1 : Olshain and Weinbach's Taxonomy of Complaint Categories

3.1.1.1 Below the Level of Reproach

The speaker chooses to minimize Face Threatening of the hearer. The speaker avoids explicit mention of the offensive event by means of various remarks without directly blaming the interlocutor. The speaker attempts to minimize cost and maximize benefit for the hearer even at maximizing cost for the speaker.

Linguistic features : Complete avoidance of direct or indirect reference to either the event or the H.

- Examples :
- i. *Never mind, nothing serious happened.*
 - ii. *Could we meet another time?*
 - iii. *Such things happen all the time.*

3.1.1.2 Expression of Annoyance or Disapproval

These are realizations of disapproval by means of indirect or vague indications that something has been violated without holding the interlocutor directly responsible. In these cases, the speaker avoids direct confrontation with the interlocutor and makes general remarks that something has happened expressing some kind of annoyance at the violation. There is still avoidance of open face threatening.

Linguistic features : Avoidance of direct and explicit mention of event or H but very obvious hint at the fact that some event is considered offensive by the S.

- Examples :
- i. *What a terrible bureaucracy!*
 - ii. *Such lack of consideration.*
 - iii. *Is this acceptable behavior?*

3.1.1.3 Explicit Complaint

The speaker performs an open Face Threatening Act towards the hearer but no sanctions are instigated. The speaker explicitly states a direct complaint holding the interlocutor responsible for such a violation. This is often a direct or unmitigated complain addressed to the interlocutor's face.

Linguistic features : Reference to either H or A, or both.

Example :
i. You're not fair.
ii. You're inconsiderate
iii. I've been waiting here for nearly an hour.
iv. I expected different treatment from a physician like you.

3.1.1.4 Accusation and Warning

When choosing this strategy, the speaker performs an open Face Threatening Act and even implies potential sanctions for the hearer. The direct action taken by the speaker making an explicit complain carries potential consequences for the interlocutor. Explicit reference to the speaker's future act will incriminate the hearer.

Linguistic features : Future tense; 1st person (S) reference.

Example : *I'll speak to your supervisor.*

3.1.1.5 Immediate Threat

Immediate threat encompasses open attack on H including verbal abuse.

Linguistic features : Present tense; reference to either S or H or both; expression of immediacy.

Examples :
i. I'm not moving one inch unless you change my appointment.
ii. This is the last time I'm letting you touch my car.
iii. Pay the money right now.

3.1.2 The Taxonomy of Directness Levels by House and Kasper (1981)

This taxonomy is used to determine the directness levels of the online complaints as realized by Malaysian and American customers on Facebook.

This scale is based on a progressive eight-point scale from 1 to 8 with Level 1 being the most indirect and 8 being the most direct. Levels 1 to 4 are all indirect while Levels 5 to 8 are direct.

X = complainant

Y = agent responsible for the unacceptable act/situation

P = the unacceptable act/situation

Table 3.1 : The Taxonomy of Directness Levels by House and Kasper (1981)

Complaint Level	Descriptions	Examples
1	By performing the utterance U in the presence of Y, X implies that he knows that P has happened and he implies that Y did P.	<i>Odd. My blouse was perfectly clean last night</i>
2	By explicitly asserting that P, X implies that Y did P.	<i>There's a stain on my blouse.</i>
3	By explicitly asserting that P is bad for him, X implies that Y did P.	<i>Terrible, this stain won't come off.</i>
4	By explicitly asking Y about conditions for the execution of P or stating that Y was in some way connected with the conditions for doing of P, X implies that Y did P.	<i>Did you wear my blouse by any chance?</i>
5	X explicitly asserts that Y did P.	<i>You've stained my blouse.</i>
6	By explicitly asserting that the action P for which Y is agentively responsible is bad, or explicitly	<i>You shouldn't have taken my blouse without asking my</i>

	stating a preference for an alternative action not chosen by Y, X implies that Y is bad/or X asserts explicitly that Y did P and P is bad for X, thus also implying that Y is bad.	<i>permission/ You have ruined my blouse.</i>
7	X asserts explicitly that Y's doing of P is bad.	<i>I think it's mean that you just take my things.</i>
8	X asserts explicitly that Y is bad.	<i>You are really mean.</i>

House and Kasper (1981) point out that 'on all the lower levels the addressee Y must perform an inference process on the basis of the situational context, especially the relationship holding between the interlocutors X and Y and the social norms recognized by both X and Y'. They suggest that 'through this inference process Y is enabled to work out for himself both an adequate propositional content and the intended illocutionary force of X's utterance'.

3.1.3 Modality Markers for Complaint Act by House and Kasper (1981)

There are a number of internal modifiers that can be used with a variety of forms in order to modify force. House and Kasper (1981) refer to these devices as *modality markers*. Markers which tone down the impact are known as *downgraders* while those which increase the impact are *upgraders*. By including internal modifiers it is possible to achieve different degrees of politeness whilst maintaining the same level of directness.

3.1.3.1 Downgraders

Downgraders are markers which mitigate the impact the speaker's utterance is likely to have on the hearer (Kasper, 1981). This function is usually accomplished by means of syntactic or lexical/phrasal linguistic means comprising a large number of mitigating devices, such as politeness markers (*please*) modal adverbs (*probably, possibly* etc.) mental state predicates (*I think, I believe* etc.) adjectives or degree modifiers (*kind of, sort of, a bit* etc.) and so forth. (House & Kasper, 1981; Faerch & Kasper, 1989). House and Kasper (1981) have identified eleven main classes of downgraders. These main classes of downgraders are presented in Table 3.2 with some examples.

Table 3.2 : The Main Classes of Downgraders

Main Classes of Downgraders	Descriptions	Examples
i. Politeness marker	Optional elements added to an act to show deference to the interlocutor and to bid for cooperative behavior.	'please'
ii. Play-down	Syntactical devices used to tone down the perlocutionary effect an utterance is likely to have on the addressee,	(i) past tense: <i>I wondered if ...</i> (ii) durative aspect marker: <i>I was wondering ...</i> (iii) negation: <i>Mightn't it be a good idea ...</i> (iv) interrogative: <i>Mightn't it be a good idea ...</i> (v) modal: <i>Mightn't ...</i>
iii. Consultative Device	Optional devices by means of which X seeks to involve Y and bid for Y's cooperation; frequently these devices are ritualized formulas,	<i>Would you mind if ...</i>
iv. Hedge	Adverbials – excluding sentence adverbials – by means of which X avoids a precise propositional specification thus circumventing the potential provocation such a specification might entail; X leaves the option open for Y to complete his utterance and thereby imposes his own intent less forcefully on Y.	<i>kind of, sort of, somehow, and so on, and what have you, more or less, rather</i>

v. Understater	Adverbial modifiers by means of which X underrepresents the state of affairs denoted in the proposition.	<i>a little bit, a second, not very much, just a trifle</i>
vi. Downtoner	Sentence modifiers which are used by X in order to modulate the impact his utterance is likely to have on Y.	<i>just, simply, possibly, perhaps, rather – Couldn't you just move over a bit?"</i>
vii. – (“minus”) Committer	Sentence modifiers which are used to lower the degree to which X commits himself to the state of affairs referred to in the proposition. X thus explicitly characterizes his utterance as his personal opinion.	<i>I think, I guess, I believe, I suppose, in my opinion – “I think you've made a mistake”.</i>
viii. Forewarn	A kind of anticipatory disarmament device used by X to forewarn Y and to forestall his possible negative reactions to X's act. Typically a forewarn is a metacomment about what X is about to do, a compliment paid to Y as a preliminary to a potentially offensive utterance, or an invocation of a generally accepted cooperative principle which X is about to flout.	<i>far be it from me, to belittle your efforts, but... - “You're a nice guy, Jim, but...”, “This may be a bit boring to you, but...”.</i>
ix. Hesitator	Deliberately employed malformulations, used to impress on Y the fact that X has qualms about performing his ensuing act.	stuttering, reduplication – “ermm...”
x. Scope-Stater	Elements in which X explicitly expresses his subjective opinion vis-à-vis the state of affairs referred to in the proposition, thus lowering the assertive force of his utterance	<i>“I'm afraid you're in my seat”, “I'm a bit disappointed that you did P”, “I'm not happy about the fact that you did P”.</i>

xi. Agent Avoider	Syntactic Devices by means of which it is possible for X not to mention either himself or his interlocutor Y as agents, thus, for instance, avoiding direct attack.	passive, impersonal constructions using <i>people, they, one, you</i> as “neutral agents” lacking [+ definite] and [+ specific] reference. “ <i>This is just not done, Mr. Robinson</i> ”.
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3.1.3.2 Upgraders

On the other hand, the inclusion of *upgraders* has the opposite effect. It increases the impact of a complaint on the hearer (House & Kasper, 1981). Furthermore, a complainer may want to suppress his/her personal responsibility for issuing the blame by putting forward the criticism as a general blame. The main classes of upgraders are presented in Table 3.3 below:

Table 3.3: The Main Classes of Upgraders

Main Classes of Upgraders	Descriptions	Examples
(a) Overstater	Adverbial modifiers by means of which X overrepresents the reality denoted in the proposition in the interests of increasing the force of his utterance.	<i>absolutely, purely, terribly, frightfully</i> – “ <i>I’m absolutely disgusted that you left the bathroom in such a state</i> ”.
(b) Intensifier	Adverbial modifier used by X to intensify certain elements of the proposition of his utterance.	<i>very, so, such, quite, really, just, indeed</i> – “ <i>I’d be really pleased if you could help me</i> ”.

(c) + (“plus”) Committer	Sentence modifiers by means of which X indicates his heightened degree of commitment vis-à-vis the state of affairs referred to in the proposition.	<i>I’m sure, certainly, obviously, really – “You should certainly have informed me”.</i>
(d) Lexical Intensifier	Lexical items which are strongly marked for their negative social attitude.	swear words - “That’s bloody mean of you!”
(e) Aggressive Interrogative	Employment by X of interrogative mood to explicitly involve Y and thus to intensify the impact of his utterance on Y.	“Why haven’t you told me before?”
(f) Rhetorical Appeal	In using a rhetorical appeal, X attempts – by claiming or implying the non-possibility of not accepting that P – to debar Y from not accepting that P.	<i>You must understand that, anyone can see that, it’s common knowledge that.. – “You must understand that this is public property”.</i>

According to Trosborg (1995), *downgraders*, which serve to mitigate the circumstances under which an offence was committed and consequently reduce the blame which can be put on the complaine; *upgraders*, which have the opposite function: they increase the impact a complaint is likely to have on the complaine by aggravating the complainable.’ In Olshtain and Weinbach’s study in 1993, they were named as *softeners* and *intensifiers*.

3.2 Participants

The data collection in this study was done based on purposeful sampling. The participants were among the Malaysian Facebook users who posted their complaints on the Facebook page of Malaysia Airlines and also the American Facebook users who posted their complaints on the Facebook page of American Airlines. Only complaints posted by Malaysians on the Facebook page of Malaysia Airlines were selected. The same concept was applied to select the participants who were among the Americans. Only complaints posted by Americans on the Facebook page of American Airlines were selected as the data for this study.

The rationale of selecting the data by focusing on one nationality for one airline company was that, those who fly with Malaysia Airlines and American Airlines are mostly their local citizens. Therefore, it was convenient to find Malaysian complainers from the Facebook page of Malaysia Airlines and American complainers from the Facebook page of American Airlines.

However, it was a bit difficult to determine the nationality of the Americans as compared to Malaysians. This is due to the fact that the researcher is a Malaysian and thus is somehow familiar with Malaysians' names - even though Malaysia is a multiracial country in which the people consist of Malays, Chinese and Indians and some other ethnicities. In selecting the complaints posted by Americans, the researcher had a tendency to wrongly select the British citizens as participants. However, it was not a big problem as the background information of these Facebook users can be accessed. In selecting the participants amongst Malaysians and

Americans, only Facebook users who allowed their background information to be viewed publicly were chosen as the participants. This was to ensure that they were really Malaysians and Americans.

In the background information of the Facebook users, their hometown and current city were stated. Not only that, based on the background information, the researcher was also able to identify their gender, occupation and other details pertaining to the complainers. However, for the purpose of this study, age, gender, occupation and others were not taken into account as this study only focused on the Facebook comments, not the participants. Apart from that, to avoid fake Facebook accounts – as Facebook only requires people to provide their email when registering - only active users whose Facebook friends were more than 500 people, were selected. The researcher can tell whether the Facebook users were active or not by looking at the statuses updated by on their timeline and also their interactions with other people who commented on their statuses.

For the purpose of this study, only comments that contained the expressions of dissatisfactions which are categorized as complaints, described and defined by Olshtain and Weinbach (1987) were chosen as the data. People who commented on public pages like these, should be aware that their comments are read and observed by other people. According to Herring,(1996), on ethically responsible research in CMC, it is safe to say that the study is being done using an unrestricted public space on this social media. Hence, no permission is needed from the participants.

3.3 Instruments

The purpose of this study is to look at the strategies employed by Malaysians and Americans in the expression of their online complaints on Facebook. Complaints In order to achieve this purpose, data was collected through the comments given by the Facebook users who had the experience of dealing with the airline companies. It was not difficult to get access to the two Facebook pages as these pages were created for public view. To get accessed, the researcher must have a Facebook account. To create a Facebook account, only an e-mail address is required.

On the other hand, the airline company was chosen to be the subject in this study for the reason that the aviation industry is somewhat prestigious. The customers put a high trust on their service. Therefore, if their expectations are not met, the tendency for the customers to complain is high. Malaysia Airlines and American Airlines are seen as high class airlines and people need to pay a great deal of money to fly with them. Therefore, they are expected to serve their customers at their very best and hospitality provided must be way better than the low cost airlines.

Facebook comments, posted in English were selected as the data for this study. It was a challenging task to collect rich data as many Facebook comments on Malaysia Airlines' Facebook page were posted in Malay Language or a mix of English and Malay Language. Complaints which were posted fully in English were selected as this study was conducted by referring to theories and past studies which were presented in English. Apart from that, in analyzing the data, the complaint structures and the component of complaints were also analyzed based on the English structures

and components. This was to ensure that both Malaysian and American complaints were analyzed using the same and standardized methods and terms. Moreover, if the complaints by Malaysians were selected in Malay Language, the researcher had to translate the data to English and thus, the structure of the complaints will be different and this might lead to a different data interpretation.

3.4 Procedures

There were four major steps involved in the current study: (i). Selection, Collection and Description of Data (ii). Coding of Data, (iii). Analysis of Data and (iv). Interpretation of Data.

3.4.1 Step 1 : Selection of Data

Having outlined the technical and social context of the Facebook comments, the focus now turns to the data collection procedures of the present study. Linguists have distinguished between two different ways the Internet can be employed in research. These are referred to as ‘Web as corpus’ and ‘Web for corpus building’ (Fletcher 2004, 2007; Hundt et al. 2007; De Schryver 2002). While in the former approach commercial crawlers or Internet-based search engines are used to create corpora from the Web directly, the latter signifies that researchers manually select the data to build offline monitor corpora. The present study falls under the ‘Web for corpus building’ approach, since its data has been collected manually from the Facebook walls of two different airline companies, precisely the Malaysia Airlines’ and American Airlines’ Facebook pages.

The first step taken in collecting data was to browse through the two airlines' Facebook pages – Malaysia Airlines' and American Airlines' Facebook pages. 1.8 million Facebook users 'Liked' the Facebook page of Malaysia Airlines whereas over 2.1 million Facebook users 'Liked' the Facebook page of American Airlines. This was a good indication that Malaysia and American Airlines managed to engage their fans and customers through updates and any information that they shared on their Facebook pages.

People posted their comments on these airlines' Facebook pages because of numerous reasons. Sometimes, these Facebook users commented on the status which were updated by the airline company. For example, if the status updated was about the latest promotion, people would comment on the promotion itself, and there were also people who shared their experience pertaining to the promotion offered. Some other Facebook users would condemn the offer, and asked the airline company to focus on upgrading the comfort of their flights, for example.

There were also some people who would post pictures of them travelling with these airlines and this led others to comment of their photos thus the Facebook users could also interact between one another on the Facebook page of the airline company. Furthermore, all complaints had been sent within a comparable period of time, namely in the years of 2013 and 2015. This is especially important, since language is always subject to change, especially in rather new communicative mediums such as text-based CMC (Claridge, 2007). In addition to that, all comments were preserved exactly as typed, which is important, since any "incorrect" spelling, grammar and/or

punctuation can have a special meaning in electronic discourse and is thus worth analysing.

For the purpose of this study, 80 comments on Malaysia Airlines' Facebook page and 80 comments on American Airlines' Facebook page were collected. Only complaints made by Malaysians against Malaysia Airlines and complaints made by Americans against American Airlines were chosen. All of these complaints were directed to the two airline companies. Although some of the complaints were directed to the airline crews for not being good with their customer service, for instance, those complaints were still directed to the airline companies as they were the ones responsible of hiring their staff. Therefore, in all 160 complaints, the two airline companies were the objects the complaints were directed to. From 875 comments that the researcher had read through, 160 comments had been analysed and categorized according to the appropriate complaint categories based on Olshtain and Weinbach's framework.

However, it is important to note that a single Facebook comment might have more than just one complaint. This is due to the fact that some complainers might complain about various issues and therefore it could be more than just one complaint found per comment. Therefore, those 160 comments referred to 160 participants who posted their complaints on Facebook but the numbers of complaints were in fact more than that. Some of the complaint categories which were not presented by Olshtain and Weinbach, but found in the data were put into a special category.

3.4.2 Step 2: Coding of Data

In the present study, all postings posted by Malaysian and American customers were coded differently for ease of reference such as 'M1' for 'Malaysian complaint, Subject 1'. In order to ease the data analysis stage, the word length used by each complainer to convey their complaints, the reasons for complaining, complaint categories, modality markers as well as the level of directness (levels 1-8) were also coded and presented in Table 3.4, below :

Table 3.4 : The Data Coding Scheme

Number	Items	Coding
1.	Malaysian's complaint (Subjects 1 until 80)	M1 until M80
2.	American's complaint (Subjects 1 until 80)	A1 until A80
3.	Word length in a single Facebook posting	WL
4.	Reason for complaining	CR
	i. Flight problems	CR1
	ii. Luggage	CR2
	iii. Ticketing	CR3
	iv. Customer service	CR4
	v. Refunds	CR5
	vi. Fares	CR6
	vii. Others	CR7
5.	Complaint Category	CC
	i. Below the level of reproach	CC1
	ii. Expression of annoyance or disapproval	CC2
	iii. Explicit complaint	CC3

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> iv. Accusation and warning v. Immediate threat vi. Insult vii. Request viii. Warning others ix. Negative judgement x. Drawing conclusion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CC4 CC5 CC6 CC7 CC8 CC9 CC10
6.	<p>Modality Markers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Downgrader <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Politeness Marker ii. Downtoner iii. Playdown b) Upgrader <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Overstater ii. Intensifier iii. Lexical Intensifier 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MM D D1 D2 D3 U U1 U2 U3
7.	Complaint directness level (Levels 1 until 8)	DL 1 until DL 8

The examples on how reasons for complaining, categories of complaints and levels of directness were identified and categorized based on the studies of Olshtain and Weinbach as well as House and Kasper. The examples of how these items were identified and categorized can be seen in Sections 3.1.1.1 until 3.1.1.5; Sections 3.1.3.1 and 3.1.3.2 as well as Sections 4.1.1 until 4.1.7.

3.4.3 Step 3: Analysis of Data

This section provides an analysis of the different strategies identified in the data. Since this study falls under qualitative method, the data was analysed using descriptive statistics where comparison and contrast are used. The complaints posted on Facebook were collected to allow for an analysis of recurring features both in terms of the contents of the posting, and in terms of how the online complaints were structured and expressed. One advantage of working with written data is that they allow for coding which can help identify themes and patterns but can also be revisited as necessary as different issues emerge.

. . . codes are organising principles that are not set in stone. They are our own creation, in that we identify and select them ourselves. They are tools we think with. They can be expanded, changed or scrapped altogether as our ideas develop through repeated interactions with the data. Starting to create categories is a way of beginning to read and think about the data in a systematic and organised way (Coffey & Atkinson, 1996:32).

3.4.3.1 Step 3(a): *Research Question 1:*

What are the reasons for complaining as posted by Malaysian and American customers on Facebook?

In order to answer this research question, the data was first analyzed according to the categories as follows:

- (i) Average number of words used to construct the online complaints

- (ii) Reasons for complaining
- (iii) Number of reasons for complaining in each post
- (iv) The relationship between the length of words and the number of reasons for complaining.

3.4.3.2 Step 3 (b): *Research Question 2:*

Which complaint categories are found in the realization of online complaints by Malaysian and American customers?

In order to answer the second research question, the data was analyzed by looking at:

- (i) the complaint categories involved in each post
- (ii) the number of complaint categories employed in each post

3.4.3.3 Step 3 (c): *Research Question 3:*

What are the levels of directness of the online complaints made by Malaysian and American customers on Facebook?

In order to answer the third research question, the data was analyzed by looking at:

- (i) the frequency of modality markers found in the online complaints.
- (ii) the directness levels of the online complaints.

3.4.4 Step 4: Data Interpretation

After data analysis stage, the realization of different complaint categories as well as the different directness levels by Malaysian and American customers were compared and discussed in detail.

3.5 Methodological Advantages and Disadvantages of the Dataset

The methodological advantages of using comments posted on the Facebook pages that received an overwhelming response from the participants are; first and foremost, active and interesting discussions among the complainers (Facebook users) can be obtained. Secondly, most of the Facebook users post their comments on the Facebook pages of the two airline companies to share their experience flying with both airlines. Therefore, those who do not have good experience dealing with the companies will post their complaints and express their negative judgements. Last but not least, naturally occurring data is able to be collected since the presence of a researcher is not seen and felt by the complainers when writing their comments, thus it is unlikely for the researchers to face the observer's paradox (Bousfield, 2008). However, there is also a disadvantage of using this type of dataset. According to Jucker (2005), some data might have been edited before appearing online, thus make it impossible for the researcher to analyse the original comments posted by the Facebook users.

3.6 Summary

In this chapter, the research design was clearly presented with the aim of collecting data and information required in order to answer the formulated research questions. Data was obtained through comments taken from the Facebook pages of Malaysia Airlines and also American Airlines. The procedures for analyzing the data were also discussed in detail. In the next chapter, the analysis of the data and discussion of the analysis will be presented to demonstrate how Malaysian and American customers realized their online complaints on Facebook.

University of Malaysia

CHAPTER 4

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the analysis of data followed by a discussion of the research findings. The findings relate to the research questions that guide the study. The research questions are as follows:

1. What are the reasons for complaining as posted by Malaysian and American customers on Facebook?
2. Which complaint categories are found in the realization of online complaints by Malaysian and American customers?
3. What are the levels of directness of the online complaints made by Malaysian and American customers on Facebook?

The data in this study were analysed and the results were interpreted to answer the research questions. The analysis of the study was carried out in 3 different phases. In the first phase, the reasons for complaining were identified. The second phase was the analysis of the complaint categories found in the online complaints. This analysis was conducted based on the framework of the taxonomy of complaint categories as proposed by Olshtain and Weinbach (1987). In the final phase, the levels of directness of the online complaints were analysed using the framework of the taxonomy of directness levels by House and Kasper (1981). In analysing the levels of directness

of the online complaints, the modality markers for complaints by House and Kasper (1981) were employed.

4.1 Reasons for Complaining

The data collected from the Facebook page of Malaysia Airlines and American Airlines were categorized according to the reasons for complaining. Based on the data, there were 7 common reasons both for the Malaysian and American customers to convey their complaints to the airline companies on Facebook namely due to flight problems, luggage, reservation, ticketing and boarding, customer service, refunds, fares and others. These reasons of complaints were identified and categorized based on the issues mentioned by the complainers in their comments. Related keywords were observed in analyzing the complaint reasons. For instance, in analyzing the complaint reasons on flight problems, keywords such as *delay*, *delayed* and *late* were observed. For complaint reasons on luggage, keywords such as *luggage* and *baggage* were observed whereas one of the keywords observed for complaint reasons on refunds was *refund*. Apart from that, in order to analyse the complaint reasons on fares, keywords such as *fares* and *price* were observed. These important keywords in identifying the types of complaint reasons were put in bold and also underlined in all examples given in this dissertation. Other words, phrases or sentences which were identified as complaints or expressions of dissatisfaction were put in bold (without being underlined). In the discussion part, when referring to the examples, the complaints were presented in italic.

