

A GENRE ANALYSIS OF FOOD REVIEWS IN A
MALAYSIAN ONLINE DINING GUIDE WEBSITE

ANGELICIA ANTHONY THANE

FACULTY OF LANGUAGES AND LINGUISTICS
UNIVERSITY OF MALAYA
KUALA LUMPUR

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ANGELICIA ANTHONY THANE

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Abstract

The 'Food Culture' is an increasingly popular notion in our world today. With the Internet, information on various cuisines is easily made available. This phenomenon gives rise to a relatively new digital genre: online food reviews. Hence, this study aims to provide a comprehensive description on online food review focusing on rhetorical strategies. Swales's Three-Level Genre model is employed to identify the communicative purpose, rhetorical structures and rhetorical strategies of online food review from a popular Malaysian food website, *FriedChilies*. The analysis of rhetorical structures is based on a conceptualised framework incorporating both Bhatia's (2004) move structures for advertising discourse and Askehave & Nielsen's (2005) move structures for online genre. On the other hand, the rhetorical strategies is focused on visuals as move and relevant discourses found in the reviews. Unlike traditional genre analysis, the present research concentrates on exploring the roles of visuals and accompanying discourses in achieving private intentions of the review. Results of the study shows that the move structure confirms that reviews are of a mixed genre. The findings also demonstrated that while reviews are supposed to be more informative, strong promotional elements are subtly incorporated via usage of visuals and different discourses. This indicates that visuals and discourses may influence and manipulate a genre's communicative purpose which in turn affects the genre type and its generic description.

Abstrak

“Food Culture” merupakan persepsi yang semakin popular di seluruh dunia. Kewujudan Internet membolehkan maklumat mengenai pelbagai hidangan makanan didapati dengan mudah. Fenomena ini menyumbang kepada pembentukan genre digital baru iaitu ulasan makanan. Sehubungan dengan itu, tujuan kajian ini adalah untuk mengutarakan penerangan menyeluruh mengenai ulasan makanan dengan bertumpukan kepada strategi retorik. Suatu kajian analisa genre telah dijalankan bagi mengenal pasti tujuan komunikatif, struktur retorik dan strategi retorik yang terdapat dalam ulasan dari laman web makanan Malaysia yang terkemuka, *FriedChilies*. Analisa struktur retorik bagi kajian ini adalah berdasarkan rangka kerja yang menggabungkan struktur retorik Bhatia (2004) bagi wacana pengiklanan serta struktur retorik Askehave & Nielsen (2005) bagi genre digital. Manakala analisa strategi retorik pula bertumpukan kepada visual sebagai “move” serta wacana berkaitan yang terdapat dalam ulasan makanan yang dikaji. Berbeza dengan analisa genre tradisional, penyelidikan ini memfokuskan penerokaan peranan visual serta wacana berkaitan yang merealisasikan "private intention". Hasil kajian menunjukkan bahawa walaupun genre ulasan berperanan untuk memaklumkan, unsur-unsur promosi telah diterapkan melalui penggunaan visual dan wacana yang berbeza. Hal ini menunjukkan bahawa visual dan wacana boleh mempengaruhi dan memanipulasi tujuan komunikasi genre dan seterusnya, mempengaruhi jenis genre serta penerangan generiknya.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

The Internet has provided a fast, exciting and convenient form of access to a wide range of information. Today, anyone who has the Internet is able to access information in matters of seconds via the use of a search engine like Google. From medical opinions to the best *nasi lemak* in town, one can practically obtain any desired information at the click of a button. Easy accessibility to information and advancement of technology can be said to impact almost every area of human life including how these information is conveyed and presented.

In terms of discourses and linguistics, these factors are seen to influence the development and type of genres. For instance, some famous national newspapers like *The Star* and *News Strait Times* are not only available in print but also cater to online subscription. In addition, genre types are also affected. It is not easy to assign materials a particular genre as the process is not as straightforward any more. Traditionally, an article may be seen to provide information and hence categorised under informative genre. At present, an article could explain everything one needs to know about Malaysia and simultaneously, persuade one to explore Malaysia. This gives rise to new genres known as mix/hybrid genre where they are a combination of more than just one type of genre. This allows certain parties especially those in the sales and promotional field to manipulate genre according to their advantage. Advertisers can now subtly insert promotional elements into a seemingly informative genre like an advertorial or a review.

This prompted the researcher to carry out the current study where it aims to provide an in-depth analysis of online food reviews via a genre analysis perspective. The researcher will be using a genre analysis approach in determining the

communicative purpose, rhetorical structures and rhetorical strategies of online food reviews. Unlike previous studies involving genre analysis, this study seeks to investigate the role of visuals and relevant accompanying discourses as rhetorical strategies. The focus of this study is to explore how the rhetorical strategies are subtly used to manipulate the communicative purpose of a review to achieve private intentions. In this chapter, the background of the study will be provided alongside the significance of the study. The aim of the study, research questions as well as the scope of the study will also be discussed in this chapter.

1.2 Background of the Study

When one speaks of the Malaysian experience, one cannot help but to associate it to the uniquely rich culture of the country. A significant component of the Malaysian culture is food. As much as 'food culture' is becoming a prominent topic around the globe, the situation is even more so in Malaysia. This is due to the fact that local cuisines serve to portray the different ethnicities which make up its population. Local cuisines which demonstrate the three main ethnic food taste; Malay, Chinese and Indian are also known as Malaysian Heritage Food or MHF (Omar, Ab. Karim, Abu bakar, Omar, 2014). In other words, food and culture in the Malaysian perspective are intrinsically linked. MHF serve to offer a 'taste' of the uniquely rich culture of the country besides reinforcing the country's image and identity. If such is the case, it will not be audacious to claim that MHF are capable of indirectly contributing to the tourism industry of Malaysia. Quan and Wang (2004) mentioned that local cuisines serve as a vital point in tourist experience, adding value to a vacation at a destination. As a matter of fact, a study was conducted by Jalis, Che and Markwell (2014) to understand different ways in which Malaysian cuisines are being used as part of the marketing

strategy to boost Malaysia's tourism sector. The study also cited the various manners implemented by the Malaysian government in using food as key point in establishing the country as a tourist destination. They also mentioned that "clearly, food has become a very important component in Malaysia's approach in destination marketing" (Jalis, Che and Markwell, 2014). This contributes to the reason the current research involves analysing online food reviews on Malaysia's local cuisine, *nasi lemak*.

The importance of food in the Malaysian culture is also further strengthened by the increase of food festivals in the country. The media is also widely seen to contribute in the promotion of such festivals in Malaysia. A pertinent example of this would be the Food Awards organised by *The Star* newspaper where readers are allowed to nominate some of the best local cuisines and proceed to vote for their favourites. Alongside the votes, scores given by four culinary experts were also taken into account in crowning the best (i.e. best *nasi lemak*, best *nasi kandar* etc). More recent events related to food culture would be the *Foodgasm Fest* and the *KL Food Truck Festival* held in 2015. A myriad of food festivals is also known to be lined up for the year 2016.

One of the major sources of information on food is online food reviews. This also solidifies its significance as data for the current research. Among popular websites or blog are *Eat Drink KL*, *Hungry Go Where* and *Friedchilies*. 'Foodies' often visit such sites for information on their favourite cuisines. Despite the existence of other traditional medium such as magazines, online food review seems to gain favour among users due to its availability and easy accessibility. One can browse through reviews on the go via mobile phones and tablets. Food reviews usually provide information on specialised cuisines and eateries. Information that is provided usually includes the taste and quality of the food, pricing and location. These reviews are usually written by "foodies" or gastronomical experts.

Due to the fact that online food reviews belong to newer genres, they are bound to have extra/ different features from traditional print media. An obvious feature would be a higher used of multimodal features in digital genre. The study of digital genre is sure to yield a different and interesting result compared to previous research involving traditional genre.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

To date, studies on online reviews remain limited. Current studies on online genres are mainly concentrated on Internet Buying such as Amazon (Skalicky, 2013) and Groupon (Lam, 2013) alongside other researches. Online promotional genres generally are more focused on advertorials and advertisements which are established and clearly identified promotional genres. While many researches on promotional genres focus on text, less attention is given to analysing visuals. However, in digital genre, visuals are abundant and cannot be ignored by merely looking at the text of the reviews. These visuals are deemed to carry certain roles with regards to the review in which it exists. There are also not many studies which conducted on private intentions on genre as most researches are more focused on textualisation and organisation. In order to identify and justify private intentions, one needs to understand these two concepts alongside context. By analysing the visuals and accompanying discourses in the webpage, the researcher attempts to describe how they carry private intentions and subtly influence readers' choice and decision. The current study will venture into these areas which may not have been sufficiently addressed.

Hence, the aim of the current study is to provide a comprehensive description on online food review focusing on rhetorical strategies. Apart from describing the move structure and communicative purpose, the study also serves to describe how visuals

complement the texts in which they co-exist. In addition, this study aims to describe subtle ways in which private intentions of promoting a product or a service. This is done by analysing the accompanying discourses which occur in the same webpage.

1.4 Research Questions

This study attempts to answer the following research questions:

1. What is the communicative purpose of Malaysian online food review?
2. What are the rhetorical moves of Malaysian online food review?
3. How do rhetorical strategies realise the rhetorical moves and communicative purpose?

1.5 Significance of the Study

This study will add on to the existing knowledge in the linguistic world via two ways. Firstly, as mentioned earlier, this study involves a relatively new type of media which can be categorised under digital genre. Digital genre contains extra/ different elements that do not exist in traditional media. Apart from this, this study will not only look at the communicative purpose of online food reviews but also delve into the 'private intentions' which are incorporated in the genre (Bhatia, 2004).

At the first glance, online food reviews may also seem to be purely informative. While this is true to a certain extent, online reviews also act as an effective internet marketing tool; influencing consumer's decision and thoughts. This is especially true if one scrutinises the amount of references on effective blog or review marketing. Advertisers may subtly incorporate promotional elements into reviews. These seemingly informative articles are more efficient in capturing readers' attention as readers will

want to read an informative piece compared to an advertisement. By doing so, the advertisers manipulate the informative structure of a review to achieve the private intention. In this case, the private intention is to promote a particular product to the readers.

Another reason it is an effective marketing tool is because of the easy accessibility of these materials to anyone around the world with Internet access. This also indirectly means that online food reviews are very much capable of reaching out to a wider audience and attract more people to experience Malaysia's wide array of unique cuisine. Therefore, the current study not only establishes the three main element of genre: communicative purpose, rhetorical structures and rhetorical strategies, but also attempts to revisit and redefine genre description of food reviews by identifying the possible private intentions apart from the projected communicative purpose.

Furthermore, this study will also attempt to identify the rhetorical strategies used to realise the moves in this genre. Unlike previous studies, the analysis of rhetorical strategies in this study extends beyond the analysis of typified linguistic features that occur within the genre. The rhetorical strategies analysed includes the pertinent role of visuals alongside relevant discourses. The analysis of rhetorical strategies does not merely involve analysing how they realise the communicative purpose of this online genre. The analysis also includes how both visuals and accompanying discourses help achieve the private intentions incorporated in the genre. Visuals are intrinsically link with texts of promotional genre and even more so in digital genres. In fact, visuals are prominent and abundant in digital genres. Similarly, the use of relevant accompanying discourses is also abundant in newer genres.

The significance of this study is beyond the pedagogical field. It highlights the need to contextualise analysis where in this case is the surrounding context: elements

which occurred alongside the review text. In addition, the study also brings to light the importance of other discourses like multimodal discourse i.e. visuals and other relevant discourses in analysing a genre. These discourses do not simply exist alongside the review text but plays a function in realising the communicative purpose or achieving the private intentions. Understanding the roles of these different discourses allows one to expand genre analysis beyond the analysis of grammar, structures and organisations of text.