The researcher did not use any existing framework to analyse the reasons for complaining. However, the definition of complaint as given by Olshtain and Weinbach (1987) served as a guideline in identifying complaints (See page 14). This complaint is usually addressed to the hearer (H), whom the speaker (S) holds responsible for the offensive action. In the examples of the complaints below, the complaints were directed to H (in this context, the airline company), whom S (in this context, the complainer) held responsible for the offensive action. The keywords (the researcher put in bold) which indicated that the actions done by H were considered as offensive can be identified when S made statements like '***this is so frustrating***', '***worst customer service***', '***currently it sucks!!!!***' (referring to the customer service), '***it's time to sharpen your customer service skills***' and '***your prices are getting to high to travel***'. More examples of the complaints with various types of complaint reasons can be seen below.

4.1.1 Flight problems

Some air travels were not always reliable. Customers encountered flight problems or cancellations, delays, misconnections, or any other deviations from schedule with or without warning from the airline. A flight delay refers to an airline flight which takes off and/or lands later than its scheduled time. The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) considers a flight to be delayed when it is 15 minutes later than its scheduled time. A cancellation occurs when the airline does not operate the flight at all for certain reasons. When flights are cancelled or delayed, passengers may be entitled for compensation due to rules obeyed by every flight company.

Examples :

M38 : Waiting for flight to Manila MH704, **late** as usual...some things never change.

It's no longer a first choice airlines. Sigh it was once a pride for Malaysia.

M64 : Malaysia leading airlines?????? **Your 850am flight at Senai Airport today had just been delayed** till 10am and just as I am commenting, they announced **it is further delayed** to 1105am. We have an urgent appt in KL which explains the reason why we chose MAS!! If our appt schedule was flexible, we would have flown Airasia or Firefly! **Preposterous and unacceptable for a so call leading airlines!!**

A18 : **WORST SERVICE EVER!** The 3 times that my husband has flown with your airlines, **his flight has been late** making him **unable to make his connecting flight**, causing him to be late to each of the events he has been flying in for. This last flight from GSP to SEA, we booked the same day as my husband received a call that his dad was dying. We booked the flight and got him to the airport on time. Upon his arrival **he was told the incoming flight would be late** and that he would, once again, miss his connection in Charlotte, NC. He was told by the desk attendant that he should contact whoever dropped him off and have them drive him to Charlotte and maybe he could make his connection. **They then put him on another flight to Dallas then to Seattle, making him 3 hours later than we had originally planned. When I called your "Customer Service" line I got nothing but a "too bad, so sad" attitude from everyone including "supervisor" who refused to give me any other identifying information than "Myles "Fox Trot" FT". I am very upset that none of the air travel plans we have made with your company have gone**

as planned and that your company sees no need to compensate or even show any compassion or remorse for the inconveniences that they cause. My husband's father is dying and every minute is precious and not one person there seemed to care that your company's inability to keep an itinerary as planned has cost my husband **not only the lost time cost by the delays**, but also the new accommodations to transport him from the airport to the hospital. And to add to it, **he BARELY made his connection** in Dallas due to **EVEN MORE DELAYS. SHAMEFUL AND WE WILL NEVER USE YOUR AMERICAN AIRLINES AGAIN.**

In the examples, complaints regarding flight problems basically occurred because of flight delays. ‘*Your 850am flight at Senai Airport today **had just been delayed***’, ‘*Waiting for flight to Manila MH704, late as usual*’ and “*...his flight has been late making him unable to make his connecting flight*” were among the statements which showed that the complaints were made because of problems on flight delays. Keywords such as *delayed* and *late* were found in these complaints. M38 used the word *sigh* as an indication of the action done by the complainer. This showed that he had actually sighed as he was complaining in order to express how frustrated he was when the flight he was waiting for was late as usual. M64 on the other hand, stated ‘*Malaysia leading airlines??????*’ with multiple question marks. The symbols of multiple question marks in this context are used to represent a sense of disagreement. Here, the complainer also made a negative statement in which he mentioned ‘*Preposterous and unacceptable for a so call leading airlines!!*’. This was also an indication that the complainer perceived that the airline had made an offensive action.

Double exclamation marks appeared after the statement represented an expression of anger. By referring to the whole complaint coded as M64, it was understood that offensive offense was a flight delay. As for A18, the complainer used capital letters in her complaint. Capital letters in computer mediated communication served to emphasize – ‘**WORST SERVICE EVER!**’ and ‘**he BARELY made his connection in Dallas due to EVEN MORE DELAYS. SHAMEFUL AND WE WILL NEVER USE YOUR AMERICAN AIRLINES AGAIN**’. The use of capital letters, exclamation marks and the use of the word ‘*shameful*’ were parts of the indicators which indicated that the complainer was feeling extremely angry and annoyed. Here, she was also complaining about flight delays.

4.1.2 Luggage

People complained about lost, damaged or delayed luggage, charges for excess luggage, carry-on luggage problems, and difficulties with airline claims procedures.

Examples :

M1 : I have two bad experiences with MAS ; the way their crew were handling passenger's luggage ..my luggage was broken after domestic arrival n also lost my electronic gadget inside it...sorry to say, a very bad day with MAS.

A41 : We landed in Lima to find that our luggage had NOT arrived and was not put on the flight in miami. We queued for around 25 minutes at 4:30 am to be given a bag locator number and to check on the website/call the local number. We were extremely distressed and missed the first day of our tour around lima.

A76 : ...Lost luggage is their biggest problem and they don't care to straighten out the problem.

Complaints made because of issues on luggage were also found in this study. In the complaints, statements which indicated that luggage was the reason for the complainer to make their complaints were, '*my luggage was broken after domestic arrival...*', '*We landed in Lima to find that our luggage had NOT arrived...*' and '*Lost luggage is their biggest problem...*'. Here, the word *luggage* served as a keyword to analyse the reason of complaints pertaining to luggage. In addition to that, there were also statements which indicated that the complainer had a negative experience with the airlines and the airlines were held responsible for the offensive events that occurred. For instance, in M1, '*...my luggage was broken after domestic arrival n also lost my electronic gadget inside it... a very bad day with MAS*'. In this example, the complainer explicitly mentioned the name of the airline which he held the airline responsible for the broken luggage and the loss of the electronic gadget inside it. In the complaint coded as A41, '*We were extremely distressed and missed the first day of our tour around lima*', the complainer mentioned about his negative feeling regarding the unfavourable event that occurred. The unfavourable event in this complaint referred to the luggage which arrived later than the complainer's

arrival which had made him missed the first day of his tour around the place that he visited. This complainer was extremely upset. Another example that showed a favourable event had occurred was identified in a complaint coded as A76. The complainer stated that *'they don't care to straighten out the problem'*. The word *they* here referred to the airline company.

4.1.3 Reservation, Ticketing and Boarding

Getting the right ticket is a crucial part of traveling by air. There were a fair share of airline mistakes in the areas of reservations, customers obtaining their tickets, and passengers boarding on the plane and also issues in making online bookings, check-ins and passengers boarding the plane.

Examples :

M15 : This is the 3rd time i am having this Web Check-in issue.. this is so frustrating!!!! Please escalate this.

M30 : Hi Malaysia Airlines, i think u should upgrade the ticketing system. I always stuck when redirect to online banking. Cannot access.

A72: Do NOT fly American Airlines!!!They have repeatedly messed up a reservation beyond comprehension. It was made as far back as January for a 06/11/15 trip and they waited until recently to mess it up. My 80yr old mother has traveled the world so she can do up a reservation better than anyone and yet American Airlines has caused grievous problems for an entire family.

Malaysian and American customers also complained because they had issues on reservation, ticketing and boarding. In analyzing these complaint reasons, keywords such as *reservation*, *ticketing* and *boarding* were observed. “*They have repeatedly messed up a reservation beyond comprehension*” was a clear example that this complaint was made because of the problem that the complainer had regarding reservation and the word *reservation* was mentioned in the complaint. In the complaint coded as M15, the complainer stated ‘*this is so frustrating!!!!*’ to express his frustration as that was the third time he faced that same problem with the airline. Multiple exclamation marks (*frustrating!!!!*) served to emphasize the statement and also indicated that the complainer was literally yelling to the airline company. In M30, the complainer mentioned about the online ticketing system in which he had problems to proceed with the online banking when purchasing tickets from the airline website. The complainer started the complaint with ‘*Hi Malaysia Airlines*’. This showed that the complaint was clearly directed to Malaysia Airlines. In A72, the complainer complained about a reservation in which he stated that American Airlines had repeatedly messed up the reservation and that had caused grievous problems to the complainer’s family.

4.1.4 Customer Service

Unruly, rude, and unhelpful employees can be a problem in any business - and airlines are no exception, as evidenced by the complaints about poor cabin assistance and treatment of delayed passengers. People also complained about poor airline food.

Examples :

M5 : I guess your team must immediately answer the call from the customers!

Calling your call centre has been done lots of time and the answer never get back to me asap.each call that been made rm1 will be charged.imagine for 10 times per day.

A7 : The only benefits you can offer at this point is a **MUCH IMPROVED customer service!! Cuz currently it sucks!!!!!!**

A31 : I wonder if one of them was the one who refused to announce a serious **peanut allergy for a passenger**. She kept smiling while explaining that although they are allowed to make that type of announcement, they do not "have" to do so. Thankfully, the other passengers seated near the one with the severe allergy were more accommodating. **American Airlines, it is time to sharpen your customer service skills and put passenger safety as a top priority!**

Issues on customer service were among the reasons that lead the complainers to complain on Facebook. Important keyword such as *customer service* was observed in order to analyse complaint reason on customer service. In the complaint coded as M5, '*I guess your team must immediately answer the call from the customers!*', the word *customer service* was not mentioned. However, it was understood that answering phone calls was part of the customer service. Thus, the complaint reason for M5 was categorized as customer service. Answering phone calls and responding to emails were also among issues related to customer service. On the other hand, in

complaints coded as A7 and A31, the word *customer service* was mentioned. Therefore, it was clear that the complaint reason for A7 and A31 was made because of customer service. In A7, '*cuz currently it sucks!!!!!!*', the word *it* referred to customer service. This complainer requested for a much improved customer service. The use of a bad word, *sucks* and multiple exclamation marks indicated that the complainer was expressing his anger in this complaint. On the other hand, in A31, the complainer complained about a cabin crew who refused to announce a serious peanut allergy to the passenger. American Airlines was also asked to sharpen its customer service skills. This indicated that the complainer was not satisfied with the current customer service provided by American Airlines.

4.1.5 Refunds

Customers complained about obtaining a proper refund from an airline for unused or lost tickets or fare adjustments. If the refund reason is the fault of the airline, or due to a natural occurrence, the airline may refund the price of the ticket as a travel voucher without any fees. If the refund is a passenger's request due to a missed flight, schedule change or other non-airline caused reason, the airline will assess a certain fee.

Examples :

M23 : Hi. On behalf of my wife and her relatives, **we are at the point of really frustrated with the service and response regarding our refund issue.**
We have received two email that confirmed the refund was done in 22 Oct but, **to this day, we haven't received the refund yet...**

M55 : Hi I lodged a complaint few weeks ago, **you promised to refund my money but I have contacted you several times but no response**, is Malaysia Airlines just trying to lie to me to stop the complaints? I would appreciate an answer to my **refund**. Let's get this over and done with. Thank you

A66 : Well here is some negative feedback. **I am waiting for my Business Class refund for me and my wife since the 6th February. The worst airline ever!**

Complaints regarding refund were quite easy to be identified. The word *refund* served as the keyword to identify the complaint reason on refund. All of the complaints on refunds as shown in the examples above contained the word *refund* - '*...we are at the point of really frustrated with the service and response regarding our refund issue*', '*you promised to refund my money... I would appreciate an answer to my refund*' and '*I am waiting for my Business Class refund...*'. These were all complaints as the complainers expressed their dissatisfaction regarding issues on refunds and they held the airline company to be responsible of the unfavourable events that occurred. They were all waiting for the airline companies to refund their money.

4.1.6 Fares

Customers complained about incomplete information about fares, discount fare conditions, overcharges, and the cost of fares in general. Some information is not presented in detail by the airline company due to certain reasons. This has made the customers query for the missing information and also realized their complaints.

Examples :

M3 : ...Can't u be more honest in your promotional price? just put the all-in pricing like Malindo Air.

A21 : Your prices are getting too high, to travel.

A48 : How about lowering prices a bit so it's not like taking out a second mortgage to fly anywhere! I would definitely travel more often if it didn't take years to pay off a trip!

Some of the complaints made were regarding issues on fares. For this complaint reason, the word *price* served as the keyword to analyse the complaint. As presented in the examples above, there was a specific mention of the word *price(s)*. Thus, it was clear that these complainers made their complaints because they had issues on fares. In M3, the complainer asked Malaysia Airlines to be honest in their promotional price. This was because some of the hidden costs were not revealed when this airline company made a particular promotion. A21 and A48 complained about the same issue – the airline fares which were considered too high for them to travel.

4.1.7 Others

There were countless "other" problems that customers came across when traveling, such as missing some personal belongings on flight and also complaints in the realm of frequent flyer miles. A frequent-flyer program (FFP) is a loyalty program offered by an airline. Many airlines have frequent-flyer programmes designed to encourage airline customers enrol in the program to accumulate points which may then be redeemed for air travel or other rewards. Points earned under FFPs may be based on the class of fare, distance flown on that airline or its partners, or the amount paid. There are other ways to earn points. Points can be redeemed for air travel, other goods or services, or for increased benefits, such as travel class upgrades, airport lounge access, or priority bookings. A frequent flyer programme offered by Malaysia Airlines is called Enriched Frequent Flyer Programme whereas for American Airlines, it is known as American Airlines AAdvantage Frequent Flyer Programme.

Examples :

M77 : What absolute nonsense. I just received an email informing me that you are "revising" your Enrich redemption rates effective 16 Feb. What this actually means is that my miles are now worth less, as it costs nearly double the miles needed for most destinations. I think this is a horribly misleading post: encouraging us to convert more points to miles when you KNOW that the miles will be worth a lot less on Feb 16. Very very unhappy frown emoticon.

M78 : I lost my iPhone back in 2012 flying Mas airline Business class (during the flight). History repeat itself yesterday when I fly MH113 from Dhaka to Malaysia. Yet **Another theft! Both my laptop charger and laptop mouse were stolen from my check in luggage!** For those who are flying MAS, please be extra careful!!!

A57 : You would think after flying 4 million miles AA would send me a free ticket to the destination of my choice instead they raise the amount of miles you need to fly ridiculously!

Complaints which were found to be regarding other than the six complaint reasons presented earlier in this section, were categorized as *others*. Frequent Flyer Programmes, missing miles and missing personal belongings were issues classified as *others*. *Enrich, lost, stolen, theft* and *miles* were among the keywords used to analyse the complaint reason pertaining to the category of *others*. In M77, the complainer was not happy with the revised Enrich redemption rates. M78 on the other hand, complained about the loss of his electronic gadgets during flights. A57 complained on the same issue as M77 – the redemption rates. In M77, instead of using any emoticons, this complainer stated ‘*Very very unhappy frown emoticon*’ to express his disappointment towards American Airlines and also to describe his facial expression at the moment of complaining.

4.2 Data Analysis of the Reasons for Complaining

As presented earlier, there were 7 different reasons for the Malaysian and American customers to complain on Facebook. The results are illustrated in Table 4.1 and Figure 4.1. The data were gathered based on 80 Malaysian customers' Facebook comments and 80 American customers' Facebook comments. The total number of the reasons for complaining is discovered to be more than 80 for Malaysian and American customers as some complainers were found to have more than just one reason of complaining in a single Facebook comment. An example of the calculation of the percentage obtained for flight problem is given below. The other percentages of other reasons for complaining were obtained by following the same concept of calculation.

The total number of the complaints made by Malaysian customers was 130 whereas 109 complaints were made by American customers. 41 out of 130 Malaysian complaints were found to be regarding flight problems. In order to obtain the percentage, 41 (Malaysian customers' complaints on flight problems) was divided by 130 (total number of Malaysian complaints) and multiplied by 100. Therefore, it was revealed that 31.54% of the Malaysian complaints were basically about flight problems. On the other hand, 23 out of 109 complaints made by American customers were because of flight problems. Therefore, in order to calculate the percentage, 23 was divided by 109 and then multiplied by 100. The result showed that 21.10% of the complaints posted by the American customers on Facebook was concerning flight problems. The reasons for complaining together with the percentages are presented in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1 : The Reasons for Complaining

The reasons for complaining	Number of Malaysian Complaints	Percentage (%)	Number of American complaints	Percentage (%)
Flight problems	41	31.54%	23	21.10%
Luggage	8	6.15%	13	11.93%
Ticketing	20	15.38%	3	2.75%
Customer service	48	36.92%	53	48.62%
Refunds	3	2.31%	3	2.75%
Fares	2	1.54%	7	6.42%
Others	8	6.15%	7	6.42%
Total	130	100%	109	100%

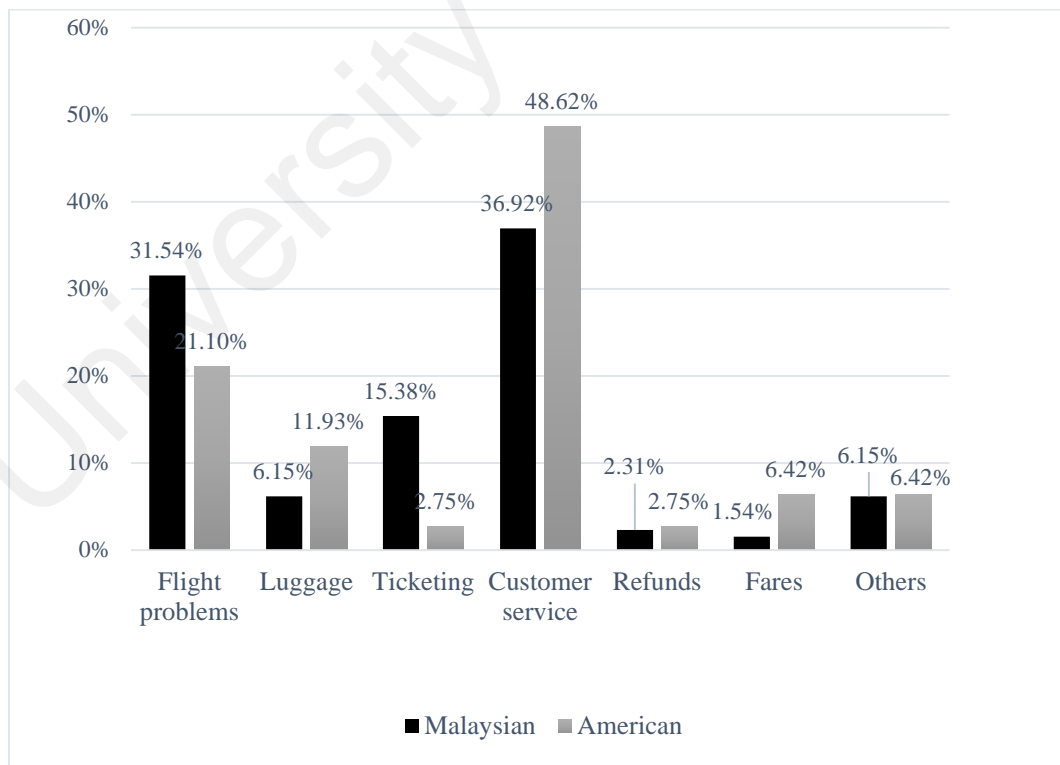


Figure 4.1 : The Reasons for Complaining

Table 4.1 and Figure 4.1 show the reasons for complaining by Malaysian and American customers against the airline companies. It was classified that complaints made by Malaysian customers were mainly because of customer service (36.92%), flight problems (31.54%) and ticketing (15.38%). The highest reason for complaining among Malaysians and American was regarding customer service. 48.62% of the American customers complained because of customer service. Customer service includes the way the customers were treated when making phone calls to the customer service care line, the response received when emailing the customer service, the quality of food served in the flight and such. The second highest reason for Malaysian and American customers to complain was because of flight problems. However, only 21.10% of the American customers complained because of flight problems as compared to 31.54% of the Malaysian customers who complained because of the same reason.

4.3 The Average Number of Words Used Per Comment

It is important to find out the average number of words used in a single Facebook comment as hypothetically, the longer the complaint, the more number of complaint reasons and categories may be identified. First and foremost, the Malaysian and American customers' complaints were analysed for the number of words used in a single Facebook comment. The researcher began with the average number of words used by the Malaysian customers followed by the American customers. In order to get the results, the number of words used in each comment or posting were counted separately. Then, the number of words for all 80 Facebook comments posted by 80 Malaysian participants were accumulated and divided by 80. 80 refers to the total

number of the Malaysian customers' Facebook comments or Facebook posts. The same procedure was conducted on the data of the American customers. The results are illustrated using a graph below:

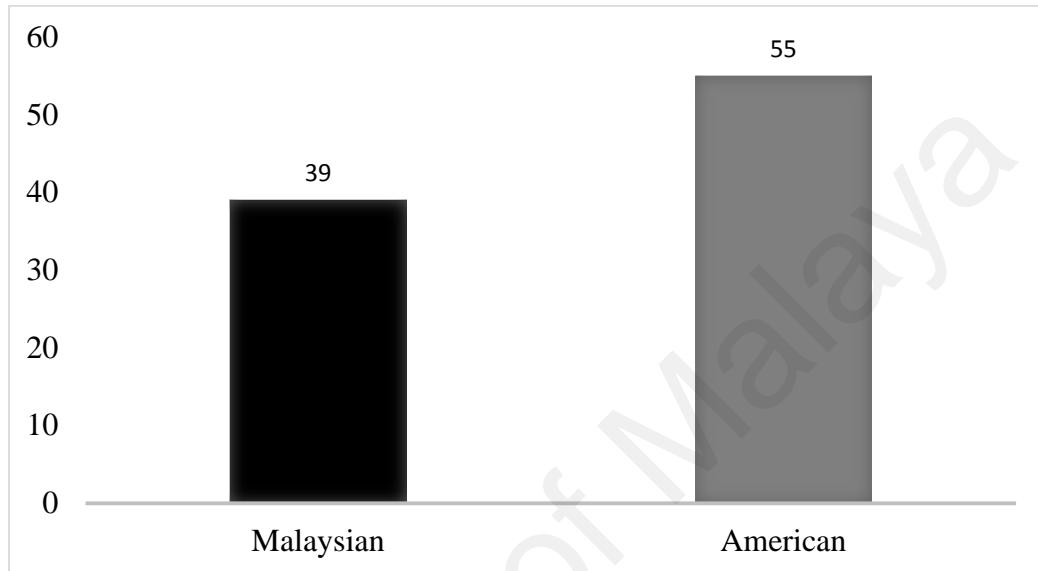


Figure 4.2: Average Number of Words Used Per Comment

Figure 4.2 shows the average number of words used by Malaysian and American customers in communicating their complaints. The average number of words used by Malaysian customers to post an online complaint on Facebook was 39 whereas for American customers, it was 55 words. This shows that American customers produced more words in communicating their complaints on Facebook as compared to Malaysian customers. Some examples of the online complaints collected are shown in Table 4.1 for ease of reference. The number of words counted for each Facebook comment are also presented.

Table 4.2 : The Number of Words in Each Facebook Comment

Participants	Complaints	Number of words
M17	again flight 2707 can't take off, clearly there's a major issue with the aircraft! Please for the sake of our safety allow us to use a different aircraft!!!!	28
M39	pls improve ur telephone service!!!! it is very hard to call in, while call in change a tix need take bout 30 mins!!! it is just disappointing people!	28
M46	delay delay delay... if there is one time when my flight goes on time as scheduled, it would probably be the day when malaysia starts to snow.. Geeez	28
A5	my flight is supposed to leave at 8:30 am and has been canceled the recording said I have to wait now then two hours to talk to someone to reschedule? ! That is not good customer service. You should be able to re - route online and you need more agents to help out in these situations!	57
A23	The baggage supervisor in LAX, Laquisha, is HORRIBLE!!! She knows nothing about customer service and professionalism. And I work for an airline, so I understand the frustrations and how upset people can be. But don't promise to do something for a customer and then yell at them and tell them no, and also don't preach that you know airline procedures. Because clearly you DON'T. This woman is awful and does not deserve the supervisor position she has been given if this is how she treats her customers. I will NEVER EVER EVER FLY AMERICAN AIRLINES AGAIN.	64
A57	You would think after flying 4 million miles they would send me a free ticket to the destination of my choice	48

	<p>instead the raise the amount of miles you need to fly ridiculously! Not to mention the price of airfare has skyrocketed. Gee Thanks American thanks for nothing..</p>	
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After conducting the analysis on the average of words used by the complainers, the number of reasons found in each of the Facebook comments posted on Facebook was then analysed. Participants complained for a particular purpose and they were also directed to make an online complaint because of a particular reason or perhaps due to a number of reasons. Therefore, the focus of the analysis is now shifted on the number of reasons for complaining in a single Facebook comment.