1.6 Scope of the Study

The digital genre encompasses a wide range of online food reviews; it will be not possible to conduct a study involving such a large scope. Therefore, the researcher has narrowed the study to specifically include 20 most recent posts from a single popular food website. This is due to the fact that using a larger corpus from various websites would prove unfeasible with the financial and time constraint proposed for the current study. As such the mode of the study will be exploratory-based where each review will be analysed in-depth. Although findings are not meant to generalise and make representativeness as a goal, it is hoped that the results of this exploratory study can be extended in a larger and varied corpus to achieve representativeness.

The study will also be specifically focusing on Malaysian Heritage Food. In line with this, the researcher has decided to conduct this study in a Malaysian context. For that reason, explanations and justifications provided will be largely based on the Malaysian culture and societal norm.

1.7 Organisation of the Dissertation

This first chapter has covered the introduction to the study where the background of the study, its purpose, significance, research questions as well as the scope of the study are discussed. In the next chapter, previous related studies alongside the chosen theoretical framework for the study will be reviewed. These will contribute to identifying the research gaps and to developing a conceptualized framework for the research. Chapter Three includes the methodology used in the collection and analysis of the data. The conceptual framework will also be discussed in this chapter. Chapter Four reports and discusses the communicative purpose and rhetorical structures found in the review. On the other hand, Chapter Five marks the pinnacle of the study as the researcher presents how the rhetorical strategies realises certain move structures which help achieve private intentions. The final chapter, Chapter Six serves as a concluding chapter encompassing the conclusion and suggestions for future studies as discovered in the preceding chapter.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses and reviews relevant topics which are related to genre and genre analysis. There will be five parts in this chapter. The researcher will firstly discuss the field of genre analysis. This is followed by the discussion of promotional genre, online genre and reviews as a genre. In addition, there is a compilation and review of relevant researches. The information will provide a concrete understanding of the field of study as well as the previous studies which have been carried out. This in turn will help establish the research gap. A thorough review on models and notions which are related to the genre analysis theoretical framework will be included in this chapter in order to help develop the research design and to conceptualize the research framework.

2.2 Genre Analysis

Swales (1990) defined genre analysis as an analysis carried out to uncover patterns of structures in genres alongside the language used in forming these patterns. Meanwhile, Bhatia (1993, p.11) stated that genre is an “insightful and thick description of academic and professional texts, and has become a powerful and useful tool to explain the significant form-function correlations”. From these definitions, one can derive that the main function of genre analysis is the identification of communicative purpose(s) in a genre. As mentioned earlier, the crux of a genre is its communicative purpose(s) which shape the genre in terms of content, style and form. Genre analysis can be used to determine the role of communicative purpose(s) in influencing the structure of a genre via certain moves. The recognition of these recurring patterns in texts with similar communicative purpose(s) enables the differentiation and classification of genre.

The approaches in genre analysis have evolved since its establishment. Early pioneering studies in this field were inclined towards the academic and research domain where data mainly consisted of journal articles and research papers. Among the first of these studies is by Swales who conducted a genre analysis on the introductions found in journal articles. He examined 48 articles from the natural and social sciences field and proposed a 4-move structure in 1981. Later in 1990, Swales improvised his earlier model and proposed the renowned CARS (Creating A Research Space) model. The CARS model includes three steps with comprehensive sub-moves to analyse introductions in research article more efficiently. This model was again revised by Swales in 2004. Studies are not only limited to introductions. Numerous studies have also been done on other sections of the research article such as abstract (Bhatia, 1993), methodology (Lim, 2006), discussion (Hopkins & Dudley-Evans, 1988; Swales, 1990) and even on the overall structure of an article (Ngowu, 1997).

Today, genre analysis is not solely confined to the academic and research world. It includes various professional domains with its most recent addition being the domain of new media. This will be discussed further in the upcoming sections. Alongside the expansion of domains and the development of the term 'genre', genre analysis also witnessed the extension of perspectives in analysing genre. As mentioned earlier, a genre appears to portray more than just its textual component. If this is the case, researchers are now able to study other components beyond text. In other words, they are capable of looking at a particular genre from a different angle and not just the textual component in isolation. Therefore, the current study attempts to extend the analysis of data beyond text and include visuals and relevant discourses.

Realising this, Bhatia (2004) proposed the notion of multi-dimensional analytical perspective when doing genre analysis. This notion puts forth four different

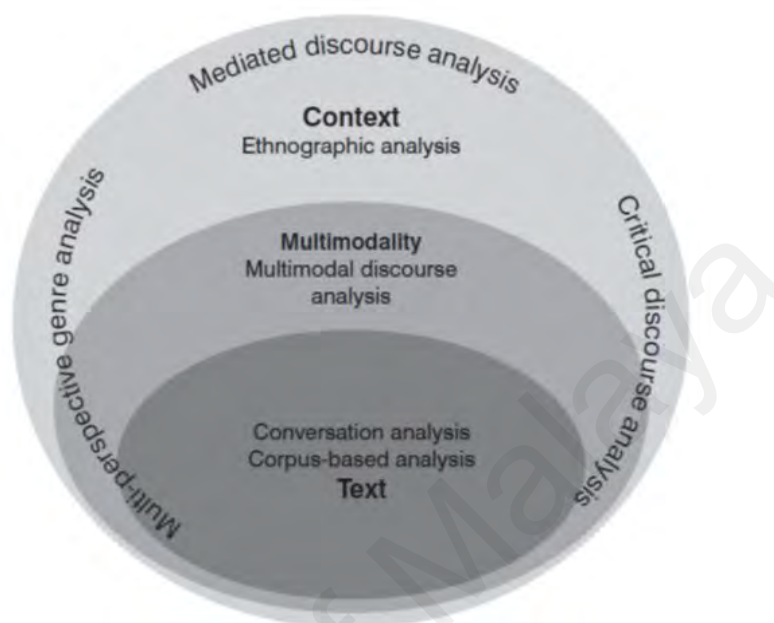
perspectives in analysing genre, namely the textual, ethnographic, socio-cognitive and the socio-critical perspective when looking at genres. The ethnographic perspective focuses mainly on the external factors that influence genre construction including the history and development of genre as well as the history and goal of professional community. Meanwhile, the socio-cognitive perspective entails the analysis and understanding of appropriation of generic resources which is abundant in mixed genre. This perspective concentrates on the use and exploitation of rhetorical strategies in achieving communicative purposes and 'private' intentions. On the other hand, the socio-critical perspective is inclined towards the sociolinguistic influence where it involves the analysis and awareness of social practices, culture, ideology and power. In the case of the present research, the study involves the textual component as well as a small part of socio-cognitive perspective.

In 2008, Bhatia, Flowerdew and Jones strengthened this notion by proposing the notion of multi-perspective genre analysis where it is deemed as an approach to discourse analysis. Their proposed diagram featuring various approaches to discourse analysis is as seen in Figure 2.1.

While there are approaches in discourse analysis that concentrate solely on a single perspective, genre analysis is seen as multi-perspective and can involve all three elements of text, multimodality and context. As stated previously, genre-based studies in the present age are not limited to mere text but can integrate elements of multimodality and context. The integration of other multimodality and context alongside the text may lead to a more grounded and holistic perspective in approaching discourses. Genre-based investigation is also bound to yield results that are more solid should all three elements be taken into account. In the case of the current study, the researcher extends the parameter of the study beyond textualisation to include

multimodality. Therefore, apart from move structures and discourses, visuals will also be part of the analysis.

Figure 2.1: Approaches to Discourse Analysis



2.2.1 Communicative Purpose

The communicative purpose is one of the three main elements of a genre aside from rhetorical moves and rhetorical strategies. It gives rise to the form and structure of a genre. In fact, a genre is created to cater and fulfil a particular communicative purpose. Swales (1990) and Bhatia (1993) placed emphasis on identifying the communicative purpose as it functions largely as a genre determinant. The communicative purpose is often realised through a set of moves known as the rhetorical moves (Bhatia, 1993).

Two different articles which share the same communicative purpose can be considered to belong to the same genre. Bhatia (1993) illustrated this by contrasting a sales promotional letter and a job application letter. A sales promotional letter is composed in a specific manner to promote a product/ service to reader. Similarly, a job

application letter is cleverly structured to promote a potential employee. Both letters are constructed using a persuasive manner in order to convince readers. Despite slight differences in the description of rhetorical moves, they generally function to persuade and urge the reader to take action. Therefore, it can be concluded that both letters falls under the promotional genre since they share the same communicative purpose.

2.2.2 Rhetorical Moves

Rhetorical moves are also known as rhetorical structures or move structures. These terms are used interchangeably in the discourse of genre analysis. Basically, rhetorical moves consist of a set of moves which serves to meet the communicative purpose of a genre. Swales (2004: 228) defined a move as “a discursal or rhetorical unit that performs a coherent communicative function in written or spoken discourse.”

A move may include a sentence or a paragraph where it carries out a specific function in realising the communicative purpose of a genre. Early studies involving genre analysis often focus upon the analysis of moves (Swales, 1990; Kathpalia, 1992; Bhatia, 1993). When Swales (1990) proposed the Create a Research Space Model (CARS), he also identified the notion of steps within moves. These steps are alternatives used by the writer in achieving the function of a move. Steps are also recognised as sub-moves. In the current study, the term ‘sub-move’ will be used.

2.2.3 Rhetorical Strategies

In Swales three-level genre model (1990), rhetorical strategies form the third level of the model. They consist of methods used to realise the rhetorical moves and communicative purpose. These methods include choices and constraints imposed on the content and style of a genre. In previous genre analysis studies, rhetorical strategies are usually limited to the typified linguistic features of a text. However, rhetorical strategies

can also include non-lexical forms such as visuals and sounds. The relationship between rhetorical strategies and move structures is not always a distinctive observation. This usually occurs when these rhetorical strategies are subtly and cleverly utilised. The current study focuses on visuals and accompanying discourses as rhetorical strategies. The analysis of rhetorical strategies in this study is not limited to the realisation of moves and communicative purpose. The researcher also aims to explore how rhetorical strategies subtly help achieve private intentions intended for the genre.

2.3 Genre

2.3.1 Definition of Genre

To understand the notion of genre analysis, it is important to understand the concept of genre first. The task of defining genre remains as multifaceted as it has been and perhaps even more so with the advancement of technology as globalisation gains its foothold in our world today. The term 'genre' is commonly used in various context. Film reviewers categorise certain types of movies as a genre while music enthusiasts label certain musical arrangement as belonging to a particular genre like 'classic' or 'jazz'.

Generally, a genre is a socially abstract way of using a language where the conventionalised form can be seen recurring in a group of similar text. According to Miller (1984), genre is "typified rhetorical actions" that are produced in recurring circumstances and becomes embedded in a community's behaviour. As for Hastings (2002, p. 174) genre is "a type or category form which literary works can be grouped according to form, technique or purpose" while Holmes (1997, p.322) defines genre "as

a class of texts characterized by a specific communicative function that tends to produce distinctive structural patterns”.

Among the many definitions provided, perhaps one of most highly-quoted definitions is by John Swales. He provided a comprehensive description of genre in his writing:

1. A genre consists of a class of communicative events.
2. The rationale for the genre is a set of communicative purposes which is shared by expert members.
3. This rationale shapes the schematic structure of the discourse besides influencing and placing constraint on the choice, style and form of a genre.
4. Instances of genre displays similar patterns in terms of structure, style, content and intended audience.
5. The exemplar is seen as prototypical by the parent discourse community if all high probability expectations are realised.

(Swales, 1990:58)

From his above definition, Swales mention that texts in a genre share a set of communicative purposes. These communicative purposes imposed certain constraints on the feature of the texts, the discourse structure and the lexico-grammatical component of the text. The communicative purposes also functions as the rationale of the genre and give rise to a particular structure of the text alongside a myriad of conventionalised verbal and visual rhetorical strategies. One can conclude from Swales’ definition that the communicative purpose is, in fact, the most important element of a genre. It is the communicative purpose(s) that governs a genre, sets it apart from the rest of the other genres; it is the very constituent that makes a genre.

Subsequently, Swales' concept of communicative purpose(s) in genre is also used as a basis for Bhatia's (1993) definition where he employs the following notions:

1. Genre is a recognisable communicative event which comprises of a set of communicative purpose(s) that is readily identified and comprehensible by expert members of the community in which it regularly occurs.
2. Genre holds particular constraints in their content, style and form, making them a highly-structured and conventionalised communicative event.
3. Expert members often manipulate these constraints to achieve private intentions within the framework of socially recognisable purpose(s).

(Bhatia, 1993: 13)

Bhatia extended Swales' definition by establishing that expert members of a particular community have more knowledge over the use and exploitation of genres. Therefore, despite the highly-structured and conventionalised form of a genre, these members possess the advantage of manipulating generic resources to achieve their 'private' intentions within the construct of "socially recognisable purposes". Expert members are merely capable of expressing the communicative purposes of a particular genre but are also able to subtly include 'private' and organisational intention.

Bhatia (2004) also views genre as a reflection of disciplinary and organisational culture where they demonstrate social actions that are embedded within professional and institutional constitutions. This is to say that professional and disciplinary genres "possess integrity of their own which comprises a combination of textual, discursive and contextual factors" (Bhatia, 2004:22-23). In extending Swales' definition, Bhatia also extended genre beyond text. There is more to genre than just its textual aspect. The constraints that exist in genre is not confined by text alone but also other contextual and discursive factors. Bhatia's notion serves as the basis of this research as the researcher

attempts to extend the analysis beyond the text by looking at the roles of visuals and relevant discourses in online food reviews.

2.3.2 Promotional Genre

The expansion of area in genre analysis was initiated by Bhatia when he proposed that genre analysis should include professional domains. Among the earliest venture into the professional domain was done focusing on the business world and its setting. The major constituent of the business domain is undoubtedly, the activity of buying and selling of a product or a service. Therefore, the main genre type for this domain is the promotional genre. Promotional genres usually consist of descriptions and evaluation of a product or service. This is due to the fact that the promotion of a product and service serves as the communicative purpose of this genre. Bhatia (2004) mentioned that there are various levels of generalisation for members of promotional genre. The colony of promotional genre may consist of straight-line advertisements to the more subtle annual reports and reviews. Promotional element is often a manifestation of private intention that is mixed with the communicative purpose of a particular genre (Bhatia, 2004).

Some of the most prominent studies in promotional genre were done by Bhatia whereby he proposed various move structures including those for sales promotional letter (Bhatia, 1993) and a job application letter. His studies serve as basis to many other future researches up to the present moment. The same holds true for Kathpalia (1993) where her study which put forth a nine move structure for advertisements is also as widely referred to.

Among studies on promotional genres which adapted the aforementioned frameworks is by Nurulain Abdullah (2014). Utilising Kathpalia's nine move structure as a framework, she conducted a study of analysing 48 car advertisements via a genre

perspective. Finding shows that eight out of Kathpalia's nine moves were prominent in these advertisements. She also extended her study by analysing the layout of the advertisements where she found that the layouts are linked to the realisation of certain moves hence, playing a role in promoting sales.

A similar study is by Teo (2008) who studied 30 skin product advertisements in a local English magazine. Besides investigating the representative move structures of the advertisements, Teo also looked at the roles of visual in her sample data. Likewise, her study shows that Kathpalia's nine move structure proved useful in her analysis where six moves were considered significant. As for visuals, Teo discovered that they are very much related to the advertised product's unique sales feature.

Although these two studies involved the analysis of layouts and visuals, the study was not upon these components. Layouts and visuals are seen as supporting elements in realising the move structures and communicative purpose of the respective genres. Contrary to these studies, the current study focuses upon visuals and relevant discourses as rhetorical strategies. The researcher examines their roles as moves and not as mere supporting elements in the genre. This is also due to the fact that the online food reviews contain a higher visual-to-text ratio. In addition, the analysis of visuals and discourses in the current study also encompasses their functions in achieving private intentions.

In a much recent study, Ng (2015) conducted a study on milk pamphlets where she also employed Kathpalia's (1992) move structures to analyse her data. She studied the move structures alongside the occurrence of interpersonal metadiscourse in her data. Findings show six significant moves and that interpersonal metadiscourse is at play in engaging audiences and realising different moves. Ng also concluded that besides informing, the milk pamphlets also serve to persuade buyers to purchase the product. Promotional elements are definitely found in her data sample.

Another study is by Lee (2013) where she looked at 12 study abroad programme brochures. Lee employed Bhatia's (2004) nine-move structure to describe the writer's overall message organisation in a text in identifying the move structure of her samples. She found that seven out of the nine moves are prominent. Results also prompted the incorporation of an extra move into her study. Moreover, Lee's study also encompasses the analysis of intertextuality, interdiscursivity and the socio-cognitive aspects of the brochures. Using Bhatia's (2004) multidimensional framework, she discovered that although these brochures were composed to appear informative, there are promotional elements which function to persuade students to enrol.

Hajibah (2008) also conducted a similar study related to university brochures. She studied brochures from 11 public universities in Malaysia. In her study, Hajibah focuses upon the branding strategies employed by these institutions by conducting a genre analysis. The findings of the study reported that there are 10 move-structures that occur in the study which realises the communicative purposes of the brochures. The main function (which is also the main communicative purpose) of these brochures is to inform the public of the programmes and service offered by the university. However, Hajibah also discovered that promotional elements exist even more strongly than the informative elements. The communicative purpose of these brochures appears to be more promotional than informative.

Studies by Hajibah and Lee demonstrate that promotional elements can be subtly integrated into a genre. Hence, a genre may appear informative but is strongly promotional. The main communicative purpose of brochures is to inform. However, the structure and organisation of these brochures are cleverly manipulated to mask the private intention behind the main communicative purpose. This makes the genre both

informative and promotional. This type of genre is considered a mixed or hybridised genre which is becoming increasingly common.

The notion of hybrid genre was the main focus of Kong's (2006) study. He analysed 83 property transaction reports in attempt to identify whether the data belong to the genre of news report, advertisement or an entirely novel genre. Findings indicated that property transaction reports contain the configuration of a news report. At the same time, promotional elements are also subtly contained in these reports. His study concluded that the communicative purpose of is as equally informative as it is promotional, thus, forming a hybridised genre.

Another study involving hybridised genre was carried out by Zhou (2012) on advertorials in *Forbes*, *Fortune*, *Newsweek* and *Business Week*. The researcher utilised Bhatia's (1993) analytical framework to study the generic structure as well as the paralinguistic features of advertorials. The findings of the study reported that the communicative function of advertorials is to inform as well as to persuade. In addition, the features reflected in advertorials are a combination of three genres, namely, advertisements, news stories and editorials.

2.3.3 Online Genre

The Internet has changed human life in various different ways. Tedious tasks, be it professional or the normal day-to-day basics can be done with much more ease and efficiency. Emails are being written instead of letters. Newspapers are rarely picked up from the stall on the way to work. Online news can be accessed on mobile phones now. Instead of poring over hundreds of books in the library, all one need to do is to 'google' up the question and one will obtain an answer in a matter of seconds. With the Internet, everything in today's world is just a click away. This has also indirectly impacted the world of genre. Traditionally, genres are made up of research articles, advertisements

and advertorials on print. With the rise of Internet usage, a new type of genre has also emerged: the new media genre.

Undoubtedly, the online genre contains different features as compared to traditional genres. Online genre breaks away from the traditional linear reading method of print media with the existence of hypertexts. Unlike print genres, it contains an incorporation of various other information and diverse media (sounds and visuals). This indicates that a higher multimodality is also witness in online genre. The adaptation of print genre to online genre involves disintegrating the different parts in print genre, rearranging and combining these parts together again (Kwasnik and Crowston, 2005). Kwasnik and Crowston (2005) mentioned that the reorganisation of elements in online genre may appear to be somewhat unstructured too. This new genre is also thought to be more flexible, expressive and allows better communication. These unique features possessed by online genre have led many researchers to believe that there will be stark differences in its function and usage now (Caballero, 2008). A similar observation can also be made regarding online food reviews. An analysis focusing on the textual component is rendered inadequate as there are elements which play significant roles ultimately forming the communicative purpose of online food genre. These elements only exist in digital genre and cannot be found in print online reviews.

As a result, studies via the genre perspective are being conducted where researchers focused on various aspects and issues of the novel genre. One of such studies was conducted by Askehave and Nielsen (2005) where they researched upon digital genre, specifically the homepage of corporate websites. Their study was focused upon the medium in which the genre exist namely, the *World Wide Web*. They proposed that a web-mediated genre consists of two modes: the navigating mode and the reading mode. The moves are made distinctive in reading mode by sequencing and segregation of “information by different sections, changes in frames, empty space, shifts in colours,

shifts in font size/type, etc” (Askehave & Nielsen, 2005: 131). They found that there were nine prominent moves which realises the communicative purposes in the homepages. As for the navigational mode, communicative purposes are realised through hyperlinks. Unlike this study, the current study will only be focusing on the reading mode in determining the move structures of online food review.

Crowston and William (2000) were also among the first to study the transformation that takes place in web genre. They carried out a survey on random web pages in 1996 where they documented their samples to possible, relevant genres. The outcome of the study reported three types of webpage genre: genres that are replica of the print copies (reproduced genre), genres that portray different features which extends beyond their authentic purpose(s) due to technology like online newspaper (adapted genre) and genres that are exclusive to the new medium (novel genre).

Other research on online genres includes a study by Herring, Kouper, & Paolillo et al (2005) on weblogs. They analysed a total of 203 blog posts where they attempted to establish weblogs as genre by identifying the purpose of the blog alongside the common structural characteristics found in these blog. Their analysis indicated that blog posts share similar features to homepages. Evidences also point to the fact that blogs are often hybridised. Blogs can be a combination of personal journals and filters of newspaper editorials. They can also be public and professional or vice versa.

On the other hand, Ihlström and Jonas (2002) conducted a study involving online newspaper genre centring on users perspective. They looked at nine Swedish local online newspapers and identified genre elements contained in these samples namely, navigational element, landmarks, news streams, search archives and advertisements. Users’ views on these elements are then obtained via the interview process. Findings show that despite the similarities online newspaper share with its print counterpart, they cannot be classified under the same genre. Online newspaper stands as

a different genre and remain a genre on its own. Hence, in relation to the current study, online food reviews are bound to fall under a different category of genre from print reviews.

A closely related study to the current research is by Cheong (2013) where she studied tourism homepages and online advertorials using a multi-dimensional genre analysis. She employed Marco's (2002) framework for corporate homepages and a combination of both Kathpalia's (1992) and Bhatia's (1993, 2004) framework to analyse her data. Results show that online advertorials do have obligatory rhetorical structures that are prominent. Meanwhile, multimodal features are viewed to be highly-functional in contributing to the role of online advertorials which are "informative with promotional intent" (Cheong, 2013, p.318).