4.4 The Number of Complaint Reasons Per Comment

Based on the data, it was revealed that some of the complainers complained because of more than one reason. To be precise, there were two or three different complaints found in a single Facebook comment. The results are illustrated in Table 4.3 and also in Figure 4.3.

Table 4.3: The Number of Complaint Reasons in Each Facebook Comment

Number of Complaint Reasons	Number of Malaysian Customers	Percentage (%)	Number of American Customers	Percentage (%)
One	57	71.25%	59	73.75%
Two	23	28.75%	19	23.75%
Three	0	0.00%	2	2.50%
Total	80	100%	80	100%

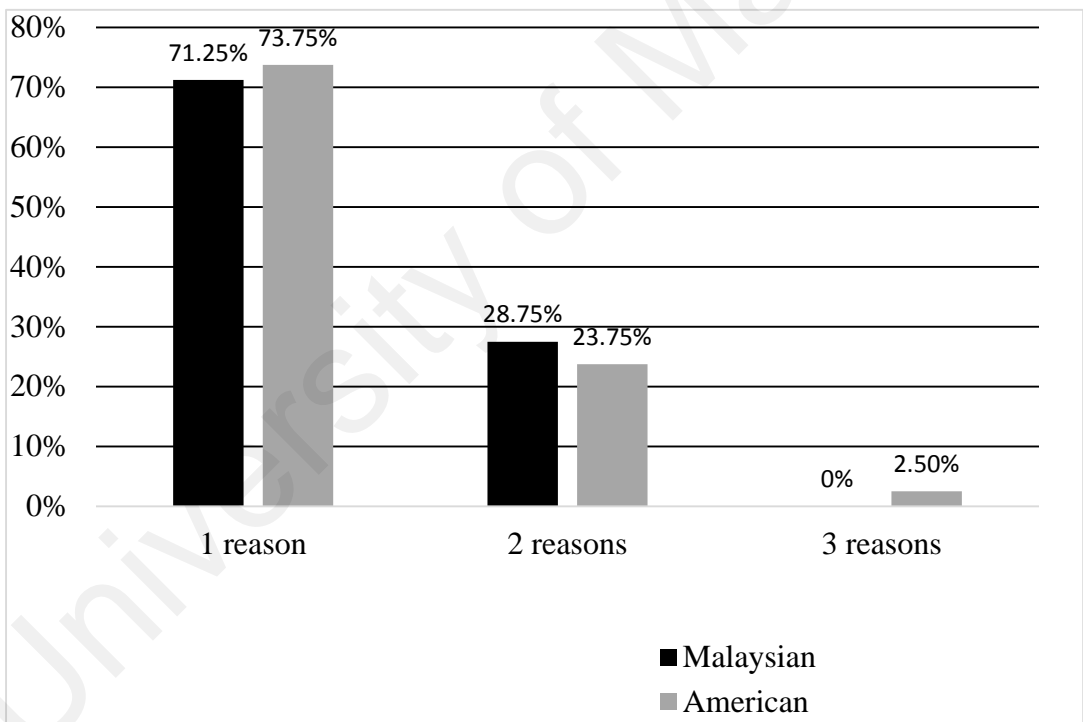


Figure 4.3 : The Number of Complaint Reasons in Each Facebook Comment

As can be seen on Figure 4.3, most Malaysian and American customers complained because of only one reason and the percentage is 71.25% and 73.75% respectively. However, there were also discovered that 28.75% of the Malaysian customers and

23.75% of the American customers complained because of two reasons. Apart from that, a very small percentage, 2.5% of the American customers were identified to have posted their complaints with 3 different reasons. Some participants who complained because of 2 or 3 reasons basically posted their comments regarding their main complaint(s) and the second or the third one was a complaint on the way the customer service department handled the initial complaints.

With regard to data sets consisting of double and triple complaints, it is important to mention that the two or three different reasons for complaining were not coded as distinct categories, since it is the nature of complaining that Facebook users might complain about two or three reasons at the same time. The examples of complaints with different number of reasons are presented below:

Table 4.4: The Number of Complaint Reasons with Examples

Number of Complaint Reasons	Complaint Reasons	Examples
1	Customer service	A4: Your 800 is AWFUL! it keeps hanging up and giving me no way to message or speak to anyone!
1	Ticketing	M13: How could a customer overwritten another customer's seat?
2	Luggage and customer service	M37 : (1) Luggage damaged! (2) one of the worst customer service. I wrote to them, no reply!

3	Flight problem, refund, and customer service	A2: (1) Flight cancelled due to mechanical problems. (2) Did not receive a full refund. (3) Disappointing customer service.
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4.5 Complaint Categories Found in the Complaints

Based on the data collected, there were numerous complaint categories either by Malaysian or American customers in the realization of online complaints on Facebook. However, the data were analysed according to the 5 complaint categories developed by Olshtain and Weinbach (1987). All the aforementioned categories are *below the level of reproach, expression of annoyance or disapproval, explicit complaint, accusation and warning* as well as *immediate threat*. The identification and categorization were done based on the definitions of each complaint category and keywords as mentioned in Sections 3.1.1.1 until 3.1.1.5. The tabulation of data specifically on the complaint categories found in the expression of complaints by Malaysian and American customers are shown in Table 4.5 and Figure 4.4. These complaint categories are based on the definitions and linguistic features given by Olshtain and Weinbach (1987). The detailed descriptions of the complaint categories are presented in Section 3.1.1. Although there were only 80 Malaysian and 80 American customers' complaints collected as the data for this study, the actual number of complaint categories was more than 80. This was basically because there was more than one complaint category found in some of the Facebook comments.

Table 4.5 : The Complaint Categories in Customers' Complaints

Complaint Categories	The Number of Malaysian Complaints	Percentage (%)	The Number of American Complaints	Percentage (%)
Below the level of reproach	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
Expression of annoyance or disapproval	49	37.69%	30	25.00%
Explicit Complaint	63	48.46%	35	29.17%
Accusation and warning	11	8.46%	46	38.33%
Immediate threat	7	5.38%	9	7.50%
Total	130	100%	120	100%

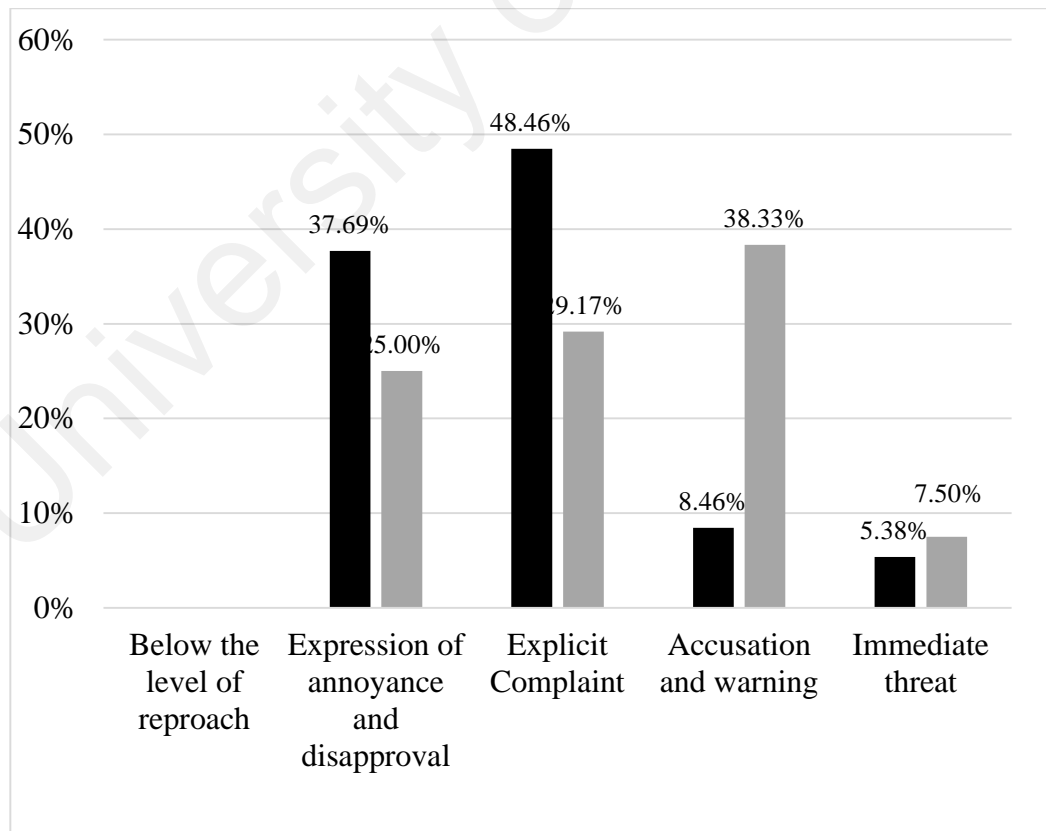


Figure 4.4 : Complaint Categories in Customers' Complaints

Figure 4.4 shows the complaint categories employed by the Malaysian and American customers when posting their online complaints on Facebook. The total number of the complaint categories identified in the complaints made by Malaysian and American customers was more than 80. Although this study collected 80 Malaysian complaints and 80 American complaints on Facebook, some of the collected complaints were found to have more than just one complaint category. Thus, the total number of complaint categories found in the complaints made by Malaysian customers was 130 whereas the total number of the complaints made by the American customers was 120. Olshtain and Weinbach (1987) proposed 5 complaint categories which are *below the level of reproach*, *expression of annoyance or disapproval*, *explicit complaint*, *accusation and warning* and *immediate threat*. However, the result showed that only 4 out of the 5 categories were employed by the customers in the realization of the online complaints.

The graph shows that most Malaysian customers chose to make explicit complaints on Facebook whereas most of the American customers used *accusation* and *warning* in the realization of their complaints. Malaysian customers (37.69%) also made the *expression of annoyance or disapproval* more than the *expression of annoyance or disapproval* made by the American customers (25%). Apart from that, a small number of complaints were made by Malaysian and American customers to threaten either the airline crews or the airline companies. None of the complaints was categorized as '*below the level of reproach*'. This was expected as once they complained, the customers would express their dissatisfaction and/or describe the negative events that they experienced with the airlines. '*Below the level of reproach*' is a complaint category where the complainers just ignore the offense or the negative

events and does not even mention anything about it. Both Malaysian and American customers' complaints were found to have a minimal form of *immediate threat* in their complaints. 5.38% of the Malaysian customers and 7.5% of the American customers were found to make *immediate threats* in the expression of their online complaints.

Table 4.6 : The Complaint Categories and Examples

Complaint Categories	Malaysian customers	American customers
Below the level of reproach	None	None
Expression of annoyance or disapproval	M23: we are at the point of really frustrated with the service and response regarding our refund issue.	A32: Horrible experience - why don't you give the option to select "dislike."
Explicit complaint	M72: Dear Malaysia Airlines, I just fly your MH2529 on Sun, i brought a big vase along as luggage with the sticker "FRAGILE". It that means "EASILY BROKEN AND BE CAREFUL" but unfortunately i got the pieces and pieces vase back..... So sad for that WHAT THE LUGGAGE STAFF DOING and can you all just throw the	A73: My wife and I are on our honey moon and instead of enjoying ourselves, we have been trying to locate our bags since Sunday at Turks and Caicos. She had had to wear the same clothes for two days and since we still haven't received our bags, she has to buy all new clothes today from the island which is very expensive. We've called the American Airlines desk at PLS airport about seven times which is already costing

	<p>luggage any how even with the "FRAGILE STICKER" as well as PRINTED IN RED COLOUR. Better no need to provide the passenger with FRAGILE STICKER. ". I am paying for the air tickets also. HANDLING SERVICES SO POOR.</p>	<p>me .35 a minute, and each time we get the same answer, that the bags haven't been scanned from Miami and that "maybe they'll be on today's flight". This incompetence is causing is a great deal of inconvenience. Completely unacceptable...</p>
<p>Accusation and warning</p>	<p>M27 : I think MAS should investigate and should do something. This is not a small thing. People have been talking abt how bad is your service, your hospitality. And i know you are well aware of the power of e-word of mouth? It spread in blink of an eye and it will affect your reputation.</p>	<p>A27: We are late because of you and you better delay my connecting flight!.... I have a large circle of customers. I will definitely share my negative experience if this is not resolved in a timely manner.</p>
<p>Immediate threat</p>	<p>M26: ...Dont let me write to the minister how bad your service and hospitality is. You know elton john's sorry seems to be the hardest word? I think that song reflects your service. None. I repeat NONE of your personnels could be bothered to say SORRY.</p>	<p>A33: ... Yes, you can expect I will SUE AA. And it will not be a cute small claims court suit just to get a "few vouchers". This will become my passion/hobby for 2014. I left SeaTac exactly 30 hours ago and still no bag.</p>

The analyses of all these complaint categories are presented below and the examples of the customers' complaints are discussed in detail.

4.5.1 Below the Level of Reproach

Based on Tables 4.5 and 4.6, none of the complaints made either by Malaysian customers or American customer was found to be at the category of below the level of reproach.

4.5.2 Expression of Annoyance or Disapproval

The second complaint category is *expression of annoyance or disapproval*. Some complaints made by Malaysian and American customers were found to fit into this category. In the complaint coded as M23, the customer stated that '*we are at the point of really frustrated with the service and response regarding our refund issue*'. Here, it can be seen that there was an avoidance of direct and explicit mention of H. However, a very obvious hint was present at the fact that response regarding a refund issue was considered offensive by the complainer. A32 on the other hand did not make any explicit mention of the event nor H. However, by stating '*Horrible experience - why don't Facebook give the option to select "dislike."*', it was a very obvious hint at the fact that some events were considered offensive by S. The word '*horrible*' itself served as a strong indicator that S was somehow expressing some kind of annoyance at the thing that had been violated without holding the interlocutor (the airline company) directly responsible.

4.5.3 Explicit Complaint

The third complaint category is *explicit complaint*. In the examples, both M72 and A73 were found to be explicit complaints in which the complainers described in detail the bad experiences they experienced. This category of complaint is often direct or unmitigated and is addressed to the interlocutor's face (complainee). Complaints in this category were also found to be longer in length as compared to other complaint categories. In the complaint made by the Malaysian customer which was coded as M72, there was a reference to H (Malaysia Airlines) in which the complaint began with a salutation, '*Dear Malaysia Airlines*'. In addition to that, A (the offensive action or event) was also mentioned by the complainer. A in this context referred to the poor handling service. On the other hand, in the American's complaint, coded as A73, there was also a reference to H (American Airlines) and A (a delayed luggage). H can be found when he stated '*We've called the American Airlines desk at PLS airport...*' in which the complainer held American Airlines responsible for the delayed luggage.

4.5.4 Accusation and Warning

The next complaint category is *accusation and warning*. For this complaint category, S performs an Open Face Threatening Act and even implies potential sanctions for H. Here, the complainers made an explicit reference to their future act. Their complaints also carried potential consequences for the interlocutors (airline companies). In the given example, M27, Malaysia Airlines was accused to have provided a bad service and hospitality. Then, the complainer warned Malaysia Airlines about the negative effect of the e-word of mouth when people start spreading

their bad experiences with others through social media. To make the warning even more severe, the complainer added, the '*e-word of mouth would spread in blink of an eye*' and that would affect the reputation of that airline company. In addition to that, a complaint posted by the American customer which was coded as A27 was also found to fall under this complaint category. The complainer began his complaint with an accusation '*We are late because of you...*' and ended the complaint with a warning '*I have a large circle of customers. I will definitely share my negative experience if this is not resolved in a timely manner.*' The linguistic feature of this complaint category is the 1st person (S) reference for examples, '**We** are late...' and '**I** have a large circle of customers...'. The complainers also used future tense in expressing the complaints. For example, in A27, '*I will definitely share my negative experience if this is not resolved in a timely manner*'.

4.5.5 Immediate Threat

The last complaint category proposed by Olshtain and Weinbach (1987) is *immediate threat*. Here, a complaint is expressed in a way that an open attack is made on H. This may include a verbal abuse. For example, in M26, '*Don't let me write to the minister how bad your service and hospitality is*', the complainer made an immediate threat towards Malaysia Airlines. The complainer in a way was indirectly asking the airline crews to apologize for what had happened. If not, he would report this incident to the minister. '*I repeat NONE of your personnels could be bothered to say SORRY.*' The words *none* and *sorry* were found in capital letters as the complainer wanted to emphasize the issue. In A33, the complainer threatened the airline company by stating that he would sue American Airlines - '*Yes, you can expect I will SUE AA*'.

For this complaint category, complaints were made using present tense and there was also a reference to either S or H or both. In M26 and A33, there was a reference of both S and H. In M26, '**I repeat NONE of your personnels...**', I referred to S and *none of your personnels* referred to H (none of the airline crews). In A33 '**I will SUE AA**', I referred to S and AA (American Airlines) referred to H.

4.6 Other Complaint Categories Found in Customers' Complaints on Facebook.

Based on the data, some other complaint categories which were not presented in the study of Olshtain and Weinbach (1987) were found in this study. Therefore, these newly identified complaint categories were put in a separate section. The other complaint categories identified in the realization of online complaints *were insult, request, warning others, negative judgement and drawing one's own conclusion.*

All of these categories were classified and analysed according to the definitions of complaint strategies found in the study of Kraft (2003) as cited in Meinel (2010) which are described below in section 4.4.1.1 until section 4.4.1.5. The term *strategy* was used in Kraft's study. However, in the present study, the term *category* is used. The examples of the other complaint categories found in this study were put in bold to highlight the identified and mentioned complaint categories.

4.6.1 Insult

An insult is defined as a disrespectful or scornfully abusive remark or action. Data from the present study revealed that *insults* were also used in the expressions of online complaints on Facebook. To insult in this context means the complainers explicitly condemn the airline companies using any lexical items that relate to something bad such as *worst*, *terrible* and *horrible* to describe an extremely bad and unpleasant condition. A number of complainers were found to use swear words in their complaints. Some of the examples of complaints with insults are:

M34: Call **malaysia bloody airlines** check in department, and they cannot do anything at all.

A28: **American Airlines has the absolute worst customer service in an industry that is known for terrible customer service.**

In M34, a swear word, *bloody* was found when the complainer addressed the airline as *Malaysia bloody Airlines*. This was a direct insult which showed that the complainer was being disrespectful towards the complaine. In A28, American Airlines was alleged to have an extremely bad customer service and in fact, the worst among other industries which were known for terrible customer service.

4.6.2 Requests for Repair

A request for repair is a statement whereby the speaker asks the hearer to remedy the situation. The examples of *requests for repair* as found in the dataset of the present study are:

M56: Please upgrade the MAS online booking/flight management system.

A16: Why don't you focus on not delaying flights due to mechanical issues?

In M56 and A16, both complainers requested the airlines to redress the situation. Since the complainer of M56 was having problems regarding online booking, he asked Malaysia Airlines to upgrade the online booking system. This would help to avoid customers from experiencing the same problem. As in A16, the complainer was not satisfied with delayed flights due to mechanical issue. Therefore, he asked the complainees to fix the problem and ensure that the same problem will not happen again.

4.6.3 Warning Others

Some complainers warned other Facebook users in their complaints. They did not want other people to fall victim just like what they had experienced with the airline.

The examples of comments with the lexical of warning as found in the dataset of the present study are:

M60: Please don't use this airline, they are thieves.

A10: Group buyers beware....

In M60, this complainer warned the Facebook users to avoid using Malaysia Airlines by stating '*Please don't use this airline*'. The word '*don't*' served to prevent other people from using the airline. In the second example, the word *beware* was found. It served to warn the customers to be cautious and alert to the bad experience that they would get if they were to board on American Airlines. In A10, the complainer specifically warned the group buyers to beware. Here, the group buyers referred to the people who are in charge of buying the flight tickets for a group of people.

4.6.4 Negative Judgement

A negative judgement is a speech act wherein: 1) the overt semantic content is generally negative; 2) the overt semantic content is either directed at the self, a person other than the interlocutor or an object, which has some negative effect on the self. Negative judgement has a spectrum of fine gradations, beginning with evaluation, leading to finding fault, culminating in condemnation and shame. The examples of complaints in the category of *negative judgement* as found in the dataset of the present study are:

M74: Malaysian airline MH0714 FLIGHT from bali to KL delay 3 hours.. Suppose to fly 1:10 pm, and then they give lunch in a box which contains only beef and they didn't inform anyone. And there were no other choice. They also didn't prepare food for the vegetarians. **A very poor service by Malaysia airlines.**

A29: I emailed 3 times in the last 3 months regarding a refund. They have never replied. I have called them 6 times and they never have answers. They said it would take 2 billing cycles to receive my refund and its been over 3. Why aren't refunds instantaneous? **AA is the worst! Customer service is awful.**

In M74 and A29, the customers described in detail the bad experience that happened to them. Then, they made a negative judgement based on what had occurred – ‘A *very poor service by Malaysia airlines*’ and *AA is the worst! Customer service is awful*. Based on these two examples, the customers used negative adjectives to describe the bad services that they had received from the airlines. Negative adjectives were used to describe the unpleasant side of people, things or experiences. The negative adjectives found in M74 and A29 were *very poor*, *worst* and *awful*.

4.6.5 Drawing one’s own conclusion

Drawing one’s own conclusion refers to the action that will be taken by the complainers in the future. In this matter, most of the complainers who were found to draw their own conclusion decided not to fly with the airline anymore. The examples of complaints in the category of *drawing one’s own conclusion* as found in the dataset of the present study are:

A58: After the horrible customer service today, **I'm ditching my rewards status and never flying this airline again.**

M6: Judging by the fact that flight 2707 is still on the ground since yesterday, **I think we are justified in electing not to board that plane (ever again).**

In A58 and M6, the complainers mentioned the action that would be taken by them in the future. After receiving a bad service from the airlines, both of the complainers decided not to fly with the same airline anymore.

The other complaint categories which were not presented in the framework of Olshtain and Weinbach's (1987) but were found in the data were illustrated in Figure 4.5. Based on the graph, the frequently used complaint categories identified in the productions of the online complaints by Malaysian and American customers on Facebook can be seen clearly. The similarities and differences in terms of the frequently used complaint categories will be discussed at the end of this chapter. There were five other complaint categories found in this study namely insult, request, warning others, negative judgement as well as drawing conclusion. All of these categories are presented in Table 4.7 and Figure 4.5.

Table 4.7 : Other Complaint Categories

Other complaint categories	Number of Malaysian Complaints	Percentage (%)	Number of American Complaints	Percentage (%)
Insult	15	17.86%	18	18.00%
Request	31	36.90%	10	10.00%
Warning others	7	8.33%	11	11.00%
Negative judgement	27	32.14%	40	40.00%
Drawing conclusion	4	4.76%	21	21.00%
Total	84	100%	100	100%

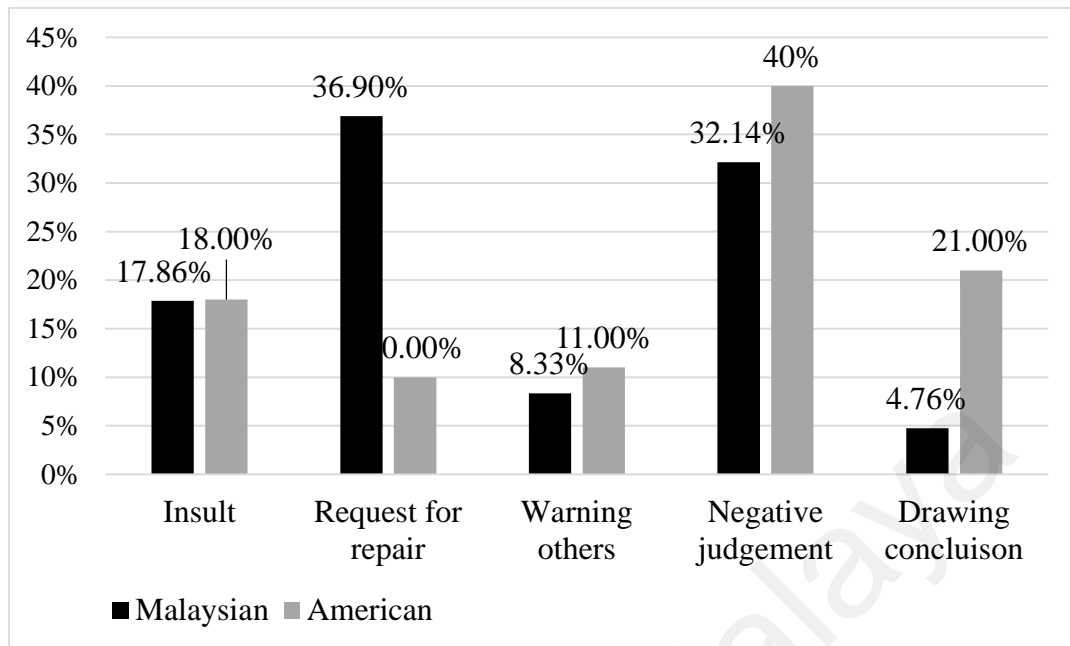


Figure 4.5: Other Complaint Categories in Customers' Complaints

Figure 4.5 shows 5 other complaint categories found in the complaints made by Malaysian and American complainers on Facebook. The total number of complaints with other complaint categories was 84 for Malaysians and 100 for Americans. These numbers were more than 80 because there could be more than just one complaint category in a single Facebook comment or in a single complaint posted by the complainers. Based on these 5 categories, 36.90% of the Malaysian customers inserted a *request for repair* in the realization of their online complaints. However, only a small number of American customers used *request for repair* in their complaints. It was found that most of the American customers made *negative judgements* in expressing their online complaints. It can be seen clearly from the graph that quite a number of American customers (21%) had a tendency to draw their own conclusions on their future action towards the airline company whereas there

were only 4 Malaysian customers (4.76%) identified to draw their own conclusions in the expression of their online complaints.