Cheng and Suen (2014) carried out a similar study by looking at homepages of five-star hotels in Hong Kong. Using Bhatia's multi-dimensional and multi-perspective framework, they conducted a critical genre analysis. In addition to that, they also employed Kress and van Leeuwen's (1996, 2006) visual grammar framework to analyse the visuals which occurred in these homepages. Their findings reported that the homepages are high in multimodal features and that knowledge of language feature and visuals are crucial in producing an efficient website. The area of this study is similar to the present study. However, the current research concentrates on the roles of visuals in realising the communicative purpose, move structure as well as the private intentions.

While Cheng and Suen aim to provide a rough 'guide line' for better web writing, the researcher choose to provide an insight on how visuals and discourses are utilised in achieving private intentions. Therefore, the researcher will be analysing visuals as move as this will sufficiently describe their role in realising communicative purpose and private intentions in the reviews.

2.3.4 Reviews as a Genre

Reviews are specifically catered to a group of people: consumers who are searching for more information about a favourite or new product/ service. Reviews generally serve as a source of information to a group of consumers in a particular field. Besides that, reviews are also seen as word-of-mouth (WOM), a term which is defined as an “informal, non-commercial, oral, person-to-person communication about a brand, a product or a service between two or more consumers” (Arndt, 1967). Prior studies have indicated that WOM is more trustable and convincing compared to print ads or TV advertisement according to consumers’ perspective (Cheung & Thadani, 2012). Here, it can be assumed that reviews share a main communicative purpose thus far that is to inform consumers of a product/service details. Reviews also tend to have a particular style, structure and content which is acceptable by members of the discourse community in which they exist in.

At present, WOM has also evolved to include electronic WOM (eWOM) like blogs, social media and chatrooms. As its name would already suggest, the electronic WOM exists in the digital context where its main medium is the Internet. Hence, among other terms used to address eWOM are online reviews and online recommendations. Extensive studies have been done in this area especially via the lens of marketing and information systems. The focuses of these studies are usually converged towards the impact and the effectiveness of word-of-mouth. Intrinsically linked to these studies are researches done via a genre outlook where researchers explore the organisational structures of these reviews. This indirectly contributes to better production of reviews to boost revenues of product or serviced reviewed.

In 2012, Hou studied movie structures of restaurant reviews. Hou studied restaurant reviews from a corpus of five leading U.S. newspapers in 2010. She

discovered that the organisational pattern of restaurant reviews occurs in the following chronological order: “experience of choice, entering, dining, paying, and consideration of another visit” (Hou, 2012, p.95). Finding also shows that restaurant reviews are good sources to discover infamous and unfamiliar cuisines. Furthermore, these reviews also help consumers in decision-making and more often than not, influence the process greatly.

Meanwhile, De Jong and Burgers (2013) carried out a genre- perspective comparative study on online film reviews. The researchers analysed two sets of data, one written by consumers and another by professional film critics. After scrutinising the organisational structures in both reviews, they found that reviews written by consumers are more personal while those written by professionals are description and not evaluation of the movie. In this study, they also claimed that “online reviews are word-of-mouth (WOM)” which plays a significant role in marketing (De Jong and Burgers, 2013, p.76).

Further to this, Pollach (2006) conducted a genre analysis on online product reviews where she looked at 385 reviews to study the generic conventions of these posts. The researcher focuses on the audience appeal, content, and word style in her sample data. Findings show that these reviews are done properly where explanations are provided for all three typical remarks: positive, negative and neutral. The reviews also often include evidences that validate the reviewers’ expertise i.e. how long they have had a specific product and the purpose for usage. The study also concluded that emotions are expressed strongly in these reviews.

Another study regarding eWOM is a research on online book blurbs by Önder (2013). In this study, Önder researched 95 online fiction blurbs where the researcher investigated the generic structure and promotional elements contained in the samples.

By using blurbs from both Amazon UK and Okuoku Turkey, the researcher also attempts to provide a cross-cultural explanation to the genre analysis that is carried out. Results reported that cross-cultural differences are not highly-marked in this study and that rhetorical strategies are employed in to persuade consumers to purchase the books. Önder also noted that though online book blurbs appear to be descriptive and informative, it contains promotional strategies to lure readers to read the books and ultimately, purchase the book.

Almost all the studies reviewed confirmed the role of review as eWOM which means it can also function as an effective marketing tool. Therefore, the likelihood of the occurrence of promotional elements in online food reviews is bound to be higher. It can also be hypothesised that the online food review is not purely informative and may even be strongly promotional. Besides attempting to confirm this, the present research also explores how these promotional elements are integrated into the genre.

2.4 Research Gap

The review of past literatures demonstrates the fact that studies involving genre analysis is abundant. However, these studies focused mainly on establishing the rhetorical moves and communicative purpose of a particular genre. Researches which take into account rhetorical strategies are often limited to typified linguistic features. Even if rhetorical strategies such as multimodal features and interdiscursivity are involved, the analysis remains superficial due to various constraints faced by researchers. For that reason, the researcher aims to provide a more comprehensive discussion on rhetorical strategies by focusing on visuals and relevant discourses.

The researcher also intends to explore how these rhetorical strategies contribute in achieving the private intention of the genre. Hence, this study extends beyond establishing the communicative purpose and rhetorical moves of online food reviews.

The current study also involves digital genre which is an increasingly common genre with the advancement of technology. Despite this fact, digital genre still has many unexplored area especially in terms of online-specific features. It is hoped that this study will add to existing knowledge concerning digital genre. In addition to this, online food reviews are considered as hybridised genre. Thus, the analysis of this genre is not straightforward as compared to previous studies. The present study will also then contribute to the understanding of mixed or hybridised genre.

2.5 Frameworks and Related Notions

In order to carry out the intended research, there is a need to conceptualize a research framework as it involves a complex and mixed genre such as online reviews. There are numerous frameworks which can be used to analyse online reviews. Unlike an advertisement or a sales letter where one would use a framework for promotional genre, the decision of the most suitable framework for online reviews requires slightly more effort. This is due to the fact that online reviews are informative as well as promotional which somehow entitle them to be classified under mixed genre. One must also take into account from the studies thus far that online genre can be different from print genre and is usually the case. For the current study, the genre approach will be adopted where analysing the move structures in the data is involved. Therefore, the renowned Swales three-level genre model (1990) will serve as the underlying overall framework for this study. Further to this, the analysis of rhetorical structures will be based on two frameworks by Bhatia (2004) and Askehave & Nielsen (2005) which also stem from Swales' model. Both parties, Bhatia as well as Askehave & Nielsen employed Swales' model in their studies in which they came up with their current frameworks. These three frameworks will be discussed thoroughly below:

2.5.1 Swales Three-Level Genre Analysis Model

Swales' three-level genre analysis model is perhaps the most popular framework under the ESP genre approach. This model is widely utilised by researchers since its conception by Swales when he first introduced genre analysis in his study in 1990. This model demonstrates the relationship between three elements which constitute a genre namely, the communicative purpose(s), the rhetorical structures and the rhetorical strategies. It highlights how dependent these three elements in forming a specific genre. The illustration below is a conceptualisation of Swales' framework:

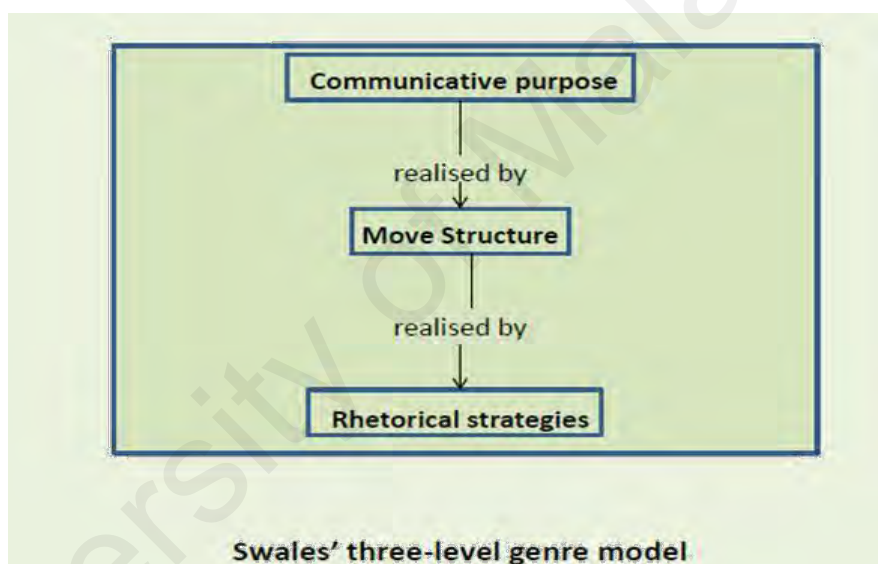


Figure 2.2: Swales' three-level genre model

As stated earlier in the definition, a communicative purpose is the rationale that shapes the schematic structure of a particular genre. This rationale decides what should be included in the content, what style should be used and how it should be structured. It is shared by expert members of the community in which a particular genre exists. This vital part of genre is realised by the move structures within a genre. The organisational pattern of a text is a major reflection of its communicative purpose. This is largely linked to how we use language to express a communicative event. We use language systematically to do so; we move from one point to another while drawing upon the

internal, typical structured used by our discourse community (Askehave & Nielsen, 2005). In this way, a text is structured in a particular way to achieve its communicative purpose(s) displaying the generic conventions that occur in a genre.

In turn, these conventional structures are realised by rhetorical strategies. Rhetorical strategies involve choices and constraints on the content and style of a genre. Strategies can include lexical and non-lexical forms like visuals and sounds. The relationship between rhetorical strategies and move structures cannot always be mapped onto each other on a one-to-one basis. One might not be always able to pinpoint directly the usage of a particular visual to a certain move. However, if one, for instance, sees a large, high multimodal picture at the beginning of the text, one can associate the visual with the move of “attracting attention”. This is because the picture carries out that precise function of capturing the readers’ attention to explore the text further. A lexical example would be, if one reads a sentence which reads: *a velvety smooth body lotion, infused with alluring rosewater scent, keeps the skin soft, supple and deliciously moisturised*, one can guess that the genre one would be dealing with is of a promotional genre with its usage of adjectives and description. It will unlikely be from an academic discipline i.e. from a text book etc.

It is important to note that as one look for common patterns and regularities in a genre, rhetoric variations are allowed to take place and often does. The move structures of a particular genre are not set and stoned where the first move in one advertisement can occur as the last in another. The same can be said for rhetorical strategies. Authors can choose from a common repertoire with regard to both aspects and not necessarily have a fixed set of obligatory moves or strategies. Authors may have a “more or less personalised version of a specific genre” (Askehave & Nielsen, 2005, p.123). In fact, this is especially the case in the appropriation of generic resources where expert members can manipulate these features to include their personal intentions.

2.5.2 Bhatia's Move Structures for Advertising Discourse

In the earlier literature on promotional genre, it was stated that Bhatia's earliest framework for promotional genre is on sales promotional letter in 1993. He improvised his earlier model and proposed a new framework which can be employed in a promotional context such as advertising. His framework includes seven proposed move structures present in advertising discourses. The researcher will be combining Bhatia's (2004) framework with Askehave & Nielsen's (2005) framework as the analytical framework for this study. The reason for including this framework into the analytical framework is the fact that there may be promotional elements contained in online reviews as reported by previous studies.

Bhatia's (2004:102) framework comprises of the following seven moves:

1. Establishing Credentials

This move functions to build consumers' trust and confident in the product/service provider. This can be done via four strategies:

- Individual needs – Product and service are design specifically to meet the taste and needs of consumer
- Long established services – Company has been around for a while and can be considered as experts.
- Gratitude for past support – Highlights company's excellent track record by having numerous client the past
- Celebrity endorsement – A famous person approves and is a user of the service/ product.

2. Introducing the offer

This move is the most important part of the promotional effort.