4.7 The Number of Complaint Categories Per Comment

For this study, the researcher also analysed the number of complaint categories found in a single Facebook comment. This analysis was conducted to identify the most frequently used category in the expression on customer complaints on the Facebook pages of the two airline companies. The data for this analysis is presented using a table and a graph as illustrated in Table 4.8 and Figure 4.6.

Table 4.8: The Number of Complaint Categories Per Comment

Number of complaint categories	Number of Malaysian Customers	Percentage (%)	Number of American Customers	Percentage (%)
1	0	0.00%	10	12.50%
2	24	30.00%	26	32.50%
3	38	47.50%	28	35.00%
4	14	17.50%	13	16.25%
5	4	5.00%	3	3.75%
Total	80	100%	80	100%

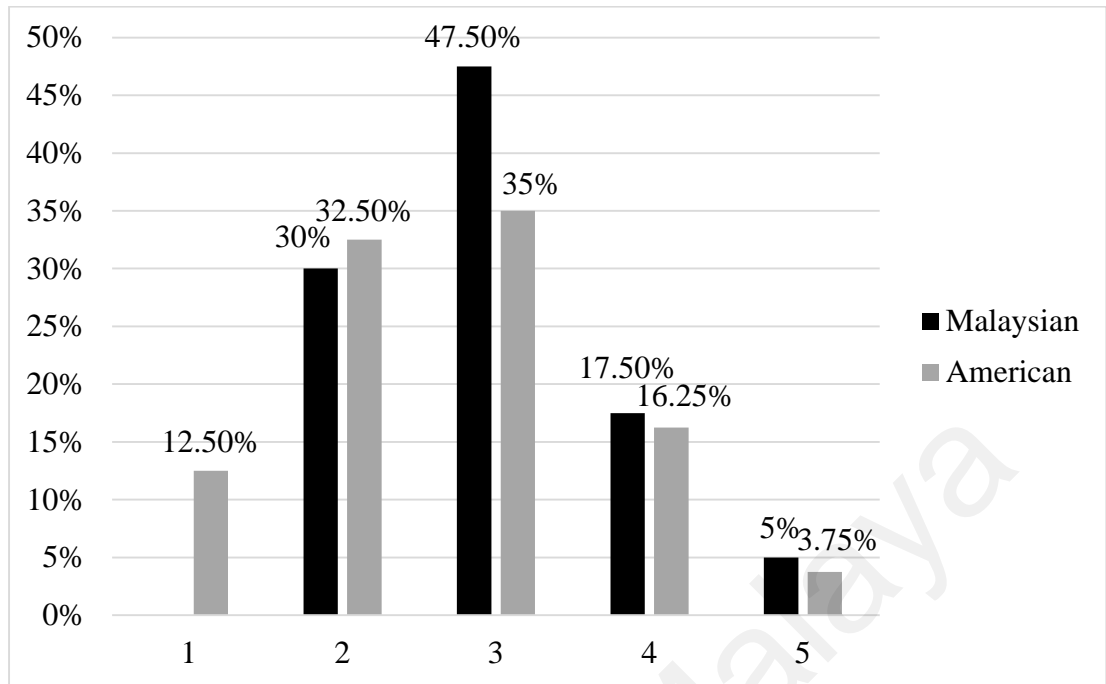


Figure 4.6: Number of Complaint Categories Per Comment

Figure 4.6 indicates the number of complaint categories found in each Facebook complaint. From the graph, it can be seen that the complainers used 1 to 5 complaint categories in a single Facebook comment. There were different styles of communicating the online complaint as shown by Malaysian and American customers. However, it is interesting to note that the trend of the numbers of complaint categories used by the Malaysian and American customers were somewhat similar. 47.5% of the Malaysian customers' and 35% of the American customers' complaints were mostly identified to have 3 different complaint categories per comment. The second highest number of complaint categories used by the complainers was an expression of complaint with 2 different complaint categories followed by a comment with 4 different complaint categories. 30% of the Malaysian customers and 32.5% of the American customers used 2 different complaint categories whereas 17.5% of the Malaysian customers and 16.25% of the American

customers used 4 complaint categories to realize their complaints. It was also revealed that none of the Malaysian complainers realized their online complaints using only one complaint category. However, for American complainers, 12.50% used only one complaint category in expressing their online complaints on Facebook.

The examples of Facebook comments - which were analyzed as complaints - with different numbers of complaint categories can be seen in Figure 4.7. The coding scheme and of the complaint categories are presented below for ease of reference:

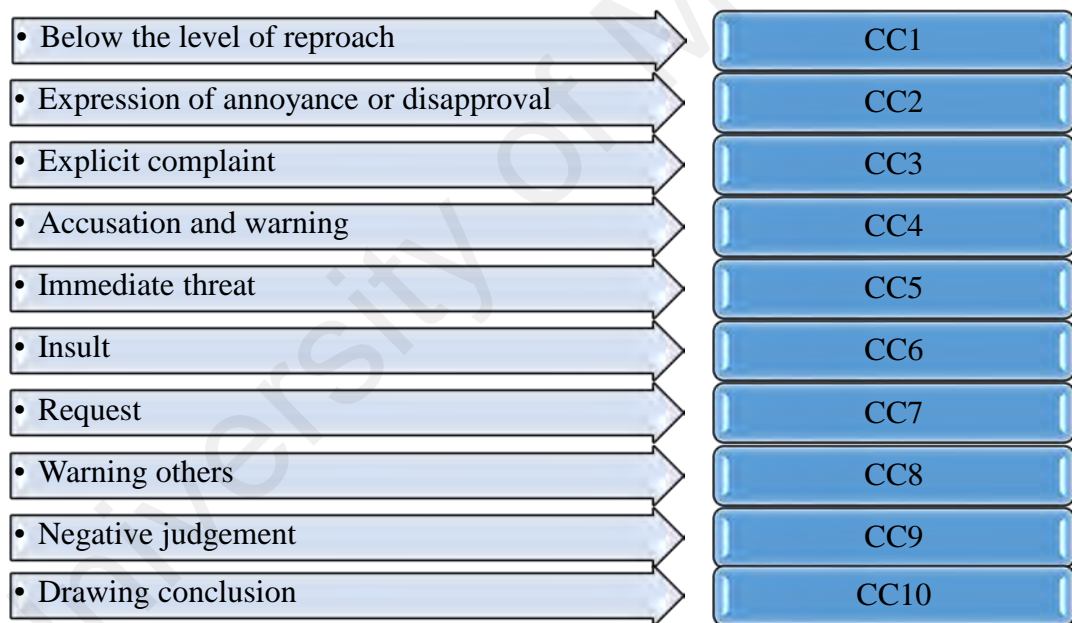


Figure 4.7: The Coding Scheme of the Complaint Categories

4.7.1 Complaints with 1 Complaint Category

A6 : [Cancel my flight, delayed on the next, then you can't even get my bags to the location.] (CC3)

A17: [I was texted my flight was delayed by an hour. Turns out my flight left on schedule and I missed my flight.] (CC3)

There was only one complaint category found in the complaints made by A6 and A17 namely *explicit complaint*. Here, the complainers mentioned about the offensive events they experienced. A6 performed an open Face Threatening Act towards the complainees when the word 'you' was found in the complaint and the offensive events were mentioned but no sanctions were instigated. The speaker explicitly stated a direct complaint holding the interlocutor responsible for such a violation. However, A17 only mentioned about the offensive event but this was still considered as an explicit complaint as the complainees were held responsible of the offensive event.

4.7.2 Complaints with 2 Complaint Categories

M50 : [Very poor response to customer. For the past 2 months, I have been emailing to you guys to claim the missing miles. Until today I have received zero reply from your side].(CC3) [Can you please check and revert back to me?. Check email from wcwroger@yahoo.com which was sent to your enrich email address on Nov 8, Dec 2 and 19.] (CC7)

A26 : [Will not be flying AA in the future.](CC10) [Poor customer service.] (CC9)

There were 2 complaint categories used by M50 and A26. CC3 in M50 shows that the complainer made an explicit complaint in which the complaine and the event were mentioned in the complaint – Missing miles and poor customer service as the complainer did not receive any reply or response after sending three emails. CC7 is a request. M50 asked the complaine to check their emails and respond to the issue concerning the missing miles. CC10 on the other hand shows that A26 drew a conclusion not to board the airline anymore in the future – *'Will not be flying AA in the future'*. This was because A26 had made a negative judgment towards the customer service centre that was considered as poor in handling customers' issues. The negative judgement was coded as CC9.

4.7.3 Complaints with 3 Complaint Categories

M59 : I flew back yesterday SDK-KUL yesterday on MH2711. It was OK. No hitches. [I am disappointed with yesterday evening flight which was re-timed several times since yesterday.] (CC3) [As a shareholder of MAS I am most unhappy]. (CC2) [I will bring this matter to attention of Tan Sri Chairman & Mr MD/CEO at the next AGM.] (CC5)

A29 : [AA is the worst! Customer service is awful.] (CC9) [I emailed 3 times in the last 3 months regarding a refund. They have never replied. I have called them 6 times and they never have answers. They said it would take 2 billing cycles to receive my refund and its been over 3 weeks.] (CC3) Why aren't refunds instantaneous? (CC7)

Both complaints made by M59 and A29 were found to have three different complaint categories. CC3 indicates that these complainers made explicit complaints by mentioning the offensive events. CC2 indicates that M59 was disappointed with what he or she had experienced. Here, this complainer expressed a sense of disappointment by saying *'I am most unhappy'*. Not only that, M59 also threatened the airline crew by stating that he or she would bring that matter to the attention of the higher authorities – Tan Sri Chairman and the chief executive officer- in the next Malaysia Airlines' annual grand meeting. The statement which was identified as threat was coded as CC5. A complaint by A29 on the other hand was found to have a negative judgement (CC9) – *'AA is the worst! Customer service is awful'* - and a request for an explanation (CC7) – *'Why aren't refunds instantaneous?'*

4.7.4 Complaints with 4 Complaint Categories

M47 : [Mh2707 from sandakan to kuala kumpur delayed 5 times and cancelled twice on 29th and 30th June after plane was fully boarded by passengers(both times) there has been no arrangements made from MAS for new direct flight and passengers are forced to wait the whole day in departure uncertainly.. this is the second night the plane has been delayed without solution..] (CC3) [definitely will recommend Malindo or Air Asia instead of MAS horrible service recovery with no solution after 2 nights!!] (CC5) [This is prove of negligence of MAS management and also their incompetence in resolving an issue within 2days..](CC9) [please hire better monkeys.](CC6)

There were 4 different complaint categories involved in the realization of complaint in M47. This complainer firstly made an explicit complaint (coded as CC3). Here, the complainer explained in detail the unfavourable event that happened. Then, an immediate threat was found in this complaint in which the complainer made a statement that he or she will recommend to other people to fly with Malindo Air or Air Asia which are considered as cheap flights but reliable and worth it and not to board on Malaysia Airlines. The immediate threat was coded as CC5. The complainer also made a negative judgement when he or she stated '*This is prove of negligence of MAS management and also their incompetence in resolving an issue within 2 days*'. This complaint ended with an insult in which the complainer asked Malaysia Airlines to hire '*better monkeys*'. The word '*monkeys*' was used to replace the word *staff*.

A10: [Terrible experience this year working with my group travel to Costa Rica. I called yesterday to purchase our tickets and was informed that the per-ticket ticketing fee is now \$35 instead of \$25 that was stipulated on the contract I signed. Now, after 4 phone calls and hours on hold, I still don't have a receipt for the \$16,400 charge that I placed on my personal credit card.] (CC3) [I blew past frustration yesterday and now I'm at the level of complete disgust.] (CC2) [Group buyers beware....there are other airlines that will charge you what they say they would, and get you a receipt (something that should be so basic to a purchase.)] (CC8) [Total fail for American Airlines!] (CC9)

There are 4 different complaint categories involved in the realization of complaint by A10. This complainer firstly made an explicit complaint (coded as CC3). Here, the complainer explained in detail the unfavourable events that happened to him. Then, he expressed his annoyance and disappointment (coded as CC2). After that, the complainer warned other Facebook users specifically the group buyers, to beware when purchasing tickets (coded as CC8). In the last line of the comment, he also made a negative judgement towards American Airlines - '*Total fail for American Airlines!*'- which was coded as CC9.

4.8 The Directness Levels of the Online Complaints

In order to analyse the directness levels of the online complaints, the use of modality markers in the expression of complaints was first identified. The tables below show the types of modality markers. *Modality markers* are divided into two categories namely *downgraders* and *upgraders*. While looking at the modality markers, the directness levels of the online complaints were also analyzed. To analyze the level of directness of the online complaints, the researcher used the framework developed by House and Kasper (1981). The descriptions and the examples of *downgraders* and *upgraders* were presented in Tables 3.3 and 3.4. The *upgraders* and *downgraders* found across different levels of complaints. This analysis was made to answer the third research question.

In order to identify the directness level of the complaints, each complaint was first analysed by looking at the modality markers found in the complaint.

Examples:

M25 : Really (U2) upset that I cannot book for multiple destination. Booked KUL-TWU-BKI-KUL but have to book separately with payment processing fee for each. **Really (U2)** money wasting and time wasting! **Please (D1)** do something!

The word *really* found in the complaint made by M25. *Really* is also an intensifier (Coded as U2). The word '*really*' is found at two different places in this complaint. Like M1, M25 also wanted to intensify the complaint. However, this complainer did not directly blame the airline but explicitly asserted the offensive event. M25 implied that the complainees did the offensive event. The directness level of this complaint is identified to be at Level 3 which is classified as an indirect complaint. Level 3 is described as '*by explicitly asserting that P is bad for him, X implies that Y did P*'. Here, M25 only mentioned the offensive event (P) – having a website for online booking which did not allow the customers to book for multiple destinations and it implied that the airline should be responsible of this situation when the complainer mentioned '*Please do something*'.

M1 : I have two bad experiences with MAS ; the way their crew were handling passenger's luggage ..my luggage was broken after domestic arrival n also lost my electronic gadget inside it...sorry to say, a [**very**] (**U2**) bad day with MAS.

In this complaint, the word *very* is found. *Very* is categorized as an intensifier. An intensifier was coded as U2 and it is an upgrader. This complainer wanted to intensify the complaint by inserting an intensifier in the realization of his complaint. In order to identify the directness level of the complaint, the linguistic features of the complaint was then analyzed. M1 explicitly asserted that the complaine (which refers to the airline crew) did not handle his luggage appropriately and thus making the luggage to be broken. Consequently, M1 lost his electronic gadget which was kept inside the luggage. This complaint is categorized as L5. L5 refers to a complaint level that is direct. A linguistic feature for L5 is '*X explicitly asserts that Y did P*' or in other words it means the complainer asserts that the complaine did the offensive event. The offensive event in this matter refers to the failure of the airline crew in handling the luggage appropriately making the luggage to be broken and thus the item inside the luggage was lost.

However, some of the complaints were also found without any modality markers. These complaints were also analysed in order to identify their directness levels by referring to the taxonomy of directness levels by House and Kasper (1981).

Examples :

M5: Calling your call centre has been done lots of time and the answer never get back to me asap..each call that been made rm1 will be charged..imagine for 10 times per day.

A63: What happens if American Airlines loses all my checked luggage on that flight and I can't get American Airlines to respond to your claim process - simply S/O/L? What is the policy? Oh, no policy? Choose an airline that has a policy and is responsive next time?

These two complaints coded as M5 and A63 do not have any modality markers. The directness level of M5 was analysed to be at Level 6. This is because by explicitly asserting that the action (P) for which the call centre (Y) is agentively responsible is bad, the complainer (X) asserts explicitly that Y did P and P is bad for X, thus also implying that Y is bad. On the other hand, for A63, the directness level was found to be at Level 4. By explicitly asking Y about conditions for the execution of P, X implies that Y did P. Here, the complainer implies that the American Airlines lost all his or her checked in luggage on the flight and that the American Airlines did not respond to the claim process.

More examples of the customer complaints which were classified according to their complaint levels are presented in the table below. The descriptions of the complaint levels are based on the descriptions given by Olshtain and Weinbach (1987). The detailed descriptions together with the original examples from the study conducted by Olshtain and Weinbach are presented in Section 3.1.2. The examples given in Table 4.9 below are based on the data found in this study.

The scale of the directness levels is based on a progressive eight-point scale from 1 to 8 with Level 1 being the most indirect and 8 being the most direct. Levels 1 to 4 are all indirect whereas Level 5 to 8 are direct.

X = complainant

Y = agent responsible for the unacceptable act/ situation

P = the unacceptable act/situation

Table 4.9 : Examples of Complaints Based on the Complaint Levels

Complaint Level	Descriptions	Examples
1	By performing the utterance U in the presence of Y, X implies that he knows that P has happened and he implies that Y did P.	A32 : <i>Horrible experience - why don't you give the option to select "dislike."</i>
2	By explicitly asserting that P, X implies that Y did P.	A35 : <i>Those US Airways seats were so worn. One might as well been sitting on plywood.</i>
3	By explicitly asserting that P is bad for him, X implies that Y did P.	M25 : <i>Really upset that I cannot book for multiple destination. Booked KUL-TWU-BKI-KUL but have to book seperately with payment processing fee for each. Really money wasting and time wasting! Please do something!</i>

4	By explicitly asking Y about conditions for the execution of P or stating that Y was in some way connected with the conditions for doing of P, X implies that Y did P.	<i>M13 : How could a customer overwritten another customer's seat?</i>
5	X explicitly asserts that Y did P.	<i>M1 : I have two bad experiences with MAS ; the way their crew were handling passenger's luggage ..my luggage was broken after domestic arrival n also lost my electronic gadget inside it...sorry to say, a very bad day with MAS.</i>
6	By explicitly asserting that the action P for which Y is agentively responsible is bad, or explicitly stating a preference for an alternative action not chosen by Y, X implies that Y is bad/or X asserts explicitly that Y did P and P is bad for X, thus also implying that Y is bad.	<i>M54 : Apart from adding frequency, I think you should look into your customer service. As a Frequent Flyer, I truly disappointed with your customer service. I have sent an email on 7th May regarding flight cancellation, it has been more than 2 months but I never get a proper response on that and my request is unsolved.</i>
7	X asserts explicitly that Y's doing of P is bad.	<i>A62 : Last night I had to wait for two hours before AA answered by call to reserve my trip. Today I had to wait for two and a half hours before AA answered my call to confirm my flight. I cannot believe this type of neglect to customers. Unacceptable.</i>

8	X asserts explicitly that Y is bad.	<i>A24 : Worst airline ever. And I'm a million mile member for us airways. American service sucks big time. Leaving the star alliance network was the biggest mistake.</i>
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Table 4.10 : The Use of Modality Markers and the Directness Levels of Malaysian Customers' Complaints

Modality markers	Directness levels								Total
	1 <i>N</i> =80	2 <i>N</i> =80	3 <i>N</i> =80	4 <i>N</i> =80	5 <i>N</i> =80	6 <i>N</i> =80	7 <i>N</i> =80	8 <i>N</i> =80	
Total no. of downgraders at this directness level			3		8	6			17(21.25%)
Frequency			0.037		0.1				} (52.5%)
Total no. of upgraders at this directness level		1	2	3	11	1	2	5	
Frequency		0.013	0.025	0.037	0.138	0.013	0.025	0.063	
Without modality markers		5	7	1	15	5	3	2	38 (47.5%)

N : number or Facebook comments; frequency: the number of occurrences divided by the number of comments (*N*)

Directness levels : 1 until 4 - Indirect ; 5 until 8 - Direct

Table 4.11 : The Use of Modality Markers and the Directness Levels of American Customers' Complaints

Modality markers	Directness levels								Total
	1 <i>N</i> =80	2 <i>N</i> =80	3 <i>N</i> =80	4 <i>N</i> =80	5 <i>N</i> =80	6 <i>N</i> =80	7 <i>N</i> =80	8 <i>N</i> =80	
Total no. of downgraders at this directness level					2			1	3 (3.3%)
Frequency					0.025			0.013	
Total no. of upgraders at this directness level			1		3	2	10	6	22 (24.7%)
Frequency			0.013		0.037	0.025	0.125	0.075	
Without modality markers	3	5	6	1	23	3	7	16	64 (72%)

(28%)

N : number or Facebook comments; frequency: the number of occurrences divided by the number of comments (*N*)

Directness levels : Levels 1 until 4 - Indirect ; Levels 5 until 8 – Direct

Table 4.12 : The Use of Modality Markers in Online Complaints

Complaint with...	Number of occurrences in Malaysian complaints	Percentage (%)	Number of occurrences in American complaints	Percentage (%)
Modality markers	42	52.5%	35	28%
Downgraders	17	21.25%	3	3.3%
Upgraders	25	31.25%	22	24.7%
Downgraders centered at indirect levels (L1-L4)	3	3.75%	0	0%
Downgraders centered at direct levels (L5-L8)	14	17.5%	3	3.37%
Upgraders centered at indirect levels (L1-L4)	6	7.5%	1	1.12%
Upgraders centered at direct levels (L5-L8)	19	23.75%	21	23.59%
Complaint without...	Number of occurrences in Malaysian complaints	Percentage (%)	Number of occurrences in American complaints	Percentage (%)
Modality markers	38	47.5%	64	72%
Centered at indirect levels (L1-L4)	13	16.25%	15	16.85%
Centered at direct levels (L5-L8)	25	35%	49	55.05%

Table 4.12 shows that 52.5% of the complaints posted by Malaysian customers were found with *modality markers* in their complaints while 47.5% did not use any *modality markers*. 21.25% of the Malaysian customers' complaints were identified with *downgraders* whereas 31.25% of the Malaysian customers' complaints were found to have *upgraders*. This indicates that Malaysian customers did not intend to mitigate their complaints. Instead, they intensified the impact of their complaints using *upgraders*. Apart from that, Malaysian customers were found to be direct in communicating their complaints. 23.75% of the complaints posted by the Malaysian customers with *upgraders* were centered at the direct levels of directness while 35% of the complaint without *modality markers* were also concentrated at the levels of direct (Levels 5 to 8). Therefore, it can be concluded that Malaysian customers tend to be direct in the realization of the online complaints on Facebook.

On the other hand, 3.3% of the American customers' complaints were found to have a very minimal number of *downgraders*. Like Malaysian customers, American customers' complaints were found to have more *upgraders*. 23.59% of the complaints were posted with *upgraders* and these *upgraders* were centered at direct levels (Levels 5 to 8). In addition to that, 72% of the complaints were identified without *modality markers* and 55.05% of the complaints without any *modality markers* were also concentrated at the higher levels of directness (Levels 5 to 8). 43.8% of the complaints with and without *modality markers* were concentrated at the levels of very direct (Levels 7 and 8). This indicates that American customers are very direct in the realization of the online complaints on Facebook.

There are eleven main classes of *downgraders* and six classes of *upgraders*. Using the same analytical method, a classification of the modality markers was set up in the corpus under the *downgrader* and *upgrader* categories. However, only 3 main classes of *downgraders* and 3 main classes of *upgraders* were found and analyzed in this study. The *downgraders* consist of *politeness markers*, *downtoners*, and *playdown* whereas for *upgraders*, the main classes of the *upgraders* are *overstater*, *intensifier* and *lexical intensifier*. All of the analysis for each category are presented with the examples and discussions below:

4.8.1 Downgraders

4.8.1.1 Politeness markers

Politeness markers are optional elements added to an act to show deference to the interlocutor and to bid for cooperative behavior, e.g. *please*, *kind of*, *I guess*.