- Offering product/services – Identify and provide clients with information that can satisfy their needs/ wants.
- Detailing the offer – Providing essential details of the product/ service (price, constituents etc)
- Indicating value of the offer – Providing the benefits and highlighting positive elements of the product/ service.

3. Offering incentives

This move is to prompt clients to purchase the product/ service now. This is realised by

- Special offers/ discounts – First time customer discount etc.

4. Enclosing brochures

This move is where company provides instruction on how to purchase product/ service by giving:

- Details of offer
- Request/ order forms

5. Soliciting response

This move is often realised by the provision of product/ service provider's contact details.

6. Using pressure tactics

Similar to move 3, this move is to 'pressure' the clients into purchasing the product/ service now. However, this move is often linked to limited time offer given by companies.

7. Ending politely

This move is where the company makes a pleasant concluding remark to maintain rapport and relationship for business profit.

Bhatia also stated that not all moves are obligatory and that moves do not adhere to a fixed sequence in the text. They may not necessarily be the first move all throughout the texts of a genre and may occur freely in a text.

2.5.3 Askehave and Nielsen's Move Structure for Online Homepage

Askehave and Nielsen's research on corporate homepages also proves to be one of the popular studies on digital genre. As mentioned earlier, their study was on corporate homepages where they focussed upon how the web medium influences the organisational patterns of online genres. The researcher will only be adapting the move-structures of Askehave and Nielsen's reading mode. The reason for utilising their framework is the fact that the current study involves online genres. However, unlike Askehave and Nielsen, the researcher attempts to offer an introduction in establishing generic conventions for online food reviews.

Askehave and Nielsen's (2005) reading mode framework consists of nine moves. They are listed as follows (Askehave & Nielsen, 2005: 131 & 132):

1. Attracting attention

This move is meant to attract the attention of the reader when entering the homepage.

2. Greeting

This move accentuates the door metaphor of the homepage; the purpose is to create a feeling of welcoming someone at your doorstep.

3. Identifying sender

This move serves to identify the web-owner. The identification is quite important from the point of view of both web user and web-owner; it enables the web user to orientate him/herself and keep track of his/her whereabouts on the

net, and it plays an important role as part of the web-owner's image creating strategy. This move is often realised by a logo.

4. Indicating content structure

This move, often referred to as the main menu, is one of the most fundamental characteristics of the homepage. It provides the web user with a clear overview of the content of the web site.

5. Detailing (selected) content

This move provides more detailed information about the topics listed in the main menu in the form of small news summaries. Apart from detailing information, the move also realises the news presenting and image creating function of the homepage as news of various kinds seem to be the preferred content of this move (be it international/national news or news of the self-promotional kind (financial results, product news, latest events in the company or community, etc.)).

6. Establishing credentials

This move is meant to establish a trustworthy image of the web-owner.

7. Establishing contact

This move enables the reader to contact the sender.

8. Establishing a (discourse) community

This move enables loyal or frequent web users to establish communities within the web site (often realised by a login facility).

9. Promoting an external organisation

This move promotes another company, product, etc. It usually takes the form of a banner advertisement.

Similar to Bhatia's framework, the move structures present in this framework is also not confined to a particular sequence. These moves can occur in a random sequence and is not a set of obligatory moves. Some moves may be optional depending on the communicative purpose and strategy used by the researcher. The researcher will also be adopting moves which are relevant to the sample data only as some moves are specifically applicable to homepages only.

2.5.4 Related Notions

Besides the three main concepts presented above, there are other related notions which are involve in the present study. This subsection provides a discussion of these concepts.

2.5.4.1 Private Intentions

Private intentions are underlying communicative functions realised within the context of a known communicative purpose. These communicative functions are usually individual objectives which are subtly incorporated into a genre. They are often expressed by expert members of the discourse community through the manipulation of rhetorical strategies such as lexico-grammatical features and discoursal strategies. (Bhatia, 2004). Expert members are able to do so because they possessed generic competence. This process is known as appropriation of generic resources and often gives rise to mixed or hybridised genre.

2.5.4.2 Mixed Genre

Mixed genre, also known as hybrid genre occurs with the advancement of technology and rise of new media. Instead of remaining domain-specific, genre evolves according to these changes by becoming multi-disciplinary. Hybrid genres are created

by mixing “socially accepted communicative purposes conventionally served by two different genres” (Bhatia, 2004:87). This is done by expert members of the discourse communities who, as mentioned earlier, possessed generic competence. Mixed genre contains the feature, organisation and communicative purpose of more than one genre. In the case of the current study, online food review is assumed to be the combination of both promotional and informative genres.

2.5.4.3 Visuals as Multimodal Feature

Visuals are considered to be an important notion in this study as they are part of multimodal features. As cited earlier, Bhatia, Flowerdew and Jones (2008) proposed the concept of multi-perspective genre analysis where studies should extend beyond the textual component to include multimodality and context (Refer Figure 2.1). Hence, the current study employs both the analysis of textual component and visuals as part of a multimodal feature. Visuals are vital in the analysis of the present study as online food reviews contain a large amount of visuals. They cannot be ignored as they are bound to serve a certain purpose in the reviews. The role of visuals will be thoroughly analysed in this study. They will be analysed as a move and not as mere supporting elements which exist in the review.

2.5.4.4 AIDA model

The AIDA model is a famous advertising model created by E. St. Elmo Lewis in the late 18th century. He is dubbed as the pioneer of American advertising and sales (White, 1980). AIDA consists of four steps namely Attention (A), Interest (I), Desire (D) and Action (A). Lewis claimed that customers are bound to be more persuaded if these four steps are implemented. The following is a description of each step in the model:-

Attention (A)

The first step involves capturing the customers' attention. Customers must be attracted to purchase a particular product or service. This can be done using multimodal features such as attractive visuals.

Interest (I)

After grabbing customers' attention, a salesperson must now secure customers' interest by providing relevant information. Information regarding the product or services must be presented in a simple yet convincing manner. It is important to pique the customers' interest.

Desire (D)

Once the customer is interested, the next step is to appeal to customers' desire and build on it. This is usually done by involving emotions and convincing customers that they need the product or service to be satisfied.

Action (A)

The final step is to prompt customers to take action by purchasing the product or service. This step is only effective if the previous three steps were able to convince the customer.

This model is used in the analysis of relevant discourses in the current study. If the AIDA model is found in any of the accompanying discourse, then online food reviews can be categorised under promotional genre. This is because the realisation of AIDA model marks the advertising discourse which is clearly promotional.

2.7 Conclusion

In this chapter, the researcher has discussed the notion of genre, promotional genre, online genre as well as reviews as a genre. Relevant studies which have been done in each genre are also provided. The researcher also included the theoretical framework which will be employed in the current study. In the next chapter, a thorough explanation will be provided on the analytical framework of this research.

University of Malaya

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the methodology and framework which are used in collecting and analysing the data. Besides that, this chapter also elaborates on how data collection and data analysis are carried out. This chapter will also discuss the data selection criteria as well as the conceptual framework used in analysis. The chapter ends with a description of the pilot study was conducted by the researcher.

3.2 Research Framework and Design

3.2.1 Theoretical Framework

The present study will be conducted based on the theoretical framework discussed in Chapter Two namely, Swales' three-level genre model (1990). This model serves as the overall general framework of the study where the researcher attempts to establish the communicative purpose, move structures and rhetorical strategies of online food reviews. In this theory, Swales (1990) states that rhetorical strategies realises the move structures which in turn, realises the communicative purpose. As mentioned in the previous chapters, the focus of this study is on how the rhetorical strategies realise not only the communicative purpose but also the private intentions of the genre.

To fulfil the aim and answer the research questions of the present study, there is a need to utilise other frameworks within this theoretical framework. This is to ensure that the analysis for all three levels is proper since the genre involved is deemed as a complex genre. Frameworks and notions which are adapted within Swales' framework consist of those discussed in Chapter Two.

3.2.2 Conceptual Framework

Since online food review is considered as a complex genre, it is inadequate to use a single framework to analyse the rhetorical structures of the reviews. The framework used to determine the moves must take into account the informative, online and possibly promotional features of online food reviews. Therefore, a framework combining Bhatia's (2004) move structure for advertising discourse and Askehave & Nielsen's (2005) moves for corporate homepages was conceptualised. This framework is conceptualised based on the findings of the pilot study conducted. A thorough discussion of the pilot study is provided in the upcoming section of this chapter. The conceptual framework was used to identify and justify the moves structures found in the review.

The use of Bhatia's framework is considered apt in this study because online reviews also serves as word of mouth (WOM) – potential promotional tools, capable of influencing customers' decision. This indicates that there are bound to be promotional or persuasive elements in this genre although reviews are generally considered as informative. On the other hand, the digital nature of online review requires the inclusion of Askehave & Nielsen's framework in this study. However, the researcher will only be adapting the reading mode move structures as the study will only be focusing upon the analysis of the webpage in the traditional, linear reading manner. The move-structure of the reading mode also suffices in answering all three research questions set forth earlier. Diagram 3.1 in the next page depicts the incorporation of both frameworks for the study.

A Conceptualised Move-Structure Framework based on Bhatia (2004) and Askehave & Nielsen (2005)

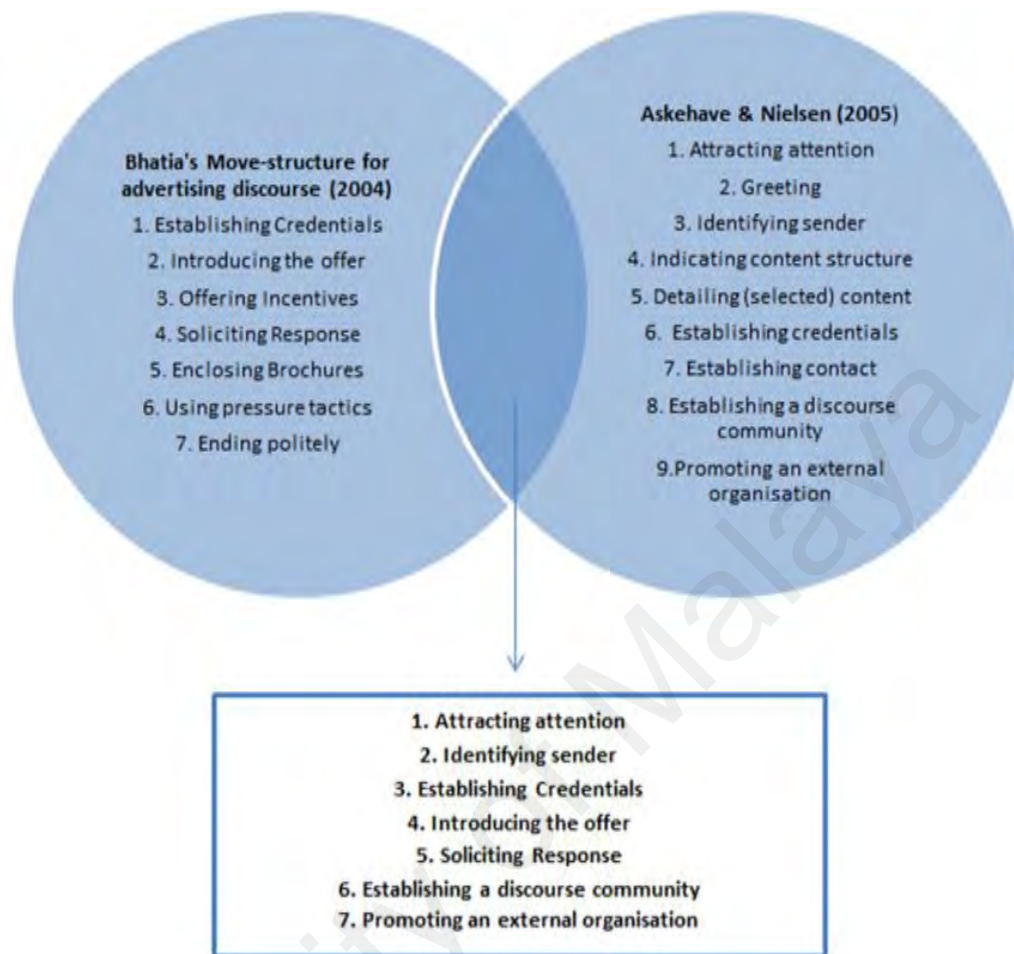


Figure 3.1: Conceptual Framework

An explanation on each move is also provided below.

Move 1: Attracting attention

Move 2: Identifying sender

Move 3: Establishing credentials

Move 4: Introducing the offer

Move 5: Soliciting response

Move 6: Establishing a discourse community

Move 7: Promoting an external organisation

Move 1: Attracting Attention

This move includes main features that serve to attract readers to browse through the content upon reaching the webpage. This could consist of picture, headline, flash technique etc.

Move 2: Identifying Sender

This move is associated with the web-owner and functions as a branding method. It creates a particular image for a product company/ service provider. It is usually made apparent in the form of a logo.

Move 3: Establishing Credentials

It is important for the readers to feel that the review is from a reliable source, hence, this move is to establish the readers' trust for the company/ service provider. In other words, readers will feel much more confident about the service/ product offered. This can be presented in the form of long established services, endorsements as well as achievements and awards which in turn increases the company's credibility.

Move 4: Introducing the Offer

This move is to introduce the product/ service to the readers and include three sub-moves by Bhatia (2004):

Sub-move 1: Offering product/service – The product/ service is being introduced.

Sub-move 2: Detailing the offer – Further information on product/ service is provided.

Sub-move 3: Indicating the value of the offer – Pricing or benefits of the product/ service. This is usually achieved in two ways: First, is where the main

features of the product/ service which benefit the consumer are spelled out in a straightforward manner. Secondly, this sub-move is achieved by including positive evaluation either by a satisfied user or simply a claim stated by the company/ service provider's

Move 5: Soliciting Response

This move is to encourage readers to contact the relevant party that offer the product or service. It is often realised by the provision of address or any other form of communication i.e. email, Facebook etc.

Move 6: Establishing a Discourse Community

This move enables readers who frequent the website as well as loyal users to form a community within the page. The login facility is an indication of this move.

Move 7: Promoting an External Organisation

This move serves to promote other services, product or company. According to, Askehave and Nielsen (2005), banner advertisements are often used to realise this move.

The description of these moves is based on Bhatia's as well as Askehave and Nielsen's interpretation in their original framework. This is because their interpretation is considered relevant and can be utilised in the context of online food review.

3.2.3 Stages of Data Collection and Analysis.

Before discussing the data collection and data analysis methods, a brief explanation on the research design is provided in this section. The research design of the current study can be illustrated via the following diagram:

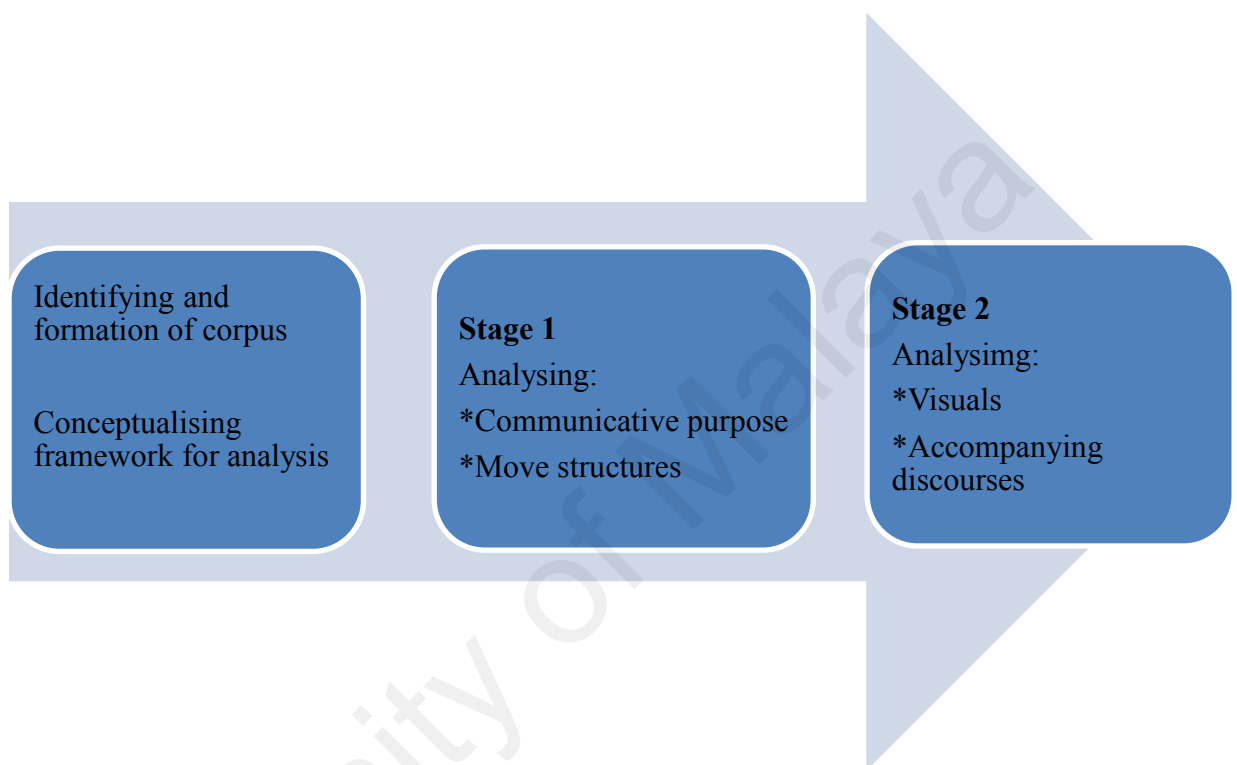


Figure 3.2 Research Design

Firstly, the corpus of data was identified and collected accordingly. The researcher then conducts a pilot study where the findings helped conceptualise a framework for the analysis of rhetorical moves. Once the corpus of online review and conceptual framework was ready, stage one of data analysis ensued. At this stage, the main communicative purposes alongside the move structures present in the data were identified. Findings from this stage will answer the first and second research questions of the study. Upon completion of stage one analysis, stage two commenced and yielded answer to the third research question of the study.

3.3 Data Collection

3.3.1 The Corpus

For the purpose of this study, a total of 16 online food reviews were collected from a popular Malaysian food website, *FriedChilies.com*. The corpus consists of reviews from this website because *FriedChilies* is a brand name which comprises of various media platforms including print publication and a broadcasting channel. Dubbed as Malaysia's first home grown food channel, *FriedChilies* has also received many accolades. Among them was being nominated for the prestigious Le Cordon Bleu Media Awards for Best Food Website in the World 2010. Besides that, they have also won the Food HEROES title by the Time Out KL. Their achievements lend credibility to the materials they produced. Their website, *FriedChilies.com* serves as an Internet platform which functions as a bi-weekly online magazine. The website is free and is easily accessible to Malaysians and international countries alike. The popularity of this website is also witness on its official Facebook page with 27908 'likes' indicating its number of followers. With the large number of followers and wide range of audience, the reviews can be rendered valid as data for the study

3.3.2 Selection Criteria

The corpus of 16 review were selected from the latest posts on the website with a text of at least 400 words as there is a need for sufficient amount of text for analysis to be carried out. These posts were published in the interval of year 2011 to year 2015. This is due to the fact that the number of reviews published bi-weekly is inconsistent and varies. The publication of reviews could go up to three per week. Certain weeks may also not record any publication of reviews. In selecting these posts, the researcher turns towards the Malaysian staple diet which consists mainly of rice. This is supported by a study conducted by Osman Bakar et al (2010) where they found that Malaysians

prefers having rice at least twice a day irrespective of age. In attempt to narrow down the scope further, the researcher chose to specifically focus on a single Malaysian cuisine, the *Nasi Lemak*. This is in line with the fact that this popular cuisine is one of the main dishes under Malaysian Heritage Food. Consequently, this dish is not only popular among Malaysians but also among tourists.

According to Omar, Ab. Karim, Abu bakar, Omar, (2014, p.613), the *Nasi Lemak* is the main heritage dish of Malay. This dish contains coconut milk boiled rice served with chilies (*sambal*), fried anchovies (*ikan bilis goreng*), hard-boiled egg, roasted peanuts and slices of cucumber, traditionally wrapped in a fresh, cleaned banana leaf (Yoshino, 2010; Hutton, Wendy & Tettoni, 2005). It can be widely found, be it in the small stalls by the street or in a five-star hotel in the city. The status of this dish contributes greatly to the decision of the researcher in selecting posts reviewing it.

Hence, the reviews selected must contain at least 400 words on Malaysia's popular cuisine, *nasi lemak*.

3.4 Data Analysis

3.4.1 Analytical framework

This study is a qualitative study. Hence, it is exploratory in nature where the researcher attempts to provide an in-depth analysis of the study instead of making a generalisation. As stated earlier, the analytical framework used to identify the move structures of the online food reviews is the conceptual framework incorporating Bhatia's (2004) move structure for advertising discourse and Askehave & Nielsen's (2005) moves for corporate homepages. On the other hand, the rhetorical strategies were analysed according to relevant notions presented in Chapter Two. Visuals were analysed as moves while relevant discourses were analysed based on promotional models like

AIDA. The communicative purpose is derived by the analysis of rhetorical moves and strategies as proposed in Swales' three-level genre model.

3.4.2 Analysis and Discussion

After obtaining a corpus of 16 posts, the researcher manually analysed the rhetorical structures of the text using the combination of both Bhatia's and Askehave & Nielsen's model. The first stage of analysis involves scrutinising the posts for recurring move structures. The moves found were then categorised according to its frequency of recurrence. Teh's (1999 as in Yong, 2001) model will serve as the basis for this categorisation.

Strength Level Categorisation by Teh (1999) as adopted in Yong (2001)

| $\frac{\text{Frequency of Move Occurrence} = \text{X no. of samples it appears} \times 100}{\text{N no. of samples}}$ | Level of frequency of Move occurrence |
|---|---------------------------------------|
| 75% ≤ f ≤ 100% | Most obligatory |
| 50% ≤ f ≤ 75% | Obligatory |
| 25% ≤ f ≤ 50% | Optional |
| 0% ≤ f ≤ 25% | Not obligatory |

In order to determine the Frequency of Move Occurrence, the researcher utilises the following steps:

- i. The X number of samples in which the move occurs is divided by the number of sample in this study, N. In this case, N = 16 as there are 16 reviews.
- ii. The results in 'i' is then multiply by 100 to obtain the percentage of the frequency.

The findings were then tabulated. A brief elaboration alongside three examples for each move was also provided. This is done to account for the significance of the moves found in food reviews.

The researcher then proceeded to analysing the rhetorical strategies present in the reviews. This second stage of analysis is perhaps the crux of this study as the researcher employs a relatively different aspect in analysing the rhetorical strategies. Instead of utilising the traditional method of focusing mainly on the lexical fields and syntactic structure present in the study, the researcher focuses on the visual and discourses that exist alongside the text of the review. In this study, the researcher attempts to explain how visuals and accompanying discourses complement the main text and realise the move structures present. The researcher endeavours to establish the intrinsic connection between the visuals, discourses and the text; that these three are not separate, stand-alone elements. Rather, each element plays a certain function in not only fulfilling but also enhancing the communicative purpose of food reviews.