Examples :

M56 : Please upgrade the MAS online booking/flight management system.

A73 : Please contact me as I need someone to locate our bags.

Politeness marker *please* was found in the complaints made by Malaysian and American customers. In M56, and A73, *please* was used to request for something. In M56, the complainer politely asked Malaysia Airlines to upgrade the flight management system whereas in A73, the complainer politely asked the airline company to contact him as he needed someone to locate the missing bags.

4.8.1.2 Downtoners

Downtoners are sentence modifiers which are used by X in order to modulate the impact his utterance is likely to have on Y, *e.g. just, simply, perhaps*.

Examples :

M9 : **Perhaps** you should sit down and rebrand your airlines ...

A13 : You've **just** screwed your very best customers.

In M9, the word *perhaps* served to modulate the impact of the complaints. Here, without the word *perhaps*, the complainer's statement was considered harsh and impolite. In A13, the word *just* was found. Here, by adding *just* in 'You've **just** screwed your very best customers', this negative statement was being mitigated.

4.8.1.3 Play-down

Play-down is a syntactical device used to tone down the perlocutionary effect an utterance is likely to have on the addressee, *e.g. I wonder, I wondered if, I was wondering*.

Examples :

M80 : ...**I wonder** what kind of system Enrich has....

A31 : **I wonder** if one of them was the one who refused to announce a serious peanut allergy for a passenger.

In M80 and A31, *I wonder* was found in the expressions of both complaints. Here, *I wonder* served to tone down the perlocutionary effect the complaints were likely to have on the complaineee. A perlocutionary effect is a speech act, as viewed at the level of its consequences, scaring or affecting the complaineee.

4.8.2 Upgraders

4.8.2.1 Overstater

Overstater are adverbial modifiers by means of which X over represents the reality denoted in the proposition in the interests of increasing the force of his utterance, e.g. *absolutely, terribly, totally*.

Examples :

M69 : The quality of your food flying out from Kuala Lumpur is **totally** horrible.

A78 : You guys screwed up three of my four flights a month ago and offered **absolutely** nothing in return.

In M69 and A78, adverbial modifiers, *totally* and *absolutely* were used by the complainers to increase the severity of their complaints. '**Totally horrible**' and '**absolutely nothing**' indicated that the complainers were really disturbed by the unfavourable events caused by the complaineee. In M69, the word *horrible* itself was understood to indicate that something was very unpleasant. However, when the adverbial modifier, *totally* was added to describe how horrible it was, the quality of food described by the complainer was seen as extremely terrible.

4.8.2.2 Intensifier

Intensifier is an adverbial modifier used by X to intensify certain elements of the proposition of his utterance, e.g. *very, so, such, quite, really*.

Examples :

M50 : **Very** poor response to customer.

A76 : It's **really** bad that the people can't be trained to be more customer friendly.

The intensifiers found in M50 and A76 were *very* and *really*. These adverbial modifiers were used by the complainers to intensify their complaints and as a way to express how bad the customer service provided by the airline companies.

4.8.2.3 Lexical Intensifier

Lexical intensifier is a lexical item which is strongly marked for its negative social attitude, e.g. swear words: *bloody, sucks*.

Examples :

M34 : I was shocked to see my seat change to **bloody** row 34!!! Call malaysia **bloody** airline check in department, and they cannot do anything at all.

A7 : The only benefits you can offer at this point is a MUCH IMPROVED customer service!! Cuz currently it **sucks**!!!!!!

Lexical intensifiers were also found in some of the complaints made by Malaysian and American customers. In M34, the complainer used the word *bloody* whereas in A7, the complainer used the word *sucks* and these two words are strongly marked for their negative social attitude. By using these words, these complainers were seen as people with negative attitudes. Complaints made with lexical intensifiers were very direct and threatened the hearer's (complainee's) face.

In sum, the most frequently used *modality markers* in the realization of the online complaints by Malaysian customers and American customers were upgraders. *Downgraders* were markers which play down the forcefulness of a complaint while *upgraders* serve to increase the impact a complaint was likely to have on the complainee. This analysis was carried out on the number and kind of modality markers found in the complaints at their different levels of directness. It can be concluded that Malaysian customers were direct in communicating their complaints whereas the American customers were found to be very direct in the realization of their complaints. Both Malaysian and American customers were being direct in communicating their complaints due to the fact that they wanted these airline companies to resolve their issues. By being direct, they would be able to get the attention of the airline companies and thus redress the situation.

4.9 Discussion

The main purpose of this pragmatic study was to compare the online complaint strategies by Malaysian and American customers on Facebook. First of all, based on the findings, it can be concluded that Malaysian customers produced less words in the expressions of their online complaints as compared to the length of words used by the American customers. The constructions of the online complaints posted by the American customers were longer than the constructions of complaints made by the Malaysian customers. As the data collected in this study were only the online complaints constructed or posted in English, only English complaints made by Malaysian and American customers were chosen and analyzed. Olshtain and Weinbach (1993) found that non-native speakers' complaints were generally longer than those of native speaker. Additionally, middle level learners have been found to produce longer utterances than native speakers, low level learners and high proficiency learners (Blum-Kulka and Olshtain, 1986). However, the findings of this study reveal that Malaysian customers, who are the non-native speakers of English used fewer words and produced shorter complaints as compared to the American customers. This happens due to the fact that some of the Malaysians are not yet proficient in English and therefore have a limited English vocabulary. Thus, they used fewer English words in the realization of complaints on Facebook.

In addition to that, based on the data sets, there were also some grammatical errors found in the realization of complaints produced by Malaysian customers. Whereas for the American customers, since English is their first language, it was not a problem to construct their complaints in English and none of the complaints posted was found

with grammatical errors. Some complaints made by Malaysian customers with grammatical errors are presented below:

M35 : ...Unprofessional service n this is so called world class airline?
Pls.. **Don't spoilt** the name.

M63 : ...We just do not want to risk our health as **NOBODY can knows**
what is the potential damage of radiation...

The grammatical errors found in this complaints indicate that some Malaysians are not yet competent with the rules of English language. Malaysian complainers are able to communicate or write in English, but they have a tendency to make grammatical errors. However, these grammatical errors did not hinder the other Facebook users to comprehend what the complainers exactly meant. The types of grammatical errors are not discussed here as it is not analysed in this study. Perhaps a study can be conducted to look at common grammatical errors among Malaysians on the Internet. In the example by M63, there is also an error in terms of the sentence structure. ... *We just do not want to risk our health as NOBODY can knows what is the potential damage of radiation....* The correct sentence structure would be 'We just do not want to risk our health as nobody knows what the potential damage of radiation is'. It might be interesting if another study can also look at the sentence structure of the complaints made by Malaysian customers and identify why such errors occur.

As for the reasons of complaining, Malaysian and American customers mostly complained because of the poor customer service provided by the airline companies. The second highest reason for complaining was due to flight problems. It was also discovered that most of the participants posted their complaints because of a single reason. This shows that most complainers complained to point out one specific issue only. This indicates that when any unfavourable event occurred in dealing with the airline companies, even if there is only one event, customers would directly post their complaint online. Therefore, it is very important for the airline companies to serve their customers at their very best as once they let their customers to experience any misconduct or any unfavourable event, they are prone to be receiving complaints from the customers. It is even worse if the complaint is made publicly on Facebook.

In addition to that, customers also complained about the way their complaints were handled by the complaine. This can be illustrated through this complaint:

M55: Hi. **I lodged a complaint few weeks ago**, you promised to refund my money but **I have contacted you several times but no response**, is Malaysia Airlines just trying to lie to me to stop the complaints? **I would appreciate an answer to my refund.** Let's get this over and done with. Thank you.

When a complaint is not handled appropriately, customers tend to make another complaint. *'Is Malaysia Airlines just trying to lie to me to stop the complaints?'* indicates that the complainer is extremely annoyed and therefore request for an immediate repair from the complaine.

A complaint by an American customer who complained about how American Airlines handled his complaint is seen as more serious and critical. This can be seen from this example:

M26 : I sent you mail on Mach 4th, approx. No answer. My baggage was broken and arrived two days after my return ,flight cancelled , no hotel..... I may be alone, i may be small, but i have the power to shake things. **Don't let me write to the minister how bad your service and hospitality is.**

Here, the complainer used threat in order to threaten the complaine by stating *Don't let me write to the minister how bad your service and hospitality is*. This statement indicates that the complaine will be harmed if they do not fix the issue. A study conducted by Vásquez (2011), indicated that complaints tended to co-occur with speech acts such as *warnings* or *threats*. The findings of the present study also revealed that complaints co-occur with *warnings* and *threats*. However, a very small percentage of Malaysian customers (8.75%) and American customers (11.25%) used *threat* in their complaints. This is because a *threat* is considered an act of coercion and therefore it is not of Malaysian and American culture to force people. Another reason as to why there is only a small number of Malaysian and American complainers used *threat* is because the act of threatening is seen as rude and impolite both in Malaysian and American cultures.

Warning on the other hand was found to co-occur with *accusation*. *Accusation* and *warning* are applied by 57.5% of the American customers. However, only 13.75% of the Malaysian customers applied *accusation* and *warning* in their complaints.

Accusation and *warning* are the most preferred complaint categories opted by the American customers. This is an interesting finding as it shows that American tend to be very direct in communicating their complaints. The complaint category that is found to be frequently used by the Malaysian customers was *explicit complaint*.

4.10 Summary

In this chapter, I have discussed the reasons that triggered the complainers to post their complaints on Facebook. I have also analysed the different complaint categories which are found in the realization of online complaints by Malaysian and American customers on Facebook. Besides that, the level of directness of the online complaints made both by Malaysian and American customers are revealed. Based on the analysis, participants posted their complaints on the Facebook pages of the two airline companies mainly because of poor customer service and flight problems. Additionally, the most common complaint category used by Malaysian customers is explicit complaint whereas for American customers, most of them used accusation and warning as a way to communicate their complaints on Facebook. This is why American customers were found to be more direct in the realization of the online complaints as compared to Malaysian customers.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

5.0 Introduction

The conclusions derived from the findings of this pragmatic study of the Malaysian and American customers' complaints on Facebook are described in this chapter. The conclusions are based on the purpose, research questions and results of the study. The implications of these findings and the resultant recommendations will also be explained. Recommendations were based on the conclusions and purpose of the study.

5.1 Complaint Reasons

Research question 1: What are the reasons for complaining as posted by Malaysian and American customers on Facebook?

This study initially aims at identifying the reasons for complaining among the Malaysian and American customers on Facebook. The complaints are basically on matters pertaining to airline services. Findings have shown that Malaysian customers' reasons for complaining are similar to American customers'. There are 7 reasons that lead these complainers to communicate their complaints against the airline companies. The Malaysian and American customers complain because of flight problems, issues on luggage, ticketing, reservation and boarding, customer service, refunds, fares, and others.

Most of the Malaysian and American customers complain because of poor customer service. Customer service is a key factor in the operation of aviation organizations as competition within the industry increases. It is vital to have customer satisfaction because customers bring lots of revenue with them and only then will it be possible for the airlines to operate profitably. If airlines have satisfied customers, not only will the customers reuse the service but they will also create good will for the company.

In addition to that, some Malaysian and American customers did not complain because of a specific reason only. Based on the findings, some of the Malaysian and American customers posted their complaints because of two or three different reasons. This means that in a single Facebook comment, customers may not just complain on customer service, for example, but they would also complain on some other issues that they are not satisfied with. Generally, the more number of reasons for complaining is, the longer their comments would be.

In sum, Malaysian customers complain against Malaysia Airlines mainly because of poor customer service, flight problems and ticketing whereas American customers complain against American Airlines mainly because of poor customer service, flight problems and issues on missing or damaged luggage. Malaysian and American customers do not just complain about the service that they received but they also complain about the way their complaints were handled by the airline companies. Apart from that, the number of complaint reasons determines the length of the Facebook comments.

5.2 Complaint Categories

Research question 2: Which complaint categories are found in the realization of online complaints by Malaysian and American customers?

The analysis was conducted based on the framework of Olshtain and Weinbach (1987). This framework outlines 5 complaint categories which are *below the level of reproach*, *expression of annoyance or disapproval*, *explicit complaint*, *accusation and warning*, and *immediate threat*. However, the findings reveal that the first complaint category which is *below the level of reproach* does not appear in the realization of the online complaints amongst Malaysian and American customers. This is expected as once a customer posted a complaint on Facebook, an expression of disappointment or an act of complaint can be seen in the comment. This shows that the customers did not just ignore the unfavourable event and thus none of the complaints with *below the level of reproach* was found. Unlike in Olshtain and Weinbach's study, all of the 5 complaint categories were used by each of the participants. This is because the study looked at the expression of complaints between two colleagues in which they know each other well. In online settings, the customers most likely do not even know whom exactly they are making the complaints to. They do not know who the administrators of the Facebook pages are and their identities may not be transparent to one another at all. Therefore, without having any social relationship with the complainees, their complaints tend to be direct and face-threatening at times.

In addition to that, the most applied complaint category among Malaysian customers is *explicit complaint* whereas for the American customers, the most preferred complaint categories are *warning* and *accusation*. Malaysian customers are found to narrate the unpleasant situation that they had experience. Therefore, their complaints tend to be explicit. For instance, if they mention that their flight is delayed, they will also mention the time of departure, the flight number, their destination and any other relevant information. For example:

M47: Mh2707 from sandakan to kuala lumpur delayed 5 times and cancelled twice on 29th and 30th June after plane was fully boarded by passengers (both times) there has been no arrangements made from MAS for new direct flight and passengers are forced to wait the whole day in departure uncertainly.. this is the second night the plane has been delayed without solution..

Although some of the American customers are also found to make explicit complaints, the percentage is only 43.75% as compared to the Malaysian customers which is 78.75%.

On the other hand, the most preferred complaint categories used by the American customers are *accusation* and *warning*. 57.5% of the American customers used *accusation* and *warning* in the realization of the complaints. There are other complaint categories which are not mentioned in the study of Olshtain and Weinbach but are found in this study. The other complaint categories are *negative judgement*, *drawing one's own conclusion*, *requests for repair*, *threat and insult*. Among these

5 other complaint categories, it was revealed that most of the Malaysian customers' complained are found to have requests for repair whereas for the American customers, most of their complaints are included with negative judgements.

5.3 Modality Markers and Directness Levels in Online Complaints

Research question 3: What are the levels of directness of the online complaints made by Malaysian and American customers on Facebook?

To answer the third research question, the taxonomy of directness levels by House and Kasper (1989) and the modality markers for complaint act by House and Kasper (1981) were employed as the framework. It was found that Malaysian customers are direct when communicating their complaints on Facebook but American customers are found to be more direct. Based on the findings on the use of modality markers, both Malaysian and American customers tend to use more upgraders than downgraders. This shows they do not want to mitigate their complaint or to minimize the face threat of the complainees but instead they intensify the impact of the complaints. Apart from that, a significant number of Malaysian and American customers are also found to construct their online complaints without using any modality markers. Most of the customers just want to highlight the unpleasant issue, get the airline companies to repair or redress the issue and also warn the other Facebook users so that they will not experience the same thing.

5.4 Limitations of the study

The following are some of the limitations of the present study. Throughout this study, the researcher encountered problems in categorizing the data into the type of complaint categories. Even though the descriptions and examples of each complaint categories are presented by Olshtain and Weinbach (1987), they were still difficult to categorize especially when the complaints are written in a lengthy form. Some customers tend to post only a few words to communicate their complaints. However, for some others, their complaints are very long thus making it difficult for the researcher to identify the types of complaint categories and also the number of complaint categories that can be identified in the complaint. For examples:

M9 : Malaysia airlines. It is not my way to express my disappointment towards others publicly but you don't give me any options. Today, 21st dec 2013, i am stranded at lapangan terbang sultan ismail petra kb at 1am because your 'beyond expectation' service doesn't reflect your tagline at all. Dont bother to brand yourself if you cant deliver what u claimed. It's the basic of branding. 101. I upgraded my ticket to business class because i have to be at kelantan to perform my duty. By 8am in the morning, i have to be at machang, to interview potential kelantan's students to join our programme. It's my duty and i am trying my best to deliver my task. To my dismay, after i upgraded my ticket, i took the last flight; at 10.40 (but delayed for few mins), i arrived at kelantan with no luggage! No luggage and that's the only thing that i brought to kelantan - my luggage. Some of us use our luggage to place our clothes, toiletries, medicines, undergarments, charging cables unlike some of your passengers who might stuffed rambutan, manggis and duku in their

luggage to the extent they dont need their bag to be with them. Oh yes. Did i mention i took the last flight? And because of that, my bag will arrive from kl the next day, by 8.45am. Oh. My luggage that is full with rambutan! I dont need my bag. There's only rambutan inside. And did i mentioned that i have to be at machang by 8am? To whom you are going to deliver the bag to? And for your information, things related to my interview at machang are nicely and safely packed in my luggage! Will you be responsible if the interview cannot be conducted because i dont have my luggage with me? Will you? Will you tell their parents that interview cannot be conducted because the world class airlines has kept my bag for one night. Very sweet of you right? If you have problem with your service, perhaps you should sit down and rebrand your airlines and try to create tagline based on what you are capable of doing, like delaying is our middle name? Or hospitality seems so far away.

A18 : WORST SERVICE EVER! The 3 times that my husband has flown with your airlines, his flight has been late making him unable to make his connecting flight, causing him to be late to each of the events he has been flying in for. This last flight from GSP to SEA,we booked the same day as my husband received a call that his dad was dying. We booked the flight and got him to the airport on time. Upon his arrival he was told the incoming flight would be late and that he would, once again, miss his connection in Charlotte, NC. He was told by the desk attendant that he should contact whoever dropped him off and have them drive him to Charlotte and maybe he could make his connection. They then put him on another flight to Dallas then to Seattle, making him 3 hours later than we had originally planned. When I called your

"Customer Service" line I got nothing but a "too bad, so sad" attitude from everyone including "supervisor" who refused to give me any other identifying information than "Myles "Fox Trot" FT". I am very upset that none of the air travel plans we have made with your company have gone as planned and that your company sees no need to compensate or even show any compassion or remorse for the inconveniences that they cause. My husband's father is dying and every minute is precious and not one person there seemed to care that your company's inability to keep an itinerary as planned has cost my husband not only the lost time cost by the delays, but also the new accommodations to transport him from the airport to the hospital. And to add to it, he BARELY made his connection in Dallas due to EVEN MORE DELAYS. SHAMEFUL AND WE WILL NEVER USE YOU OR AMERICAN AIRLINES AGAIN.

5.5 Implications for Future Research

The findings of this study can contribute towards future research. This study is also essential in exploring the pragmatic transfer among Malaysian English speakers in communicating their complaints in English. Albeit this study may not be sufficient to build learners' linguistic competence, it may be necessary to help learners develop their understanding in perceiving their pragmatic transfer. Further studies may be conducted in this area using respondents from different cultures, different languages or using different methodologies in order to vary the findings. The pragmatic transfer of complaint strategy from Malay Language to English is believed to be significant for future research.

In addition to that, there are various other topics that can be extended from this study. Based on the data sets of the present study, further research can be conducted on the style of writing on Facebook or perhaps on any other social media such as Twitter or Instagram. People tend to write in short form when writing on Facebook. They also use a special Facebook feature that is hashtag. A hashtag is a type of label or metadata tag used on social network and microblogging services which makes it easier for users to find messages with a specific theme or content. Users create and use hashtags by placing the hash character (or pound sign) ‘#’ in front of a word or unspaced phrase, either in the main text of a message or at the end. Searching for that hashtag will then present each message that has been tagged with it. A hashtag archive is consequently collected into a single stream under the same hashtag. An example of a Facebook comment with the use of hashtag is:

#AmericanAirlinesSUCKS!!! Gave our seats away because they thought we weren't gonna make our connecting flight, BUT WE DID! (A61)

People can actually click on the hashtag #AmericanAirlinesSUCKS!!! and if there are other Facebook users who write the same phrase with hashtag, other people who use Facebook are able to see those comments. This is one of the ways for a complaint to be widely spread on the social media and it brings a negative impact on the business which people are complaining to.

Apart from that, another interesting study can be conducted on the interaction of the Facebook users on a Facebook page. Based on the Facebook comments, the participants did not only direct their comments to the airline company. It was also

discovered that they were some form of interactions between the complainers on the Facebook page. For example :

M35 : “**Agree with you Warren.** I purchased my tickets through online 2 days ago with maybank2u. Money was deducted but mas stated did not receive n I keep calling but no one answer my calls for 2 days”.

Warren is the name of another complainer in the same thread of the Facebook comments. This indicates that the participant tried to respond to a complaint made by Warren by sharing with him the same unfavourable event that the participant had experienced. Apart from that, some customers also communicated with other Facebook users by warning the Facebook community not to fly with the airlines. An example of *warning others* can be seen in this following example:

A53 : **NEVER FLY AMERICAN AIRLINES!!!!!! SCREWED US ON THE WAY
HERE BECAUSE THEIR IPADS WENT DOWN NOW ON THE WAY
BACK SAME THING... FLIGHT LEFT WITHOUT US...**

Another study can also be done by focusing on the linguistic features such as the use of capital letters and multiple punctuation marks in expressing the feeling of annoyance and anger. Some examples are found as follows:

M29 : **..SILENCE!!!** Please just close down both divisions and pay back my enrich voucher in case as both departmetns are clearly **NOT WORKING** at all **!!!!!!**

A18 : ‘SHAMEFUL AND WE WILL NEVER USE YOU OR AMERICAN AIRLINES AGAIN’

The style of writing of the online users on the social media is believed to have a significant meaning and intention. Therefore, it is good to conduct a study particularly in this area to help reveal such significance.

The study on CMC is very interesting as it may lead to many other angles and areas which have not extensively researched on. The nature of CMC means that it is easy for individuals to engage in communication with others regardless of time or location. CMC allows for individuals to collaborate on projects that would otherwise be impossible due to such factors as geography. In addition, CMC can also be useful in allowing individuals who may be intimidated due to factors like characters or disabilities to participate in communication. By allowing an individual to communicate in a location of their own choice, CMC allows a person to engage in communication with minimal stress. Making an individual comfortable through CMC also plays a role in self-disclosure, which allows a communicative partner to open up more easily and be more expressive. When communicating through an electronic medium, individuals are less likely to engage in stereotyping and are less self-conscious about physical characteristics. The role that anonymity plays in online communication can also encourage some users to be less defensive and form relationships with others more rapidly.

5.4 Summary

In business settings, customers should use proper words to communicate their dissatisfactions towards the company that they are complaining to. This is extremely crucial as their negative comments and complaints are not only viewed by the complaine, but also the public from all over the world. Using Facebook to threaten and insult others may give a negative impact on the reputation of the complainers as other people who know these people (complainers) may have a negative perception on them. This study is hoped to help the customers at large to be more polite in airing their dissatisfaction or anger on the internet. Customer feedback is very important in improving the user's experience.

Airline industries in particular need to have a reliable way of collecting and gauging customer feedback. Whenever a customer registers a complaint, it needs to be taken seriously. Smaller problems, when neglected, later become complex issues, creating customer service nightmares for airlines. Similarly, collecting feedback without incorporating it into improving the overall customer experience is of no use. The airline industry needs to ensure that all customer feedback has been reviewed and proper actions are taken to avoid similar situations in the future. In conclusion, from the linguistic viewpoint, the constructions of online complaints differ in different cultures. From the economic viewpoint, however, they project a company's failure to meet customers' expectations and at the same time, highlight low quality services. It is only by complaining that customers can make their dissatisfaction clear to the company. Therefore, it is hoped that this study has revealed some new insights that may be beneficial to research on the study of customer complaints particularly among Malaysians.

The present study explores the differences and the similarities of the complaint strategies applied by Malaysian and American customers. It also discovers the levels of directness of the complaints made by Malaysians and Americans are different and American customers are found to be more direct as compared to Malaysian customers in the expression of their online complaints on Facebook. This study indicates that there are similarities and differences between the realizations of complaints by Malaysian customers and American customers on Facebook. To conclude, the present study has given initial insight into Malaysian and American customers complaining strategies on Facebook. Hopefully, this will provide researchers with an incentive to further pursue these interesting endeavours in the near future.

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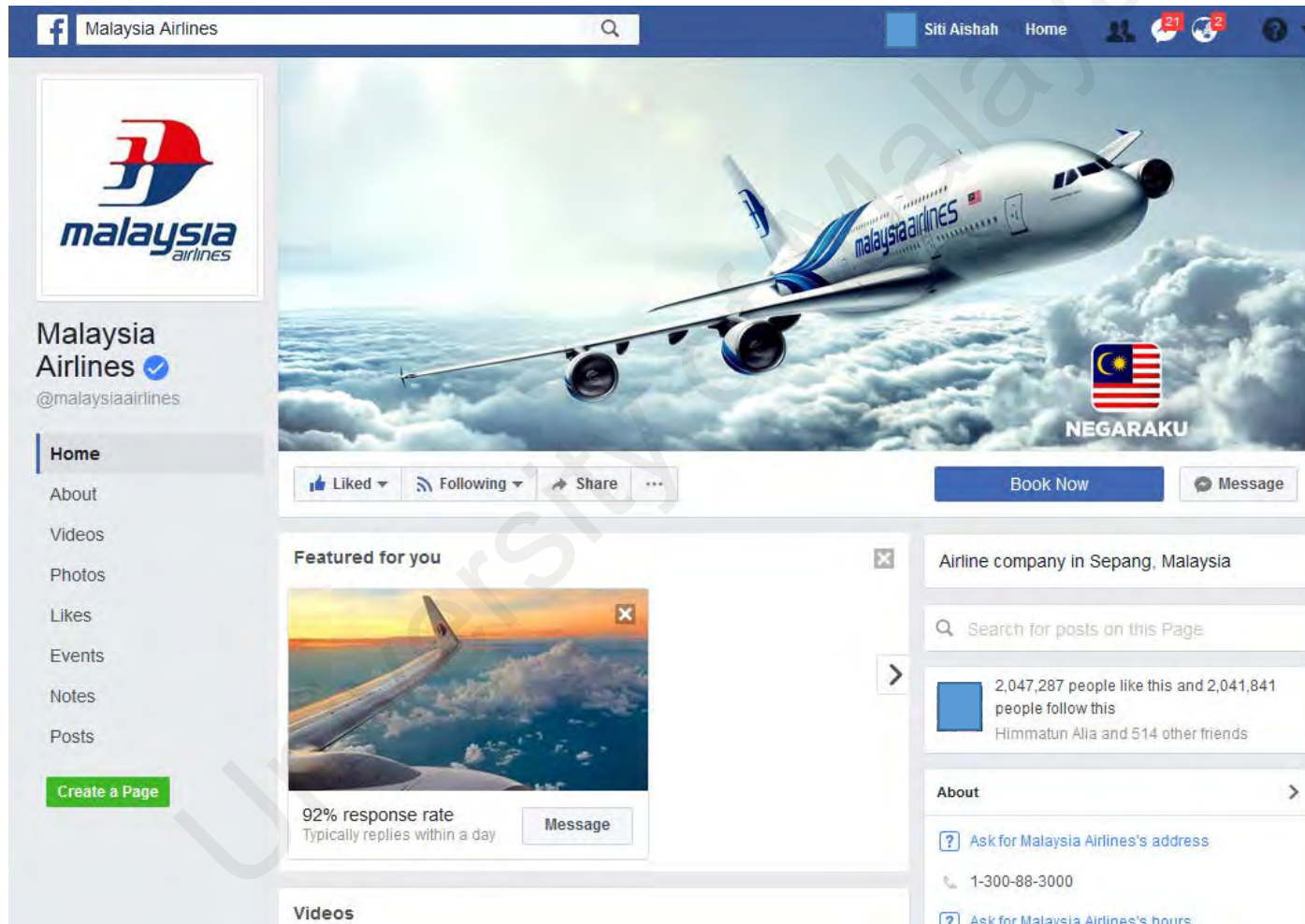
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APPENDIX A : MALAYSIA AIRLINES' FACEBOOK PAGE



The image shows a screenshot of the Malaysia Airlines Facebook page. The page layout includes a top navigation bar with the user's name 'Siti Aishah' and 'Home'. The main profile section features the Malaysia Airlines logo, the name 'Malaysia Airlines' with a verified checkmark, and the handle '@malaysiaairlines'. A large cover photo shows a Malaysia Airlines aircraft flying over clouds, with the Malaysian flag and the word 'NEGARAKU' in the bottom right corner. Below the cover photo are interaction buttons: 'Liked', 'Following', 'Share', and 'Book Now', along with a 'Message' button. A 'Featured for you' section displays a smaller image of an aircraft wing and provides a '92% response rate' and a 'Message' button. The right-hand sidebar contains information about the page, including the location 'Airline company in Sepang, Malaysia', a search bar, and statistics: '2,047,287 people like this and 2,041,841 people follow this'. The 'About' section lists contact information: 'Ask for Malaysia Airlines's address', '1-300-88-3000', and 'Ask for Malaysia Airlines's hours'. A left-hand navigation menu lists 'Home', 'About', 'Videos', 'Photos', 'Likes', 'Events', 'Notes', and 'Posts', with a 'Create a Page' button at the bottom.

APPENDIX B : AMERICAN AIRLINES' FACEBOOK PAGE

The image shows a screenshot of the American Airlines Facebook page. On the left is a navigation menu with options: Home, About, Photos, Instagram feed, Likes, Videos, Posts, and a green 'Create a Page' button. The main content area features the American Airlines logo at the top left, followed by the page name 'American Airlines' and the handle '@AmericanAirlines'. A large photograph of an American Airlines aircraft is displayed. Below the photo are interaction buttons: 'Liked', 'Message', 'Save', and 'More', along with a blue 'Book Now' button. A text input field prompts the user to 'Write something on this Page...'. Below this is a post from 'American Airlines' dated '20 hrs' with the text: 'Inspiring little aviators, one pair of wings at a time. Kid's wings are back!'. On the right side, there is a 'Product/Service' section, a search bar for posts on the page, and a notification that '2,137,900 people like this' along with a list of friends and an 'Invite friends to like this Page' button.

APPENDIX C: IDENTIFYING THE PARTICIPANTS' NATIONALITY

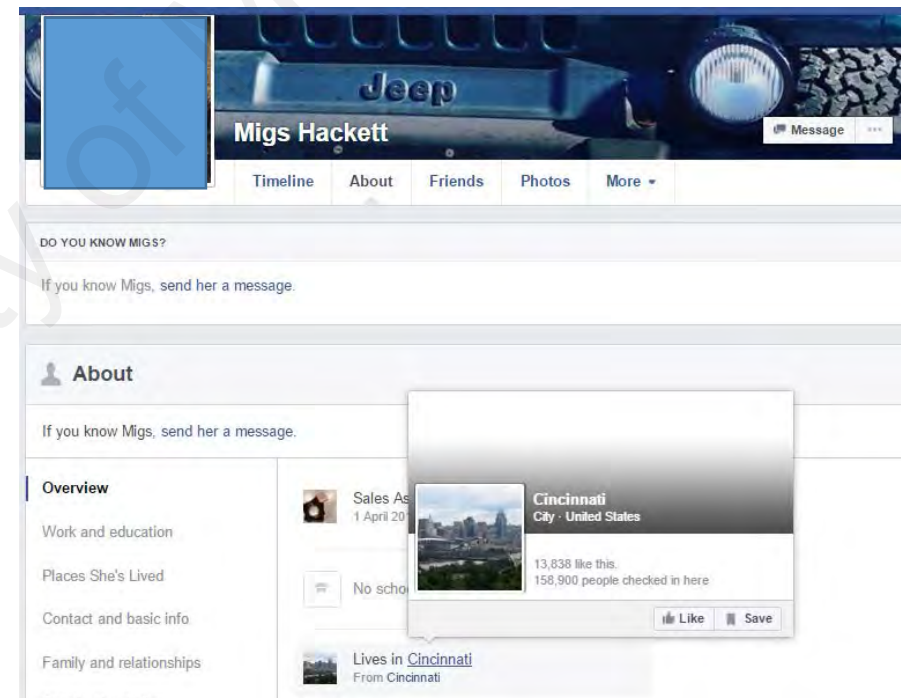
Malaysian Customer



The screenshot shows a Facebook profile for a Malaysian customer. The profile picture is a group of people in a classroom. The cover photo features colorful cartoon characters. The navigation bar includes 'Timeline', 'About', 'Friends 3,735', 'Photos', and 'More'. The 'About' section is expanded, showing an 'Overview' sidebar on the left and a main content area on the right. The main content area includes:

- Work and education:** Owner/Manager/Teacher at Dzul Iman Ukay Perdana. Past: ulm jengka, pahang and Universiti Teknologi MARA.
- Places you've lived:** Studies Linguistics and Languages at University of Malaya. Past: Universiti Teknologi MARA and SMK Abu Bakar Temerloh.
- Details about you:** Lives in Ampang, Kuala Lumpur. From Temerloh District.
- Life events:** 5 family members.

American Customer



The screenshot shows a Facebook profile for an American customer. The profile picture is a blue square. The cover photo is a close-up of a Jeep's front end. The navigation bar includes 'Timeline', 'About', 'Friends', 'Photos', and 'More'. The 'About' section is expanded, showing an 'About' sidebar on the left and a main content area on the right. The main content area includes:

- DO YOU KNOW MIGS?:** If you know Migs, send her a message.
- About:** If you know Migs, send her a message.
- Overview:** Sales As... 1 April 20...
 - Work and education:** Cincinnati City · United States. 13,838 like this. 158,900 people checked in here.
 - Places She's Lived:** No scho...
 - Family and relationships:** Lives in Cincinnati. From Cincinnati.

APPENDIX D : FACEBOOK COMMENTS BY MALAYSIAN AND AMERICAN CUSTOMERS

Malaysian Customers

The screenshot shows the Malaysia Airlines Facebook page. The page header includes the airline's logo and name. The main content area displays several customer comments and replies from December 2014. The comments are as follows:

- Comment 1:** "for my KL-Perth flight on 16 Dec - MH 0125!! Love you all!!" (4 December 2014 at 12:31)
- Reply 1:** "Aw Yeong Wai Hoe Thank you for spoiling my day and trip. Flight deferred 4 hours but was not informed thru SMS/ email/ call. Caused unnecessary stress and waste my money" (2 December 2014 at 10:59)
- Reply 2:** "Hazwan Hafiz Tahniah MAS pagi ni hampir buat ramai org tepas flight. Nk drop luggage ja ambil masa sejam lebih...rasanya Air Asia lebih efficient." (2 December 2014 at 06:59)
- Reply 3:** "Hi Hazwan, we're truly sorry to hear about this. Kindly email us your feedback and flight details to socialmedia.team@malaysiaairlines.com for our Customer Care team to note on improving. Thank you." (2 December 2014 at 21:27)
- Comment 2:** "YS Teoh 1. Miles transfer from bank is still in the process after TWO freaking months! - FAIL! 2. Missing miles is not credited and Enrich website is never working properly - EPIC FAIL! Malaysia Airlines Please up your game!" (3 December 2014 at 09:18)
- Reply 4:** "Hi YS Teoh, we're truly sorry to hear about this. Kindly email us your feedback and flight details to socialmedia.team@malaysiaairlines.com for our Customer Care team to note on improving. Thank you." (3 December 2014 at 09:18)
- Comment 3:** "Syafizal Sani try the MHUpgrade for flight to dubai on 4th Dec did not get itwonder why" (2 December 2014 at 22:53)
- Reply 5:** "Hi Syafizal, we're truly sorry to hear about this. Kindly email us your feedback and flight details to socialmedia.team@malaysiaairlines.com for our Customer Care team to note on improving. Thank you." (2 December 2014 at 22:53)
- Comment 4:** "Emmy Yaya Dear Malaysia Airlines. Maçam mane sy nak apply enrich card..?" (1 December 2014 at 22:43)
- Reply 6:** "Hi Emmy, thank you for your query. We would be pleased to have you join our Enrich family. Kindly visit this link to sign up for one http://bit.ly/1lii18T." (1 December 2014 at 22:43)

At the bottom of the page, there is a link to "Malaysia Airlines - Enrich" with a note: "Note: By providing the information required, you have consented for us to use your personal data..."

American Customers

The screenshot shows the American Airlines Facebook page. The page header includes the airline's logo and name. The main content area displays several customer comments and replies from October and November 2014. The comments are as follows:

- Comment 1:** "Phil Bonilla 120 segments for ExecPlat...grrrr" (28 October 2014 at 22:09)
- Reply 1:** "Scott Hughes This is terrible. No 75k status incentive. You killed off all the best parts of US Airways elite status (unlimited upgrades, buy up, the Barclays credit card, companion certs). Who wants my business? Not AA/US that's for sure." (28 October 2014 at 22:42)
- Reply 2:** "Barry Poole Aligning a program with competition does not give you competitive advantage. Not sure what it cost AA to allow EP at 100 vs 120, but as a 5 year EP on segments over 100, this does not create incentive for me to fly more AA. To the contrary, knowing th... See more" (29 October 2014 at 04:44)
- Comment 2:** "Nicole Fife I will NEVER fly this airline again - only DELTA for me from now on!" (4 November 2014 at 07:37)
- Comment 3:** "Kathy Kinser This airline is shameful...won't offer reduced flights for medical treatment in a city that they fly to several times a day. NOT HUMANITARIANS!!!" (29 October 2014 at 04:33)
- Comment 4:** "Vickie Mitchell Ditto the question on the Million Miles." (28 October 2014 at 22:40)
- Comment 5:** "Alex Smirnov I applaud the management of the New American for the decision to stay with the AAdvantage program as we know it for many years. I am Executive Platinum who is approaching 3 Million Miles with AA and today I have gained additional confidence in flying ... See more" (29 October 2014 at 12:28)
- Comment 6:** "Jeremy Crabb Not too excited about 120 segment qualification... I fly a lot of \$300 - \$400 segments... Should have tiered to a spend level for a year or two." (29 October 2014 at 07:54)
- Comment 7:** "Michael Lashchuk Really glad to see that AA is NOT going the route of UA and DL and instead is going to continue earning FF miles by miles and not dollars spent. Its one of the reasons that I have switched my business over..." (29 October 2014 at 07:54)

APPENDIX E : DATA ANALYSIS OF MALAYSIAN CUSTOMERS' COMPLAINTS

These Facebook comments were analysed according to the word length (WL), reasons for complaining (CR), complaint categories (CC), modality markers (MM) as well as the directness levels of complaints (DL).

Respondents	Complaint	WL	CR	CC	MM	DL
M1	I have two bad experiences with MAS ; the way their crew were handling passenger's luggage ..my luggage was broken after domestic arrival n also lost my electronic gadget inside it...sorry to say, a very bad day with MAS	39	2	2,3	U2	5
M2	Had the same technical problem when flew to London last month tht caused 2 hours delay... yet we were not compensated anything. .. MAS should do something especially when London is one of its most profitable routes	37	1	3,7	-	6
M3	the tax on top of your price is very frustrating.. can't u be more honest in your promotional price? just put the all-in pricing like Malindo Air	27	8	2,7	U2	5
M4	Hello, BTW I made a complaint for reimbursement of a cancelled flight MH3800 on 11 aug 2013, via your website...so far i get no acknowldegment..please advise	26	1	3,7	-	3
M5	I guess your team must immediately answer the call from the customers! Calling your call centre has been done lots of time and the answer never get back to me asap..each call that been made rm1 will be charged..imagine for 10 times per day	44	4	2,3	-	6
M6	With rgds to MH2707 flight fiasco, technical problem is not the issue. Our main contentions are the fact we are kept waiting for such a loooong time with MAS choosing not to inform us on anything. How do u think ppl will react if you choose to keep silent when clearly there's a problem. We have sent various queries to MAS but apparently they have seen that us, the poor passengers who PAID to use their service are not worth their	207	1	2,7	D1	7

	<p>bother. Another issue is choosing to persist to fly the airplane that clearly has problem with the passengers(!) onboard. Judging by the fact that flight 2707 is still on the ground since yesterday, i think we are justified in electing not to board that plane (ever again). And it seems MAS is not even bothered in assisting us to get alternative flights, leaving it totally up to us to run around, fight for available flights etc. No information is forthcoming from MAS, resulting in lost of time, perishable goods, missed important appointments etc!!!! I would like MAS to please issue a statement & compensate for all flight 2707 passengers who have suffered thru this ordeal due to MAS total lack of common sense, professionalism & competency.</p>					
M7	<p>MH2707 - What is MAS trying 2 do here???? Playing with the passengers' lives????!!!! Yesterday the flight got cancelled b'coz of technical difficulties with the aircraft, n today the flight got delayed b'coz of the technical difficulties with the aircraft, yet we are boarding the same aircraft????!!!!</p>	47	1	2,3,4	-	7
M8	<p>Flew on business class last year and toilet door was opened from the outside by the steward. Made a formal complaint online...took 2 weeks for a reply (after I wrote again complaining on their late reply). In the end, MAS replied no one on that flight remembered that happened (oh...like I am going to fall for that excuse). Next time, I'll take d name of the steward and his pic too. Maybe something will happen then.</p>	76	4	3,10	-	7
M9	<p>Malaysia airlines. It is not my way to express my disappointment towards others publicly but you don't give me any options. Today, 21st dec 2013, i am stranded at lapangan terbang sultan ismail petra kb at 1am because your 'beyond expectation' service doesn't reflect your tagline at all. Dont bother to brand yourself if you cant deliver what u claimed. It's the basic of branding. 101. I upgraded my ticket to business class because i have to be at kelantan to perform my duty. By 8am in the morning, i have to be at machang, to interview p otential kelantan's students to join our programme. It's my duty and i am trying my best to deliver my task. To my dismay, after i upgraded my ticket, i took the last flight; at 10.40 (but delayed for few mins), i arrived at kelantan with no luggage! No luggage and that's the only thing that i brought to kelantan - my luggage. Some of us use our luggage to place our clothes, toiletries, medicines, undergarments,</p>	373	1	2,3,6	D3	7

	<p>charging cables unlike some of your passengers who might stuffed rambutan, manggis and duku in their luggage to the extend they dont need their bag to be with them. Oh yes. Did i mention i took the last flight? And because of that, my bag will arrive from kl the next day, by 8.45am. Oh. My luggage that is full with rambutan! I dont need my bag. There's only rambutan inside. And did i mentioned that i have to be at machang by 8am? To whom you are going to deliver the bag to? And for your information, things related to my interview at machang are nicely and safely packed in my luggage! Will you be responsible if the interview cannot be conducted because i dont have my luggage with me? Will you? Will you tell their parents that interview cannot be conducted because the world class airlines has kept my bag for one night.</p>					
M10	<p>I boarded MAS for my flight from KL - BKK in Feb. Tho the flight was good but the landing was bloody hell rough + the pilot & crews never apologize for it.. Talk about Malaysian Hospitality!!</p>	37	1	2,6	U3	3
M11	<p>Dissatisfaction and disgust towards the so called One World Malaysia Airlines International Service to London - Poor corporate governance and chaotic flight service.</p>	23	4	2,3,9	-	5
M12	<p>We bought four tickets, 2 adults and 2 children to London with seats reservation already in place six months before our travelling day, 7 December 2013. We bought them via Malaysia Airline website. Our flight was scheduled at 10.35 am. When the day came, we went to KLIA quite early and arrived there around 8 am. To our surprise, the scene was quite hectic and chaotic. We were being greeted with a long queue at the Malaysia Airlines counters. Customers who were going for the International flights were mashed up together in a long generic queue. All this talk about world-class and efficiency at their best for me went down the drain.</p> <p>Our patience was really tested that day. When the time arrived for us to be served at the counter (after approximately two hours of agonizing queue), we were being served with another cruel dish. Our time at the counter took another long excruciating waiting time. Now, when we were being held hostage at the counter for those painful hours, the best</p>	636	1,4	2,3,6,9, 10	U2 x 2	7

	<p>thing for a customer service would do is to inform the customer of the tardiness. But, that was not visible. The customer service agent only informed us about the delay when we kept on pressing for the reason.</p> <p>What was the reason given? It really took us by surprise as we could not believe such inefficiency and mismanagement would ever happened at this so called world class airline. We were told that the flight was already full and there's no more available seat to accomodate us four. We were beyond shocked. WHAT?!! How can it be? It's not like we were late in procuring our tickets. We bought them tickets fair and square, five months earlier in fact.</p> <p>We kept pressing on for more details. The agent leisurely described that this situation was a norm. It happened because of an overflow of sales. We were told that a lot of customers that day was in the same situation as ours. For me, I thought this was nonsense. Why would an airline company, a "world-class airline company" not being able to track their ticket sales correctly? On our mind, this was an oppresion, suppression and transgression showing their really ugly faces. Also, we believed that nepotism and croniysm played their part as well. How can a customer, I who is a Malaysian in fact being denied to an official Malaysia airline service, which I bought fair and square?</p> <p>Why were we being treated that way? What time should we checked-in then? How could a customer overwritten another customer's seat? In our case, how could customers who bought a ticket from a travel agency overwitten our tickets bought from Malaysia Airlines? Those were some of the issues lingering in our mind. We were confused and perplexed. Why would Malaysia Airline treated us this way?</p> <p>Our flight was now changed from 10.35 am to 11.55 pm, not with our earnest consent. We were being ferried away to a hotel while waiting for the next available flight. The rest, was painfully difficult to be explained anymore.</p>					
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	<p>All in all, we lost faith and trust towards Malaysia Airline as a local product because of this occasion. We were truly ashamed of our local product as there were also foreigners who were in the same boat as ours that day.</p> <p>Buckle up Malaysia Airline! Ahmad Jauhari, you need to do something. I would like to believe that you are doing your job. But, the incident happened that day somehow showed otherwise. At times like this, I tend to imagine the situation would be the polar opposite if we were somebody deemed important by the country. I am ashamed, really ashamed.</p> <p>Malaysia Airline, if you did not feel anything, I hope you will slowly rot and die a shameful death.</p>					
M13	How could a customer overwritten another customer's seat?	39	2	3,7	-	2
M14	3 times attempted to make payment, either via maybank2u, or Cimbclicks or cardholder. what the problem actually with MAS website? spend 3 hours just to re-enter again and again traveller details, due to the redirecting web's problem. MAS PLEASE MAKE SOMETHING!!!	41	3	2,3,7	D1	3
M15	<p>We are unable to process your check-in request at this moment. Try again later or contact Malaysia Airlines Call Center or check-in at the airport. [ER2003]</p> <p>This is the 3rd time i am having this Web Checkin issue.. this is so frustrating!!!! Please escalate this..</p>	45	3	2,3,7	D1 U2	5
M16	MH2707 - What is MAS trying 2 do here???? Playing with the passengers' lives????!!!! Yesterday the flight got cancelled b'coz of technical difficulties with the aircraft, n today the flight got delayed b'coz of the technical difficulties with the aircraft, yet we are boarding the same aircraft????!!!!	47	1	2,3,4	-	7
M17	again flight 2707 can't take off, clearly there's a major issue with the aircraft! Please for the sake of our safety allow us to use a different aircraft!!!!	28	1	2,3,7,9	D1	5

M18	There's no initiative from MAS part to take responsibility for their incompetence. We were left out to dry & have to find our own way to go back. Shouldn't they at least try to prioritise and find another way to help us reach our destination?! Even though it's been obvious that the plane has been compromised, they still force us to go thru the motion!!!! And no info or explanation has been given for a long period of time, leaving us in the dark What are they thinking????	88	1	2,4	-	5
M19	Hi Malaysia Airlines, I ve sent lot of emails to your team as well as called your call centre pertaining my booking, flight bound to KUL. I could not proceed to the payment due to the system breakdown but the booking has been made with the total an outstanding. How do i need to make the payment to avoid any problems prior to check in?	65	3	3,7		5
M20	Total crap!! Tried to purchase online..then keep getting error messages then called the call ctr they asked to try different browsers. .still didn't work. Called again. .after they can't help to purchase. ..they hang up! Crappy customer service! !!	39	3,4	2,3,6,9	U1	3
M21	Yes..the screen shows "session reset - your session needs a reset.please click here to start again". damn!! I've been doing this 35 times since yesterday	25	3	2,3	-	3
M22	I had to rush out and find a service centre that didn't close at 6pm to change my flight manually in time so a glitch that was in your system wouldn't result in me losing my flight completely. First and foremost, something like that happening on an airline booking website is ludicrous and will just make people pissed off, even more so when the system fails and you find out that there is no call centre that you can call after 6pm.So yes please direct yourself to our online FAQ where if your problem isn't addressed, tough life, lose your flight. Online chats until 8pm, Twitter until 6pm, call centres until 6pm. An airline business isn't a 9-5, it's a AIRLINE for chrissakes, your business is 24/7 and your flights serve people around the clock, so should your customer service too.	141	3,4	2,3,7,9	-	8
M23	Hi ,	131	4,5	2,3	U2 x 3	5