Firstly, visuals were identified and categorised according to their positions in the review. The researcher then conducted the analysis by looking at their specific roles and the function they realise. Results were then presented in tables and discussed. Then, the researcher proceeded to identifying the relevant discourses found in the review. These were then discussed alongside three examples for each discourse which was identified.

Lastly, the findings from the first and second stage of analysis were then combined to confirm the communicative purpose of online food reviews. The researcher also discusses the private intention which the rhetorical strategies were trying to achieve. The discussion of findings on communicative purpose will be presented first followed by move structures and rhetorical strategies. Whenever possible, the findings of the study are discussed using tables for better understanding and presentation.

3.5 Pilot Study

A pilot study was conducted prior to this study to test the suitability of the data corpus. Findings from the pilot study were also used as a foundation in conceptualising the framework to analyse the rhetorical structures of the data. The corpus for the pilot study consists of eight posts which were selected according to the selection criteria discussed earlier. These posts were then analysed using two frameworks to determine the move structures present. Firstly, the researcher used Bhatia's (2004) move structure to identify the moves structures present in the reviews. Findings for this first round of the pilot study analysis are as follows:

Table 3.1: Occurrence of Move Based on Bhatia's (2004) Move Structure

| No | Reviews | Establishing Credentials | Introducing the Offer | Offering Incentives | Soliciting Response | Enclosing Brochures | Using Pressure Tactics | Ending Politely |
|----|---|--------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|------------------------|-----------------|
| 1. | Nasi Lemak Marvellous | / | / | | / | | | |
| 2. | Nasi Lemak Atan | / | / | | / | | | |
| 3. | Nasi Lemak Pak Ayob | / | / | | / | | | |
| 4. | Nasi Lemak V3 Corner | / | / | | / | | | |
| 5. | RA Nasi Lemak | / | / | | / | | | |
| 6. | Nasi Lemak Kak Sanah | / | / | | / | | | |
| 7. | Nasi Lemak Kak Hani | / | / | | / | | | |
| 8. | Nasi Lemak Ceria | / | / | | / | | | |
| | Total Number of Reviews it Occurred in | 8 | 8 | 0 | 8 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | Percentage (100%) | 100 | 100 | 0 | 100 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

Since the four moves (*Offering Incentives*, *Enclosing Brochures*, *Using Pressure Tactics* and *Ending Politely*) that did not occur in any of the eight reviews, they were eliminated from the move structure model of the current study.

Then, Askehave and Nielsen's (2005) moves were used to analyse the reviews.

Similarly, moves that did not occur in any of the reviews were also eliminated. The following table reports the findings of the second round of pilot study analysis:

Table 3.2: Occurrence of Move Based on Askehave & Nielsen's (2005) Move Structure

| No | Reviews | Attracting Attention | Greeting | Identifying sender | Indicating Content Structure | Detailing (selected) content | Establishing Credentials | Establishing Contact | Establishing a Discourse community | Promoting an External Organisation |
|----|--|----------------------|----------|--------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1. | Nasi Lemak Marvellous | / | | / | | | / | / | / | / |
| 2. | Nasi Lemak Atan | / | | / | | | / | / | / | / |
| 3. | Nasi Lemak Pak Ayob | / | | / | | | / | / | / | / |
| 4. | Nasi Lemak V3 Corner | / | | / | | | / | / | / | / |
| 5. | RA Nasi Lemak | / | | / | | | / | / | / | / |
| 6. | Nasi Lemak Kak Sanah | / | | / | | | / | / | / | / |
| 7. | Nasi Lemak Kak Hani | / | | / | | | / | / | / | / |
| 8. | Nasi Lemak Ceria | / | | / | | | / | / | / | / |
| | Total Number of Reviews it Occurred in | 8 | 0 | 8 | 0 | 0 | 8 | 8 | 8 | 8 |
| | Percentage (100%) | 100 | 0 | 100 | 0 | 0 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |

There were three moves that did not occur namely, *Greeting*, *Indicating Content Structure* and *Detailing Selected Content*. These moves are perhaps more prominent and appropriate in homepages. As indicated in Chapter Two, Askehave and Nielsen's data were corporate homepages which offer an overview of a whole website. The remaining moves which recorded occurrence were then combined with the results from the first round to form the conceptual framework of the study.

There are two moves: *Establishing Credentials* and *Establishing Contacts* in Askehave and Nielsen's framework which overlapped with Bhatia's move of *Establishing Credentials* and *Soliciting Response*. Since these moves are the same, the researcher chose to use Bhatia's (2004) terms for the conceptual framework employed in the study. Visuals and relevant discourses were also identified to ensure that the data is valid and reliable.

3.6 Conclusion

In this chapter, the data collection and analysis procedure are discussed. The discussion involves the specific methods and frameworks which were employed in this study. A brief description on the pilot study conducted is also presented. From the discussion of the methodology, research framework and development in this study, it can be concluded that there is a need to conceptualize a research and analytical framework, especially in studying mixed genres or genres with private intentions. The next chapters will cover the report of the findings and discussion following the data analysis process.

CHAPTER 4: COMMUNICATIVE PURPOSE AND RHETORICAL MOVES OF ONLINE FOOD REVIEWS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings obtained from the synthesis of the information found in the 16 online food reviews. This chapter covers the analysis on rhetorical moves and communicative purpose. Findings from the analysis were tabulated and explained accordingly. For a clearer illustration of these findings, relevant examples from the 16 reviews were also provided. Full versions of these examples are made available in Appendix A. Besides highlighting the rhetorical moves and communicative purpose, this chapter also presents a brief discussion on linguistic features, multimodal features and interdiscursivity as rhetorical strategies. The findings will help to identify whether the reviews contain promotional moves and purposes apart from informative moves and purposes. This finding will also help identify whether the review is a type of mixed genre. Further analysis on the rhetorical strategies (use of visuals and relevant discourses) will be discussed in detail in the following chapter, especially in determining whether the genre is inclined towards a promotional or informative genre.

4.2 Genre Type and Communicative Purposes of Online Food Review

Online reviews function as electronic Word-Of-Mouth (eWOM) where consumers obtain relevant information on a particular product/ service. This will indirectly help consumers in deciding whether or not to purchase the product or service. The term 'review' is defined as follows:

- “a report about a product written by a customer on a commercial website to help people decide if they want to buy it” (Cambridge Business English Dictionary Online, n.d.)
- “a report that gives someone's opinion about the quality of a book, performance, product, etc.” (Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary, n.d.)

These are definitions of review according to the general dictionary. Arndt (1967), as mentioned in Chapter 2, provided the definition of review according to the advertising perspective. Arndt stated that reviews function as WOM advertisement.

They function as “informal, non-commercial, oral, person-to-person communication about a brand, a product or a service between two or more consumers” (Arndt, 1967, p.3). From the genre point of view, Bhatia (2004) categorised reviews alongside reports in the colonisation of academic, professional and other institutionalised genres.

Reviews, reports and academic introductions belong to a “somewhat more distant categories of discourse which are essentially and traditionally non-promotional in intent” (Bhatia, 2004: 91).

Based on the definitions and notions of reviews, it can be concluded that the genre type of reviews is of ‘reports’. Reports are typically information-giving. Hence, the communicative purpose of online reviews is to inform consumers of relevant details regarding the product or service. The online reviews are found to fulfil the function of supplying information regarding products which are being offered. In this case, the descriptions of *nasi lemak* and various side dishes were provided elaborately. The side dishes highlighted in the reviews are deemed as popular as the *nasi lemak*. This is apparent in the elaborate descriptions of the rice and sambal. These can be witnessed in the following lines:

“The rice has a smidgen of coconut flavour, light and fluffy” (Review 7)

“The rice is wonderfully light, cooked with the usual coconut milk, pandan and ginger” (Review 15)

“The *sambal* here is well rounded, not too sweet and not too spicy, as Goldilocks would say, the *sambal* is just right. It’s chunky with a deep crimson colour. Dried chillies, onions and garlic are blended and then cooked slowly for two and a half hours, allowing the aromatics to simmer and release their natural sweetness.” (Review 15)

In this situation, these descriptions appeal to the audience’s senses. The audience are exposed to the taste and texture of these specific dishes. The author even provided information on how these dishes are being prepared. The review also contains other information like the background of the place, location, prices and other products offered at the place.

From the description of reviews presented above, it is doubted that reviews fulfil the informative function. Therefore, reviews can be categorised under reports which serves to inform readers of a particular subject. Reports are considered to be informative genre. The findings of the rhetorical moves and rhetorical strategies confirmed the communicative purpose of online food reviews. Thus, also confirming the genre type and genre domain they belong to. In addition, this research also attempts to determine whether the genre description and the communicative purpose of these reviews are limited to the existing literature.

Bhatia (2004) stated that the main communicative purpose of the genre containing reviews, academic introduction and reports is still to inform despite having a mixed genre appearance sometimes and are becoming increasingly promotional. Hence, this study will also be used to confirm whether reviews contain other communicative purpose and whether they are promotionally inclined. This justifies the need to integrate Bhatia’s (2004) promotional rhetorical moves to scrutinise and confirm whether these reviews contain promotional communicative purposes (private intention). A strong

inclination towards the promotional may proposed a shift in the main communicative purpose of the genre of reviews.

4.3 Rhetorical Moves of Online Food Review

The rhetorical moves are analysed using the conceptual framework proposed in Chapter Three. The framework is an incorporation of both promotional moves by Bhatia (2004) and online genre rhetorical moves by Askehave and Nielsen (2005). Additional new moves are also taken into account in the analysis. The results obtained from the data analysis yielded the following rhetorical moves in online food reviews.

Move 1: Attracting Attention (AA)

Move 2: Author Identification (AI)

Move 3: Establishing Credentials (EC)

Sub-move 1: Period of Establishment (PE)

Sub-move 2: Highlighting Unique Traits (HUT)

Sub-move 3: Customer Endorsement (CE)

Sub-move 4: Expansion of Outlet (EO)

Move 4: Introducing Offer (IO)

Sub-move 1: Offering product (OP)

Sub-move 2: Detailing the offer (DO)

Sub-move 3: Indicating the value of the offer (IVO)

Move 5: Personal Recommendation for Action (PRA)

Move 6: Soliciting Response (SR)

Move 7: Establishing a Discourse Community (EDC)

Move 8: Promoting an External Organisation (PEO)

The identification of these moves demonstrates that they have the tendency to occur in a structured manner where they follow a particular sequence.

The subsequent moves always would adhere to the following sequence:

AA → AI → EC → IO → PRA → SR → EC → PEO

It also appears that all eight moves were present in all sixteen reviews according to the same sequence. Hence, all eight moves are considered to be “Most Obligatory”. This further strengthens the findings of the pilot study conducted during the early stage of the research as stated in Chapter Three. The results from the pilot study reported that all the seven moves of the conceptual framework occurred in the eight samples analysed. The eight samples are also data for the analysis of the current data. The observation that all these moves are considered as “Most Obligatory” also reflects the emphasis placed on the structure of these reviews. There is no deviation of structure in all of these reviews despite it being written by different authors.

These findings are contrary to Kwasnik and Crowston’s (2005) claim that the reorganisation of elements online appears to be somewhat unstructured. The seemingly rigid organisations that were clearly observed during the analysis could perhaps be related to the in-house of trend adopted by *FriedChilies.com*. The observations from the analysis seem to conclude that writers may be required to abide by certain trend and styles imposed by the publishing house. Although the reviews were written by a total of

six different authors, the organisation of the texts adhere consistently to the rules and regulations set by the companies they write for.