	On behalf of my wife and her relatives, we are at the point of really frustrated with the service and response regarding our refund issue. We have received two email that confirmed the refund was done in 22 Oct but, to this day, we haven't received the refund yet. There were so many issues with this planned trip; wrong information in the website about hotel booking, flight delay (shorten the holiday trip for a day), so we will appreciate to get some response since there are no response to our numerous emails and it is really hard to get you guys on the phone.					
M24	i have a problem on my refund. I already giving the detail of my account to be credited in response to your refund e-mail. The response is that my refund is in the process . Suddenly when i check my e-mail this morning the status of my refund is " status closed" with the remark 'customer not responding". What should i do ? Do i have to wait again or what ? Is this a delay tactic?	77	4,5	3,4,7	-	5
M25	Really upset that cannot book for multiple destination. Booked KUL-TWU-BKI-KUL but have to book seperately with payment processing fee for each. Really money wasting and time wasting! Please do something!	30	3	2,3,7	U2 x 2 D1	7
M26	And responding to my message for more than 24hours is not acceptable to me. Your PR department should be more aggressive. I am in this line as well. We will act immediately when there's negative issue been raised. Unless if u dont treat what i have experience as important since you have been receiving number of complaints from others and couldnt be bothered to take action. I may be alone, i may be small, but i have the power to shake things. Dont let me write to the minister how bad your service and hospitality is. You know elton john's sorry seems to be the hardest word? I think that song reflects your service. None. I repeat NONE of your personnels could be bothered to say SORRY.	127	4	2,3,5	-	7
M27	Yes. I think MAS should investigate and should do something. This is not a small thing. People have been talking abt how bad is your service, your hospitality. And i know you are well aware of the power of e-word of mouth? It spread in blink of an eye and it will affect your reputation. As an esteemed organization, i am sure you have a risk or at least crisis team who has come-out with procedures to overcome things arising. How am i	111	4	3,4,5,7	-	7

	supposed to be proud of the local airline if you treated us like we don't pay for your service? Courtesy is the best policy. Practice what you preached.					
M28	seriously again the same situation from last month, i faced the same system error when making the payment! same situation, tried to call hotline but had to wait for ages! i think my phone call charge from China has already almost 50% cost of the ticket i wanted to buy to go home! do not ask me to go to your customer service in the mainland/HK because that would be another chapter of disappointing stories!! i have been trying to call since yesterday and today is the last day for Enrich promotion. the same thing during your promotional period last month. well, i guess all airlines are crooks! unless a business or first class travellers, for the rest, we are just "unimportant" clients to you. seriously, the automatic advertisement while waiting for calls to be answered was somehow stated "your call is important to us"?? i think that is a lie to yourself Malaysia Airlines! sekian!	155	3,4	2,3,6,9	-	5
M29	what is the use of deals when the customer service is LOUSY... until now mAS customer service pass my case around. I want to use voucher to buy items in temptations (which by the way website is closed). Takes up to 5 days for customer service to answer and asked me to write to temptations customer service..so far ..SILENCE!!! Please just close down both divisions and pay back my enrich voucher in case as both departmetns are clearly NOT WORKING at all !!!!!	83	4	2,3,5,7,9	D1	5
M30	Hi Malaysia Airlines, i think u should upgrade the ticketing system. I always stuck when redirect to online banking. Cannot access	21	3	3,7	-	6
M31	To the team behind all this posting for MAS in Facebook, or social media team, probably you might want to get your top management to look into complaints via enrich email. Why keep advertising/posting in FB when there is whole load of complaints not cleared? This basically shows the incompetency of the airline. You may keep on posting and advertise in FB, but general audience will look into all the negative feedbacks here. These feedback if not entertained, will bring down the airline. And why not you devote your time to help customer service and enrich?	96	4,9	3,4,7,9	-	6

M32	For god sake open your eyes MAS. Key message here is that why are there resources from MAS happily posting in Facebook while the whole world is having issue with Enrich? No one seems to be replying to queries in Enrich, complaints not closed after several months and whole loads of nuisance! Make sense now?? You probably want to seek top management intervention o this, else you will see a whole load of complaints in Facebook!!!	76	4,9	2,7	-	5
M33	Their service provider in this matter is worst than a low cost airlines! Disappointed with this..	16	3	2,3,6,9	-	5
M34	My RESERVED SEAT got taken away!! I was suppose to seat on the row 28 with bassinet, and when i want to do check in this afternoon, i was shocked to see my seat change to bloody row 34!!! Call malaysia bloody airline check in department, and they cannot do anything at all and wants us go to check in counter on that day and see what their counter staff can do!! and ask us to email this method to them...what the hell!!Waiting for their email reply will be the next decade, i tried once, and they only replied after my trip back home	104	3,4	2,3,6	U3 x 2	5
M35	Agree with you Warren. I purchased my tickets through online 2 days ago with maybank2u. Money was deducted but mas stated did not receive n I keep calling but no one answer my calls for 2 days. Unprofessional service n this is so called world class airline? Pls.. Don't spoil the name..	52	3,4	3,8,9	-	5
M36	Why they nvr make livechat available at their website..calling so called call center wasnt helping at all when u have to put ur phone there for more than half an hour .. then suggesting ppl to purchase online .. why the hell will u have such a poor systems for ur sales system online .. Money transaction very fast .. but where is my confirmation number ..	111	3,4	3,9	-	7

	<p>the call center person told me i will receive it within 24 hrs .. and i didnt even receive anything from u ..</p> <p>Why would u guys make this things out when u ppl cant afford to provide what the customers need .. !!</p>					
M37	Luggage damaged! one of the worst customer service. I wrote to them, no reply!	14	2,4	2,9	-	7
M38	Waiting for flight to Manila MH704, late as usual some things never change. It's no longer a first choice airlines. Sigh it was once a pride for Malaysia.	29	1	2,3,9	-	6
M39	pls improve ur telephone service!!!! it is very hard to call in, while call in change a tix need take bout 30 mins!!! it is just disappointing people!	28	4	2,3,7	D1	6
M40	I've sent in like 100 of emails and been waited for almost a month just to get my compensation for lost baggages, understand that you have lots of complaints to handle, but i have been waited too long, what kind of service is this, im so sad!!!	47	2,4	2,3,9	U2	7
M41	Mas needs to look into its food n beverage dept n cleanliness of it toilet n interior on d whole nyway still got room for improvment	26	4	3,7	-	6
M42	My luggage was delayed by malaysiaairlines @MAS for 54hrs!	9	2	2,3	-	5
M43	Mas Airline, I have no choice but complaint about your customer service here. I faced some issues & I went to Kuching office . The customer service said she can't do anything and gave me an email address. I sent email to the email address that she gave me. However, there is no reply at all until now. The customer service person from Kuching office said she can't help me call or email or contact KL side. Is this the customer service that MAS provided to your frequent flyer customer? Kindly advise where can I email to get the problem solved ASAP !	103	4	2,3,7,9		
M44	I am truly disappointed with my first international flight booked with MAS.	12	3	2,3		

M45	MAS is a flight that I have always wanted to travel with. However I make a mistake and would like to amend my flight, I therefore log in and tried to amend through the manage my booking site. The result shows for the booking is NT 1300 for 2 persons. However, when I tried to click make payment, the page just prompt out and refuse to allow me to make further amendment on the flight. I therefore call to your call centre and was informed that I have to pay for NT 4000 for the amendment. This is ridiculous. However, I politely informed the staff from the call centre that I need to discuss with my husband before I proceed with the decision. I call back after 15mins with the intention to agree with the charges, and no one answer the call. Once i hold the line for 55 mins and once i hold the line for 20 mins. What service is this?? If you are a lower class provider, I have no say. But as the FIRST class provider, I expect you to have better service. But it seems like I am wrong...FIRST class provider shall now allow their customer to wait for even more than 20 mins...Now, I wanted to cancel my flight. My reservation number is KWEF4. Please call me immediately to advise on the procedure. Thanks.	230	3,4	3,4,7,9		
M46	delay delay delay... if there is one time when my flight goes on time as scheduled, it would probably be the day when malaysia starts to snow.. Geeez	28	1	3,8,9	-	2
M47	Mh2707 from sandakan to kuala kumpur delayed 5 times and cancelled twice on 29th and 30th June after plane was fully boarded by passengers(both times) there has been no arrangements made from MaS for new direct flight and passengers are forced to wait the whole day in departure uncertainly.. this is the second night the plane has been delayed without solution.. definitely will recommend Malindo or Air Asia instead of MAS horrible service recovery with no solution after 2 nights!! This is prove of negligence of MAS management and also their incompetence in resolving an issue within 2days..please hire better monkeys	101	1,4	2,3,6,7,9,10	-	7
M48	The Airbus A380 was gorgeous even in economy class. Sadly, Malaysia Airlines cabin crew's attitude spoilt everything. One crew, a Malay lady yesterday on board MH 04 was rude and despicable. She was descriminating Malaysian as though like we have no class.	71	2,4	2,3	-	5

	No greetings for me as I'm no class, a Malaysian only greets Foreigners. Best of all, she thinks I don't even now how to use the entertainment's remote control.					
M49	<p>I missed my flight yesterday back to KCH.WHY??I was waiting for the gate to open but all I could see was "Kiosk".They never showed "Open/Buka",after kiosk,it was "Closed/Tutup".Until the last 25 mins I felt weird and went to drop my luggage but it was too late.By the time I was in the counter,I had 15 mins left!!I couldnt get my luggage in so i had to give up my boarding pass and got a standby ticket for an additional rm100.This was not the problem,I had to wait there near counter B17/B18 and two flights after that did not have empty seats.I got back on the third one.I thought I would have to wait till midnight or the next morning to get back!!</p> <p>I am not the only one confused by this.I hope Malaysia airlines can do something about it. There were many others who missed their flight because Gate "Open" was never shown at the monitor screens,we were merely waiting for it.We all thought our flights would be delayed.This is unacceptable MAS.We all waited and crowded ourselves there with our luggage for nothing.We shouldnt had been penalised for rm100 because we were waiting for our gates to open.Please put "Kiosk" and "Open" together on the screen.How can you close when you never open the gates??I observed this happened for flights to KCH,LANGKAWI and SANDAKAN when I was looking at the screens.Please make what is shown on the monitor screens less confusing.It caused us a lot of hassle and money and time.What an awful experience!</p>	253	1	2,3,7,9	D1	6
M50	<p>Very poor response to customer</p> <p>For the past 2 months, I have been emailing to you guys to claim the missing miles.</p> <p>Until today I have received zero reply from your side.</p> <p>Can you please check and revert back to me?</p>	60	4,9	3,7,9	D1 U2	5

	Check email from wcwroger@yahoo.com which was sent to your enrich email address on Nov 8, Dec 2 and 19.					
M51	Dear MAS, I was on a 4.55pm flight from KUL-MIRI on 1st Dec. To be fair, the whole journey was fine until the plane was about to land at Miri airport. I was using my phone to play games almost throughout the flight (my phone was on flight mode the whole time)..and when the announcement came in, I was in the midst of exiting the game to switch off my phone when one of your award winning cabin crew approached me from the back and literally yelled in my ear to switch off my phone. Not only I was embarrassed, but I was hurt. What the hell happened to being polite? MAS hire Godzillas in petite bodies and kebaya these days? Please train your award winning cabin staffs appropriately. Last I checked I am not deaf and I am a paying customer and I travel with your airline on a monthly basis. The only reason I travel with MAS these days is because I hate LCCT. I have faith in MAS and your airline should be something of a national pride. But live up to that name and if your cabin crews are truly an award winning one, then prove it in every flight. Not only in those big fancy international Airbus but also in the domestic ones. A paying customer, is a paying customer and your customers are people with feelings too. Do take this criticism constructively and improve. Be the national pride it was and make the ordinary Malaysians proud.	253	4	2,3,4,6,7	-	6
M52	Disappointed with MAS Pay for MAS but the service like AA. 1) flight always delayed 2) lunch menu - fish n beef but they can tell you fish finished already, I do not eat beef and at the end, hungry for 6 hrs in th flight!! Moral of the story: if you choose the wrong airline, it will spoil your mood for the whole day even the whole journey.	69	1,4	2,3,6,8	-	3

M53	Dear Malaysia Airlines, Thank you for LOSING my Christmas gift on my recent flight back from MELBOURNE, best thing is you cannot even tell me whether my luggage left Melbourne or did it arrive Malaysia. Recent call to your customer service, and the staff advised us that the claim process will take up to 99 days to, again TRACK the luggage (is Malaysia Airline luggage tag system functioning ? if so, cant you recall where my luggage is with the nice piece of sticker you put on my boarding pass), and another 99 days for the claim process if Malaysia Airline cannot locate the already missing luggage. GREAT!!!!	108	2,4	2,3,6	-	5
M54	Apart from adding frequency, I think you should look into your customer service. As a Frequent Flyer, I truly disappointed with your customer service. I have sent an email on 7th May regarding flight cancellation, it has been more than 2 months but I never get a proper response on that and my request is unsolved	56	1,4	2,3,7	U1	6
M55	Hi I lodged a complain few weeks ago, you promised to refund my money but I have contacted you several times but no response, is Malaysia Airlines just trying to lie to me to stop the complains? I would appreciate an answer to my refund. Let's get this over and done with. Thank you	54	4,5	3,4,7	D3	6
M56	Please upgrade the MAS online booking/flight management system. It doesn't allow ticket holders to select and pay for their seats online if we try to do this after the initial purchase. Writing to MAS with feedback will only get you an apology that their system is unable to do this. Period. If AirAsia can do it, why not MAS? Besides, having to call the MAS customer service hotline to change details and make payment just exponentially increases the risk of fraud committed on our credit cards. An excellent case in point is what happened to me recently. I had to call 1300883000 to select my flight seats and provide my credit card details (including the 3-digit security code at the back) to the phone consultant. Coincidentally, someone used my card details that very same night to make an online ticket purchase from Emirates, to the tune of almost RM10,000! This has never happened to me with that particular card in the last 10 years or so. I'm now	198	3	3,4,5,6,7	D1	6

	extremely wary about dealing with MAS. I'm not pointing fingers at anyone, but what were the chances that it would take place on the very same day I called MAS?					
M57	please do something with your call centre service. reception is horrible, the sales person takes too long to check, amend, and confirm my booking. i have to make a total of 8 calls to change my flight, twice i was put on hold for more than 10 minutes and have to hang up as there was no response, finally manage to confirm on the 8th call after talking to the sales person on the phone for half an hour just to change my flight dates.	85	4	2,3,7,9	D1	6
M58	Malaysia Airlines, please pass the message to whoever is in charge of customer service and ask them to at the very least acknowledge that they've receive my emails even though they don't seem bothered about replying them. Thank you.	39	4	3,7	D1	6
M59	I flew back yesterday SDK-KUL yesterday on MH2711. It was OK. No hitches. I am diasappointed with yesterday evening flight which was re-timed several times since yesterday As a shareholder of MAS I am most unhappy. I will bring this matter to attention of Tan Sri Chairman & Mr MD/CEO at the next AGM.	54	1	2,3,5	-	
M60	Definitely will recommend Malindo or Air Asia instead of MAS horrible service!	12	4	3,5,8	-	5
M61	Please fix your web page and your Android app. The worst among major airlines i travel with. Try searching for flights between KUL and PVG and no flights info even on 10 different dates up to Sept 2013	38	4	3,9	-	6
M62	Why u all just deleted all the comment? Flight delayed isn't informed, only found until the airport.. Any the crew just told the fight delayed due to natural disaster? And doesn't help to arrange the comfy of overnight. What disaster is that? All the other airlies flew too even the airasia? Mas just doesn't care about their passengers!!	58	1,4	2,3,4	-	6
M63	Dear Mas, We bought tickets to Tokyo and requesting for re-route due to the recent nuclear leak in Japan. By the way, we bought the tickets before the news on the leak was announced. We were told not possible, c'mon we are not trying to be unreasonable. We just do not want to risk our health as NOBODY can knows what is the potential damage	104	3	3,9	U1	3

	of radiation. We understand there will be fees involved and willing to pay for it. WHY Air Asia can initiate such changes done on their promo fare during the Bangkok riot and yet MAS can't. This is totally unacceptable.					
M64	Malaysia leading airlines????? Your 850am flight at Senai Airport today had just been delayed till 10am and just as I am commenting, they announced it is further delayed to 1105am. We have an urgent appt in KL which explains the reason why we chose MAS!! If our appt schedule was flexible, we would have flown Airasia or Firefly! Preposterous and unacceptable for a so call leading airlines!!	67	1	2,3,8,9	-	2
M65	I just want to say, they charged me twice using same reference no. and after 4th phone call, the auto callback system didn;t call me back after 1700 min nor 17 min like promised. The 5th time I call back, the operator is total not trained, no greeting no respond and keep you on hold. This is not the 1st time I have to deal with MAS but still, this Award Winning Airline should provide better service than their competitor but you know~	85	4	3,7	-	3
M66	i was wondering if all the MAS workers only post showoff news in Facebook yet refuse to deal with their passengers comment/complaints??? I've wrote in emails to customers mailbox to claim for my lost baggage compensation, few days past by and i have yet to receive any feedback, what happen to MAS??????	52	2,4	3,6	D4	3
M67	no point wiz the fresh look, great service ... ur ground crew doesn't know how to handle delays ... were rude to passengers ... first time i'm encountering this after flying wiz FY for a long time ...	38	4	3,9	-	5
M68	Dear MAS, I have written into customer@malaysiaairlines.com and I have not heard a reply since. It has been nearly 3 weeks and I am very frustrated now. I have also sent in	85	4	2,3,7,9	2 X U2	5

	2 reminders but I guess it is useless. When are you going to revert? My case is very bad and I want to know what you are going to do about it! My case number is 2622-05/2015. Its nothing compare to other airlines now.. Its just like a budget airlines in national color.					
M69	Dear Malaysia Airlines, the quality of your food flying out from Kuala Lumpur is totally horrible ,even in business class!	21	4	2,3,7	U1,D1	5
M70	Worst experience ever! Still at KLIA since 10 pm last night. It's 03:52 now. MH 149 rescheduled from 2350 last night to 0330 this morning to 0530 later! No care, no explanation nor a single cup of coffee! Where is the love Malaysia Airlines?	44	1,4	2,3,9	-	4
M71	<u>Malaysia Airlines</u> , you cancelled my flight and only gave a replacement on the next day, without any choice of dates. Is this how your transformation of your airline is coming to ?	32	1,4	3,6	U2 X 2	4
M72	Dear Malaysia Airlines, I just fly your MH2529 on Sun, i brought a big vase along as luggage with the sticker "FRAGILE". It that means "EASILY BROKEN AND BE CAREFUL" but unfortunately i got the pieces and pieces vase back..... So sad for that WHAT THE LUGGAGE STAFF DOING and can you all just through the luggage any how even with the "FRAGILE STICKER" as well as PRINTED IN RED COLOUR. Better no need to provide the passenger with FRAGILE STICKER. ". I am paying for the air tickets also. HANDLING SERVICES SO POOR	90	2	2,3	-	2
M73	They have to divert us to another flight (MH851, 1205) without any further explanation. We are so disappointed!! the service is worst than any other budget airlines and were claimed 1 of the best airlines decades ago. The frustration we have now is about our precious time and ground bookings and fares at designated place wasted!! We wish for a swift reply from your management for the matter. As Malaysian, we always wanted to support the local main airlines but please make sure we are proud of choosing it!!	89	1	2,3,4	-	2

M74	Malaysian airline MH0714 FLIGHT from bali to KL delay 3 hours.. Suppose to fly 1:10 pm, and then they give lunch in a box which contains only beef and they didn't inform anyone. And there were no other choice..A very poor service.	54	1,4	3,5,9	U2	5
M75	We just flew back from Bali with MAS. It was a good flight, tq MAS. But whats dissappointing was that the foods were not at all as good as before. I could see that many passengers did not take their meals on the flight. I used to fly with MAS and it was then so known that MAS served the BEST foods onboard, but not anymore.	66	4	2,3,9	-	2
M76	dear MAS, did u recently kick all helpdesk operator? nobody entertain me for many attempts to call..let me know if u need cheap labour to pick up ur bloody phone ok?	31	4	2,3,6	U3	4
M77	What absolute nonsense. I just received an email informing me that you are "revising" your Enrich redemption rates effective 16 Feb. What this actually means is that my miles are now worth less, as it costs nearly double the miles needed for most destinations. I think this is a horribly misleading post: encouraging us to convert more points to miles when you KNOW that the miles will be worth a lot less on Feb 16. Very very unhappy frown emoticon	80	7	2,3,9	U1,U2	8
M78	I lost my iPhone back in 2012 flying Mas airline Business class (during the flight). History repeat itself yesterday when I fly MH113 from Dhaka to Malaysia. Yet Another theft! Both my laptop charger and laptop mouse were stolen from my check in luggage ! For those who are flying MAS, please be extra careful!!!	55	7	2,3,8	-	3
M79	You have time to upload post to fb but have no time to reply to my case.	17	4	3,9	-	5
M80	I honestly give up on this Enrich programme. From all the horrible experience I had from applying for the membership to collecting points. After so many trips and me remembering to include my enrich member number, I find no points at all when I log in my account online. When I report it, I am told to produce my check in slips as evidence! Geez...I wonder what kind of system Enrich has....	87	7	2,3,9,1 0	D4	3

APPENDIX F : DATA ANALYSIS OF AMERICAN CUSTOMERS' COMPLAINTS.

These Facebook comments were analysed according to the word length (WL), reasons for complaining (CR), complaint categories (CC), modality markers (MM) as well as the directness levels of complaints (DL).

Subject	Complaint	WL	CR	CC	MM	DL
A1	No way will I fly with AA again. I submitted 2 complaints and both were completely ignored. One in December and again in January. I've already spent \$10k with AA since then and will give them all my business in future. It's such a shame, I was loyal to AA for 15 years until this.	55	4	1,7	-	8
A2	Flight cancelled due to mechanical problems. Did not receive a full refund. Disappointing service and theft from your own customers.	20	1,5	1,3,4	-	5
A3	Expect nothing but callous disregard and complete incompetence from these useless idiots. I will NEVER fly with them again, and I will caution everyone I know to avoid them. Disgusting.	30	4	2,4,5,7, 8	-	3
A4	Your 800 is AWFUL! it keeps hanging up and giving me no way to message or speak to anyone!	19	4	2,3,4	-	6

A5	my flight is supposed to leave at 8:30 am and has been canceled the recording said I have to wait now then two hours to talk to someone to reschedule? ! That is not good customer service. You should be able to re-route online and you need more agents to help out in these situations!	57	1,4	2,3,7	-	2
A6	Cancel my flight, delayed on the next, then you can't even get my bags to the location.	17	1,2	3	-	3
A7	The only benefits you can offer at this point is a MUCH IMPROVED customer service!! Cuz currently it sucks!!!!!!	19	4	4,6,7	-	8
A8	Who believes there are good things from this merge????? All I see is higher prices...horrible seats...and less care for airline costumers!	21	4,6	3,9	-	8
A9	Sad to say that some of your employees at LAS were extremely rude to me when changing my flight to JFK... And they put me on two more cancelled flights afterwards. Their rude and condescending attitudes pretty much just lost me as a loyal AA customer	46	4	1,3	U1	8
A10	Terrible experience this year working with my group travel to Costa Rica. I called yesterday to purchase our tickets and was informed that the per-ticket ticketing fee is now \$35 instead of \$25 that was stipulated on the contract I signed. Now, after 4 phone calls and hours on hold, I still don't have a receipt for the \$16,400 charge that I placed on my personal credit card. I blew past frustration yesterday and now I'm at the level of	116	3	1,3,5,6	-	3

	complete disgust. Group buyers beware....there are other airlines that will charge you what they say they would, and get you a receipt (something that should be so basic to a purchase.) Total fail for American Airlines!					
A11	My day on AA was horrible. Started out in Atlanta with a broken plane. Had to switch my flight from Chicago to LA. Paid for 1st class and flew coach. They stink!!!!!!	32	1	1,2,3	U2	5
A12	I sent you mail on Mach 4th, approx. No answer. My baggage was broken and arrived two days after my return ,flight cancelled , no hotel..... I may be alone, i may be small, but i have the power to shake things. Dont let me write to the minister how bad your service and hospitality is.	56	1,4	3,4,7	U1	5
A13	You've just screwed your very best customers: changing seating preference with no notice, devaluing miles with no notice, taking fares away in the middle of booking. I just cancelled my AA credit card. You're going to lose your most loyal customers.	41	1,6	1,3,7	-	5
A14	I am so disappointed in AA. Exactly that - you sit on the stinking plane for over a 100k to earn EP and some sucker who pays for a black card gets more benefits than someone who sat all those miles. Then when you want to book you can't even get your free ticket and if you do it bankrupts your account with one flight. I	91	4	1,3	-	2

	have been trying to get a free ticket to Berlin for 2 and simply can't do it. Should I change my loyalty to another airline?					
A15	This is cool but not cool you guys left my sick mom waiting along with 200 people in Santa Cruz. Your planes are old and it made her sicker and nervous. She is still in Santa Cruz now and now you are telling her she has to wait two days to leave. What kind of service are you providing???	59	1,4	3,4	-	7
A16	Why don't you focus on not delaying flights due to mechanical issues? I'm waiting on another delayed flight at DFW on your Greyhound of the skies...American Eagle!	27	1	2,3	-	5
A17	I did that on my last flight, I was texted my flight was delayed by an hour. Turns out my flight left on schedule and I missed my flight	29	1	3	-	-2
A18	WORST SERVICE EVER! The 3 times that my husband has flown with your airlines, his flight has been late making him unable to make his connecting flight, causing him to be late to each of the events he has been flying in for. This last flight from GSP to SEA, we booked the same day as my husband received a call that his dad was dying. We booked the flight and got him to the airport on time. Upon his arrival he was told the incoming flight would be late and that he would, once again, miss his connection in Charlotte, NC. He was told by the desk attendant that he should contact whoever dropped him off and have them drive him to Charlotte and maybe he could make his connection. They then put him on another flight to Dallas then to	313	1,4	1,2,3,4	U2 X3	7

	Seattle, making him 3 hours later than we had originally planned. When I called your "Customer Service" line I got nothing but a "too bad, so sad" attitude from everyone including "supervisor" who refused to give me any other identifying information than "Myles "Fox Trot" FT". I am very upset that none of the air travel plans we have made with your company have gone as planned and that your company sees no need to compensate or even show any compassion or remorse for the inconveniences that they cause. My husband's father is dying and every minute is precious and not one person there seemed to care that your company's inability to keep an itinerary as planned has cost my husband not only the lost time cost by the delays, but also the new accommodations to transport him from the airport to the hospital. And to add to it, he BARELY made his connection in Dallas due to EVEN MORE DELAYS. SHAMEFUL AND WE WILL NEVER USE YOU OR AMERICAN AIRLINES AGAIN.					
A19	Wasted last few years of my life with AA. After yesterday's experience, never again!	14	7	2,10	-	1
A20	And let the lower prices begin right? Oh wrong I see, my mistake.	13	6	6	-	1
A21	Your prices are getting to high, to travel.	8	6	5	-	1
A22	Poor customer service.	3	4	4	-	5

A23	<p>The baggage supervisor in LAX, Laquisha, is HORRIBLE!!! She knows nothing about customer service and professionalism. And I work for an airline, so I understand the frustrations and how upset people can be. But don't promise to do something for a customer and then yell at them and tell them no, and also don't preach that you know airline procedures. Because clearly you DON'T.</p> <p>This woman is awful and does not deserve the supervisor position she has been given if this is how she treats her customers.</p> <p>I will NEVER EVER EVER FLY AMERICAN AIRLINES AGAIN.</p>	96	4	2,3,4,5, 7	-	7
A24	<p>Worst airline ever. And I'm a million mile member for us airways. American service sucks big time. Leaving the star alliance network was the biggest mistake.</p>	26	4	4,5	-	8
A25	<p>FYI to all travelers on American Airlines!! If your bag is damaged by American Airlines, just know you may have to wait 2 months only to find out they have no idea where it is and don't have you on record and then they asked for what kind of bag it was to replace it and never called me back and I spent 1.5 hours yesterday trying to find someone to help me and they keep redirecting me to different numbers, offices, etc. I called the number this morning to be directed to the website!! Now I'm on hold with someone else who doesn't know anything. Really? AA you can't cough up a few hundred dollars for our bag????!! Good thing I'm persistent</p>	123	2,4	2,3,6	-	2

A26	Will not be flying aa in the future. Poor customer service.	11	4	4,5	-	5
A27	We are late because of you and you better delay my connecting flight! I am on flight 1519 from Phoenix to Dallas and they had to turn the plane around because of an oxygen issue in the cockpit. First of all, why didn't they notice before we took off? Second, why did they wait until we landed (20+ minutes after they discovered the problem and we had to fly back to Phoenix) to contact the mechanics to get it fixed? Honestly, whether it was a pilot oversight or a legitimate mechanical failure, it makes me very uncomfortable flying your airline (I fly US Airways all the time). It took another 45 minutes or so to repair the issue. Now the flight is supposed to arrive 7 minutes before my connecting flight to Houston (Flight #2472) and I have no idea how far I have to walk and I have a sore ankle. If they don't delay the flight 2472 15 -20 minutes or whatever it takes for me to make my flight (and all the other people connecting), I will be very upset and demand a full price voucher and hotel compensation for tonight. I am also in health and safety line of work, and educate people on a daily basis. I have a large circle of customers and would definitely share my negative experience if this is not resolved in a timely manner.	234	1	2,3,7	U2	5
A28	American Airlines has the absolute worst customer service in an industry that is known for terrible customer service. They destroyed my brand new roller bag and when I tried to make a claim they told me only bag damage on international flights are covered. I found out later that was a lie. They refused to even look at the damage. Every employee I have tried to bring it up with has been rude and dismissive.	75	2,4	3,4,5	U1	8

A29	AA is the worst! Customer service is awful. I emailed 3 times in the last 3 months regarding a refund. They have never replied. I have called them 6 times and they never have answers. They said it would take 2 billing cycles to receive my refund and its been over 3. Why aren't refunds instantaneous?	56	4,5	4,5,9	-	8
A30	I just tried to contact AA with no success. I did get an answer who transferred me, but unfortunately I coughed, asked them to hold and they hung up. This was my 3rd phone call. I have tried to fill out a claim, but it will not accept my email file number or baggage number. Someone dropped my bag or something on my bag and BROKE THE CAP, not the bottle of rum. Of course the cap fell off and rum everywhere, including my iphone. So, any suggestions on how to contact and get an answer. A couple of years ago they broke the wheel off my 1st time used new luggage and I got a smile with a sorry...Well, sorry AA I will walk before using you again.	129	2,4	3,5	-	5
A31	I wonder if one of them was the one who refused to announce a serious peanut allergy for a passenger. She kept smiling while explaining that although they are allowed to make that type of announcement, they do not "have" to do so. Thankfully, the other passengers seated near the one with the severe allergy were more accommodating. American Airlines, it is time to sharpen your customer service skills and put passenger safety as a top priority!	77	4	3,7,9	D4	5
A32	Horrible experience - why don't you give the option to select "dislike."	12	4	9,10	-	3

A33	Customer service? I was put on hold for 129 minutes until I finally gave up. Yes, AA lost my luggage for an extremely important business trip. I have LITERALLY been unable to speak to a human. The business meeting? A company wide week long national attorney meeting. Yes, you can expect I will SUE AA. And it will not be a cute small claims court suit just to get a "few vouchers". This will become my passion/hobby for 2014. I left SeaTac exactly 30 hours ago and still no bag.	90	2,4	1,3	-	5
A34	How about instead of repainting, AA fixes the old interiors on existing planes and train their "customer service" staff?	19	4	3,9	-	3
A35	Those US Airways seats were so worn. One might as well been sitting on plywood.	15	4	6	-	2
A36	Thank you American Airlines for canceling our complimentary access to American Airlines Admirals Club and US Airways® Club locations for American Express Platinum card members. Just once again shows how you are striving to be the best..... NOT.	38	7	6	-	5
A37	Thanks for not writing all over New Zealand, my one flight with American Airlines was the worst flight of my life so I hope you keep well out of my country.	31	4	4,9	-	8
A38	Poorest service. The 777's are configured so tight you are like a sardine in a can. Turkish Air, Baby.	19	4	3,6	-	5
A39	Terrible customer service - #Delta is still the best in the U.S.	12	4	3,9,10	-	5
A40	I will ever use this airline again . They lose my bags .	13	2	3,10	-	5

A41	<p>American airlines have been the worst airline i have travelled with! Dear American Airlines, my friend and I booked a trip of a lifetime to tour around Peru. We chose your airline as you had the best and shortest flight times to get us to Lima. Two weeks before our trip we were emailed and advised our outbound connecting airport was changing from JFK to Miami, which was a positive for us as we would have more time to make our connection. We arrived at London Heathrow on Friday 1st of November to find that our flight was delayed by 2 hours + we started to worry as we had to arrive in lima at latest 6:30am to get to the hotel for our welcome meeting for the tour. We boarded the flight and landed in Miami with an hour connection time, we were given fast track envelopes that advised us not to re-check our bags and to proceed straight to the gate. We had to run through passport control and security to make our flight which was definitely not ideal but we were pleased to make the connecting flight to lima. We landed in Lima to find that our luggage had NOT arrived and was not put on the flight in miami. We queued for around 25 minutes at 4:30 am to be given a bag locater number and to check on the website/call the local number. We were extremely distressed and missed the first day of our tour around lima. My main concern was i didn't have my malaria tablets which i had to take every day before entering the amazon and also we were leaving lima the following morning to go to Arequipa and we would be without luggage that we had an itemised packing list for as we were on a specialised tour. We continued to phone american airlines multiple time on saturday 2nd of november to be told our bags had not been located. I was also addressed by an extremely rude customer representative that told me our luggage was at Heathrow and there was nothing further he could do. We were absolutely</p>	621	1,2,4	3,9,10	U2X3	8
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	<p>distraught and the thought of having no luggage was ruining our holiday. We went and purchased toiletries and clothes to get us through the next few days as the next big town we were visiting was in 6 days time. We called in the morning at 3am and 7am to find out if our cases had arrived before departing for the airport but we were told again they were un-tracable and that the airport could not check to see if our bags had arrived as they did not have staff working on a Sunday. The baggage locator on the website was also down so we had to keep going to a pay phone to call. We arrived at the airport with a new suitcase and the essentials to get us through the next few days. We luckily bumped into one of the representatives from the morning before and showed him a picture of our suitcases which we had luckily taken at London Heathrow. He checked the storage room and found our cases we were absolutely elated. American Airlines customer services was so POOR but the gentleman working at the airport. I have since contacted your customer relations team to find out how I can claim a refund for the items I had to buy due to your lack of information, I also think we should be entitled to some sort of refund for missing the 1st day of our tour but still have not received a response! The treatment I have been given by American Airlines definitely puts me off travelling with them again.</p>					
A42	<p>I was an AA snob, but after numerous poor customer service issues during my latest vacation, I've had to re-evaluate them</p>	21	4	3,10	-	5
A43	<p>American Airlines is a horrible enterprise. Only airline comparable is Spirit. Your customer service (both in person, online, phone), operations, outfit, etc. are in need of a complete makeover. We were denied our</p>	84	4	3,7,9	-	8

	Christmas/New Years trip due to your incompetency, and as a result will never step foot on or near your fleet again. How two lackluster operations such as yourself and US Airways plan to merge is a complete mystery. AA should have never been bailed out. A complete sham of an outfit!					
A44	Just a shame you forgot customer comfort three seats to a row make it less pleasant for couples and the seats on the new long haul flights are horribly hard!!	30	4	3,6	U1	5
A45	Worst airline ever	3	4	9	-	8
A46	Congratulations to screwing the travel agents, and continuing to make the seats narrower in order to squeeze more people on board. Who cares if your passengers are uncomfortable on a 9 hour flight, at least you're making more money right !!!	41	1	3,9	-	5
A47	the worst customer service I have ever seen ! incredible service claim lost luggage, waiting 10 weeks and the amount you want to pay is ridiculous ! who complains one ??? I live in Mexico and no one can meet us only in USA, NEED HELP	46	2,4	2,3,7,9	-	5
A48	How about lowering prices a bit so it's not like taking out a second mortgage to fly anywhere! I would definitely travel more often if it didn't take years to pay off a trip!	34	6	3,7	-	7

A49	And yet you cannot answer your customer service line any sooner than a 6 HOUR HOLD!!!! Yep that real customer service!!	21	4	2,3,6	-	5
A50	American Airlines has been terrible with customer service. We missed our flight due to the incompetency of the LAX employees and the American Airlines customer service.	26	1,4	3,9	-	7
A51	I've had the worst experience with American Airlines today. Their customer service is rude and impersonal. I tried to both voice my concerns via phone and email and I got nothing but a basic reply refusing any kind of actual service. I'll never fly with them again!	47	4	2,3,9,10	-	5
A52	American Airlines is the worst airline, how they stay in business is beyond me.	14	4	9	-	8
A53	NEVER FLY AMERICAN AIRLINES!!!!!! SCREWED US ON THE WAY HERE BECAUSE THEIR IPADS WENT DOWN NOW ON THE WAY BACK SAME THING... FLIGHT LEFT WITHOUT US... WAS SUPPOSED TO LEAVE AT 1:50PM AND LEFT AT 11:00AM.... SAW THE PLANE JUST SITTING THERE AND THEY WOULDN'T LET US GET ON..... OUR BOARDING PASS SAID 1:50!!!! I AM GETTING MY MONEY BACK FROM THIS HORRIBLE AIRLINE!!!!!!!!!! American Airlines	66	1	2,3,10	-	8
A54	You should keep a close watch on your passengers and take care of them better. Without us you are nothing!	20	4	4,7	-	6
A55	I wanna know what american airlines do with a lot of lost bags. I think they have a bags's black exchange. Careful everyone, only travel with this company if you intend lead a hand's bag. Im really disappointed with	82	2	2,8	U2	3

	<p>this company. I want my bags.</p> <p>If you can help us, we are really appreciated. The locator is UWPRAJ, one of that luggage is purple and the other one have blue flowers. This happened 24 of may, Chicago to Orlando. One is that</p>					
A56	<p>Please avoid this airline at all costs. I regret ever booking with them. I fly all over the world and this has to be the worst airline ever.</p>	27	4	8,9	-	8
A57	<p>You would think after flying 4 million miles they would send me a free ticket to the destination of my choice instead the raise the amount of miles you need to fly ridiculously! Not to mention the price of airfare has skyrocketed. Gee Thanks American thanks for nothing..</p>	48	6,7	2,3,6	-	5
A58	<p>After the horrible customer service today, I'm ditching my rewards status and never flying this airline again. Way to go American Airlines.</p>	22	4	3,9,10	-	5
A59	<p>this week. Both times when I was flying through Chicago O'hare. Then to top it off the customer service was so bad that I thought I was on a hidden camera show. Every person I asked to help either lied to me so I would go away or was unwilling to help. So here I sit in a hotel that should have been taken care of but was not. Although I was told by a customer service representative that if I asked to speak with a supervisor that they would take care of my room "because it was so obvious that it was the airlines fault I was not going to make it home" The person was so rude to me that I had to walk away from her condescending attitude I don't even know what to do about it. There is no clear path to submit my complaint on the web site so I am using</p>	212	4	3,4,6	U2X2	6

	social media to try and let people know to be warned. Don't assume that if the customer service tells you something that it will be honored or executed as they said. So happy my next work travel arrangements have been booked thru another airlines. I'll keep you posted on how this turns out for me!!					
A60	One star is way too many... What is going on? I've had mostly good experiences with AA, but today has been a huge let down. After sitting on the runway with no movement or updates for 20 minutes after the scheduled takeoff time, you let us know that we will be underway shortly and the delay is due to a prolonged logbook entry.... While annoying, this is fine as I was expecting to be underway soon. Not two minutes later I hear that we have a valve issue and not only are we delayed, we have to deplane. Ok... That's more frustrating, but I'll give you some time to find us another plane... We board another plane at a different gate 20 minutes later around 9:30 pm... It is 10:30 and I'm still sitting on the runway... A 2 hour delay with zero promise of compensation!!!	146	1	2,3,9	U2	7
A61	#AmericanAirlinesSUCKS!!! Gave our seats away because they thought we weren't gonna make our connecting flight, BUT WE DID! Will never fly this POS airlines again!!	25	1	2,3,9, 10	-	8
A62	Last night I had to wait for two hours before AA answered by call to reserve my trip. Today I had to wait for two and a half hours before AA answered my call to confirm my flight and be able to pay for it. I cannot believe this type of neglect to customers. Unacceptable	55	4	3,9	-	7

A63	What happens if American Airlines loses all my checked luggage on that flight and I can't get American Airlines to respond to your claim process - simply S/O/L? What is the policy? Oh, no policy? Choose an airline that has a policy and is responsive next time?	47	2	3,4	-	4
A64	Undoubtedly American Airlines is the worst airline today. I say this with the many experiences I had, among others: * Bad service on board * Entertainment Center Out of Order * In three international Flights, I could not see a movie or series * The last time, not only that, but it broke my own headset Bose * Customer care,,,? Nobody respond * Now Loose my luggage (priority tag) * Answer: We forgot in BUE * Then sent to NYC. Ohhh.....The destination was MIAMI * Luggage arrived to MIA at 16PM y continue waiting. Why? No answer * Now said at midnight. Why? No answer * I had to suspend a business dinner because I don't have any clothing. * Customer Care....???? No anwer By far, very far, it is the worst company. There's someone in AA who wants to give me explanations which is the business of the company and who understand customer care. I welcome your comments.	159	2,4	3,9	-	8
A65	Too good to be true. Had a horrible experienced, our flight has been delayed many times, been stranded at the airport for almost two days and no one was willing to help. When you asked an AA staff, they'll throw you from one gate to another. I've run out of medicine for my diabetes, I'm begging to get a flight back home but no one seems to care. After a long hours of running here and there, we were fortunate to find this kind hearted Scott Hanley (if I remember it right) whom the only one that took my condition seriously. He finally	157	1	2,3,9, 10	U2	7

	rebook us on the same day (although we ended up driving an hour to our home) at least we made it home that day and got my medicine. I was very upset with my experience with AA, lack of courtesy and respect to the passengers. I'll think twice where to fly with next time.					
A66	Well here is some negative feedback. I am waiting for my Business Class refund for me and my wife since the 6th February. The worst airline ever!	27	5	3,6,9	-	8
A67	Funny how American Airlines never responds to any of there costumers who had horrible experiences. American airline has treated me and my family like complete garbage no wonder why they only have a 1 star rating on here! This is terrible they held us back on two flights now and won't even get us a hotel. Real classy.	58	1	2,3,6,8	U1	5
A68	Can you please train your customer service representatives about how to speak to customers who are going through traumatic life circumstances? Upon calling your airline to explain I needed to transfer my ticket two days earlier to attend a funeral of a family member, to my surprise I was not answered with a "I'm sorry for your loss" or "I'm sorry to hear that" but "MA'AM I'm going to need to have you lower your voice" when I was only raising my voice because I was trying to talk through tears. I was shocked when they told me that it would cost me almost a thousand dollars to change my ticket and when I asked them why they didn't give me an explanation, just repeated it in a slower voice like I was stupid. I will never use your airline again after this experience which is unfortunate because between me and my	193	3,4	2,3,7,9, 10	D1	5

	<p>husband as a military family we travel through American Airlines almost 8 times a year.</p> <p>I hope that they learn how to speak to people before they do that to someone else who just lost the mother figure in their life.</p>					
A69	<p>Please don't use this airline, they are thieves</p> <p>I had a very bad experience!</p>	14	7	8	U2	8
A70	<p>Is American Airlines a serious company! NO! They made a trip a NIGHTMARE! The crew got stuck on a traffic jam in Rio de Janeiro and the flight was delayed in more than one hour! How is it possible for ALL passengers be on time and the CREW not?! Irresponsibility! Another disrespect; the connecting flight to MIA was scheduled for 8:30AM and now the estimated time is 11/30am!!! And what are they doing for their passengers? NOTHING! This is suitable for suing!</p>	82	1	2,3,5,9	-	5
A71	<p>Your team lacks customer service! Instead of instagramming, spend sometime training and learning customer service or pretty soon you will all be out of jobs!</p>	25	4	3,5,7	-	6
A72	<p>Do NOT fly American Airlines!!!</p> <p>They have repeatedly messed up a reservation beyond comprehension.</p> <p>It was made as far back as January for a 06/11/15 trip and they waited until recently to mess it up.</p> <p>Hours of phone calls and promises by supervisors has only made it worse.</p> <p>American Airlines had better straighten this out as it's the worst customer service/ business practice ever.</p>	94	3,4	2,3,4,8	-	5

	My 80yr old mother has traveled the world so she can do up a rez better then anyone and yet American Airlines has caused grievous problems for an entire family.					
A73	My wife and I are on our honey moon and instead of enjoying ourselves, we have been trying to locate our bags since Sunday at Turks and Caicos. She had had to wear the same clothes for two days and since we still haven't received our bags, she has to buy all new clothes today from the island which is very expensive. We've called the American desk at PLS airport about seven times which is already costing me .35 a minute, and each time we get the same answer, that the bags haven't been scanned from Miami and that "maybe they'll be on today's flight". This incompetence is causing is a great deal of inconvenience and is completely unacceptable. Please contact me as I need someone to locate our bags. I'm really tired of speaking to the same people and getting the same "maybe" answer. What is so hard about getting our bags onto the aircraft? There haven been multiple flights from MIA to PLS since we've arrived.	168	2,4	2,3,9	U1 U2X4 D1	7
A74	I have been a loyal customer of this airline my entire life (having a lack of options living in DFW). I almost solely fly American and have always defended you. Until now. I am appalled at your lack of customer relations and the run around I have been given concerning a residual voucher of MY money worth almost \$700 that was not sent back to me!! Why you insist on using paper vouchers instead of electronic in the year 2015 is beyond my comprehension! I have been dealing with this since January and just keep getting sent in circles - reservations to AACustomerRelations@aa.com, but that gets me NOWHERE. I spend hours on the phone with people in reservations explaining my situation only to have them tell me they can do nothing for	225	4,7	2,3,4,6	-	8

	me and to contact Customer Relations. Hey, guess what? Maybe your customer relations should be actual people instead of an email box that returns my email automatically b/c it is FULL!!! Do you not find this embarrassing??? Ridiculous?? Unacceptable??? You are THIEVES!!!! You should be ashamed of yourselves!!! I LOVE to travel and I feel like my business is worth keeping! #nobodyhastimeforthis#nowonderyourebankrupt #swairlinesftw					
A75	Nice video, bad service! American Airlines changed -bad change, over the last 1-2 yrs! Many delays, cancellations, v poor customer service, no follow ups, etc.. I have almost 90k points already, but will stop using them. Enough aggravation, does not go anywhere. American Airlines successfully made me hate traveling with them.	51	1,4,7	2,3,9,10	-	5
A76	It's really bad that the people can't be trained to be more customer friendly. Lost luggage is their biggest problem and they don't care to straighten out the problem.	29	2,4	3,9	-	3
A77	I will never fly your airlines again! Bad customer service!	10	4	2,3,10	-	5
A78	I will never fly your airlines again. You guys screwed up three of my four flights a month ago and offered absolutely nothing in return. I wrote AA on the website and have gotten no response. You need to learn how to treat your customers. Everyone I know will know of my horrible experiences with your airline	57	1	3,5,7,10	-	5
A79	WORST SERVICE EVER! The 3 times that my husband has flown with your airlines, his flight has been late making him unable to make his connecting flight, causing him to be late to each of the events he has	313	1,4	2,3,9,10	-	7

	<p>been flying in for. This last flight from GSP to SEA,we booked the same day as my husband received a call that his dad was dying. We booked the flight and got him to the airport on time. Upon his arrival he was told the incoming flight would be late and that he would, once again, miss his connection in Charlotte, NC. He was told by the desk attendant that he should contact whoever dropped him off and have them drive him to Charlotte and maybe he could make his connection. They then put him on another flight to Dallas then to Seattle, making him 3 hours later than we had originally planned. When I called your "Customer Service" line I got nothing but a "too bad, so sad" attitude from everyone including "supervisor" who refused to give me any other identifying information than "Myles "Fox Trot" FT". I am very upset that none of the air travel plans we have made with your company have gone as planned and that your company sees no need to compensate or even show any compassion or remorse for the inconveniences that they cause. My husband's father is dying and every minute is precious and not one person there seemed to care that your company's inability to keep an itinerary as planned has cost my husband not only the lost time cost by the delays, but also the new accommodations to transport him from the airport to the hospital. And to add to it, he BARELY made his connection in Dallas due to EVEN MORE DELAYS. SHAMEFUL AND WE WILL NEVER USE YOU OR AMERICAN AIRLINES AGAIN</p>					
A80	How about instead of repainting, AA fixes the old interiors on existing planes and train their "customer service" staff?	19	4	7	U2	7

University of Malaya