The occurrence for these moves is provided in the table below. Results presented another interesting find when all moves are actually categorised under ‘Most Obligatory’ ($75\% < x < 100\%$). This means that all eight moves belonged to were recorded to occur at least once in all sixteen reviews.

Table 4.1: Occurrence of Rhetorical Moves

| No | Reviews | Attracting Attention | Author Identification | Establishing credentials | Introducing offer | Personal recommendation for action | Soliciting response | Establishing discourse community | Promoting external organisation |
|-----|------------------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|-------------------|------------------------------------|---------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. | Nasi Lemak Marvellous | / | / | / | / | | / | / | / |
| 2. | Nasi Lemak Atan | / | / | / | / | / | / | / | / |
| 3. | Nasi Lemak Pak Ayob | / | / | / | / | / | / | / | / |
| 4. | Nasi Lemak V3 Corner | / | / | / | / | / | / | / | / |
| 5. | RA Nasi Lemak | / | / | / | / | / | / | / | / |
| 6. | Nasi Lemak Kak Sanah | / | / | / | / | / | / | / | / |
| 7. | Nasi Lemak Kak Hani | / | / | / | / | / | / | / | / |
| 8. | Nasi Lemak Ceria | / | / | / | / | / | / | / | / |
| 9. | Nasi Lemak Tanglin | / | / | / | / | | / | / | / |
| 10. | Nasi Lemak Famous | / | / | / | / | | / | / | / |
| 11. | Nasi Lemak Royale Kedah | / | / | / | / | / | / | / | / |
| 12. | Nasi Lemak Ali @ Lebu Pantai | / | / | / | / | / | / | / | / |
| 13. | Nasi Lemak Kukus Fauzey | / | / | / | / | / | / | / | / |
| 14. | Nasi Lemak Alor Corner | / | / | / | / | / | / | / | / |

| | | | | | | | | | |
|-----|---|-----|-----|-----|-----|------|-----|-----|-----|
| 15. | Nasi Lemak Kak Maimon | / | / | / | / | / | / | / | / |
| 16. | Nasi Lemak Bumbung | / | / | / | / | / | / | / | / |
| | Total Number of Reviews it Occurred in | 16 | 16 | 16 | 16 | 13 | 16 | 16 | 16 |
| | Percentage (100 %) | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 87.5 | 100 | 100 | 100 |

Table 4.1, continued

These findings conclude that these reviews realise Askehave and Nielsen's (2005) rhetorical moves for online genres which is to inform by providing the readers with necessary information to the readers. For example, the location alongside the description of the dishes is provided in the review. This can be further seen in the upcoming discussion and example of each move. However, Bhatia's (2004) promotional moves were also realised. As a result, these reviews contain both informative and promotional elements. This confirms the fact that these reviews are indeed categorised under mixed genre. However, there is a need to confirm whether the main communicative purpose of this genre is to inform since the promotional moves are realised as strongly as the informative moves. Hence, the communicative purpose alongside the description of genre type of the reviews also needs to be expanded or re-examined as the common understanding is that the reviews are supposed to be neutral and limited to being informative. The following are detailed analysis of each of the 8 moves and how they are realized. Each analysis of moves is provided with three examples.

Move 1: Attracting Attention (AA)

This move is originally proposed by Askehave and Nielsen (2005) in their framework for homepages. The data of the current study is also found to display this move. It functions to capture readers' attention to read further. Askehave and Nielsen

(2005) mentioned that this move is often realised by the use of a picture, headline, or flash techniques. This notion proposed by Askehave and Nielsen (2005) is used to describe and study Move 1 in the present research. The current study demonstrates the realisation of this move by the presence of headlines or title in the reviews. The choices of words for these headlines are straightforward and simple. The usual combination of words consists of the phrase “*Nasi Lemak*” and the specific name of the place.

The simple structure of the headlines capture the attention of the readers because it is succinct yet projects clearly the main idea of the article to the readers. Readers are able to immediately gauge the content of the review by simply reading these headlines. At the same time, the readers are prompted to read further because the concise headlines create the urge to know more about the ‘nasi lemak’ highlighted. The headlines were also standardised by having the words ‘Nasi Lemak’ as the first phrase. This is yet another method adopted to highlight the theme of the review which is *nasi lemak* and not the place. This gives the impression that the review mainly contains information on the common Malaysian cuisine sold at that place instead of outlet itself. It projects an informative outlook instead of promotional. Readers are more likely to be interested in the reviews if it contains useful information and unbiased.

In addition, the move is reinforced by multimodal features. One of the features is the selection of a different font choice for the titles. Furthermore, they also appear to be in bold and larger in size. These headlines are also presented in the colour red. The colour red not only attracts readers’ attention, it is also the colour associated with the brand *FriedChilies*. The webpage is mainly splashed in red. The purpose or intention of the headline is to capture their attention. The audiences will then be prompted to read further and discover what the text is about. Instances of these moves are as follow:

Table 4.2: Examples of Attracting Attention (AA)

| Examples: | Full version can be viewed at: |
|---|-----------------------------------|
| <p>Home > Where To Eat > Malay > Nasi Lemak Marvellous</p> <p>Nasi Lemak Marvellous</p>  | <p>Appendix A</p> <p>Review 1</p> |
| <p>Home > Where To Eat > Malay > Nasi Lemak Atan</p> <p>Nasi Lemak Atan</p>  | <p>Appendix A</p> <p>Review 2</p> |
| <p>Home > Where To Eat > Malay > Nasi Lemak Pak Ayob</p> <p>Nasi Lemak Pak Ayob</p>  | <p>Appendix A</p> <p>Review 3</p> |

This study is in line with Ng (2015) where she emphasises the significance of AA and headlines as a move where she quoted the famous advertising pioneer, Claude Hopkins:

“Don’t think that those millions will read your ads to find out if your product interests. They will decide by a glance—by your headline or your pictures.”

Hopkins (2009:14)

Besides headlines, the AA move is also realised by the presence of a main visual and the accompanying introductory text. This will be discussed separately in the rhetorical strategies section later.

Move 2: Author Identification (AI)

This move is adapted from the Askehave and Nielsen’s (2005) moves, ‘Identifying Sender’. It functions as a branding strategy particularly to construct a specific image for a company. It is often made apparent in the form of a logo. Apart


from a logo, the current study also reported the presence of a byline in all the reviews. A byline is a “line at the beginning of a newspaper or magazine article that gives the writer's name” (Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary, n.d.). The inclusion of the author’s name in a text lends credibility to the text. This is of importance especially in reviews. The function of a review demands strong credibility as it provides information and influences consumers’ decision. The byline also indicates human touch or the presence of a human person. This complies with the nature of a review whereby it involves “*person-to-person* communication about a brand or product” (Arndt, 1967, p.3). These can be seen in the following examples:



Figure 4.3: FriedChillies logo

[Logo which appears on all review]

Table 4.3: Examples of Author Identification (AI)

| Examples: Full version can be viewed at: | |
|---|-----------------------------------|
| <p>anywhere commercial that yield precious delicacies for the curious foodster. Join Edwan as he discovers a nasi lemak stall in the middle of the city.</p> <p><small>by Edwan S. Photography FriedChillies, Fri, July 13, 2012</small></p> | <p>Appendix A</p> <p>Review 3</p> |
|  <p>Join Farah as she embarks on a journey to get her NL craving fix, here in the heart of KL.</p> <p><small>by Farah Photography FriedChillies, Thu, August 30, 2012</small></p> | <p>Appendix A</p> <p>Review 4</p> |
| <p>to satisfy your nasi lemak craving. In my case, that stall is Nasi Lemak Kak Sanah. You have to take number here and at 7am, mine is already a whopping 33. Sigh...</p> <p><small>by Danielle Photography FriedChillies, Sat, November 03, 2012</small></p> | <p>Appendix A</p> <p>Review 5</p> |

The *FriedChilies* logo is found in every webpage of each review, situated on the left hand corner. The same phenomenon is observed for the byline. As can be seen from the examples above, the byline consists of the author's name, photographer's name and the date of the post. All these information plays a role in constructing the credibility of the review. By indicating the time, date and name of a specific writer, the review becomes more reliable and professional. The byline is also made apparent in the introductory text. In the example provided (Review 4 and 3), both the authors' name, 'Edwan' and 'Farah' were mentioned. The area of the specific eatery is also stated. These information shows that this review is real and not made up. It is not simply written as there is proof of a person alongside the location of the place being reviewed.

Move 3: Establishing Credentials (EC)

Move 3 is adapted from Bhatia (2004) rhetorical move which focuses on building consumers' confidence towards a certain product or service. Generally, consumer must be able to trust that the products or services offered are of quality and meet a certain standard whether at a personal or industrial level. When consumers are convinced that a particular product or service is trustworthy, they are prompted to purchase the product or service offered. This move is extremely crucial for reviews which rely heavily on personal judgment and opinion. The author of a review must be able to provide features of product and services that will render them trustworthy in the eyes of the consumers. This move can be realised using various different methods including mentions of reputable company and brand name, awards and achievements of the company alongside the history of the company.

Nurulain Abdullah (2014) mentioned that despite the various methods employed, the focus is to increase sales and instil brand loyalty among consumers. Likewise, Teo (2008) shares a similar point of view where this move is also prominent

in her study. On the other hand, Ng (2015) found that EC is an optional move in pamphlets and sample brochures of milk. Lee's (2013) study described this move as a clever way to persuade audiences to read the brochures further. The findings of the current research show that this move contains promotional and persuasive elements. The researcher proposes four new sub-moves in which EC is realised in the current study:

- Sub-move 1: Period of Establishment (PE)
- Sub-move 2: Highlighting Unique Traits (HUT)
- Sub-move 3: Customer Endorsement (CE)
- Sub-move 4: Expansion of Outlet (EO)

Sub-move 1: Period of Establishment (PE)

Sub-move 1 is projected when the author includes the number of years a particular product is established. The years of establishment of a business speaks volume about its credibility. Generally, if an outlet is able to withstand the test of time, the outlet must be good since it is able to sustain its customers. The fact that the crowd choose to patronise a stall lends it the element of credibility. The crowd represents the credibility that food served in the outlet is indeed good. Further illustrations of this sub-move can be found below:

Table 4.4: Examples of Period of Establishment (PE)

| Examples | Criteria | Can be viewed at: |
|---|--|-------------------------|
| Situated near the ‘top’ of Jalan Alor, this <i>nasi lemak</i> stall has been around for 32 years . In their current spot they’ve sold <i>nasi lemak</i> since 1998 . | Mention specifically the years of establishment and the year it started. | Appendix A Review 14 |
| <i>Nasi Lemak Tanglin</i> has been around for ages... Tanglin started way back around 1948 by Suryati Jawirunnah and her recipe is now passed to her son Zainal which will soon pass down to Zainal's daughter. Three generations of history here. | Mention the year it started and the years of establishment. | Appendix A Review 9 |
| As it turns out, this stall has been in operation since the 1970s . | Mention the year it started. | Appendix A Review 2 |

The examples above illustrate the years of establishment and the commencement year are provided. The numerical information gives a sense of reliability to the consumers. In turn, this will contribute to the image of the eatery that the food served in the eatery is of good quality constantly. Customers who are convinced of this fact will then be persuaded to patronise these eateries. Sales will inevitably increase for these eateries.

Sub-move 2: Highlighting Unique Traits (HUT)

The author realises the second sub-move by highlighting the unique traits of a particular place that offers the cuisine. At a glance, this sub-move may appear similar to ‘Indicating the value of the offer’ move which is Sub-move 3 of Move 4. It must be noted that Move 4 is highly focused on the offer/product, which in this study is the *nasi lemak* dish. However, the same cannot be said for the sub-move HUT. The unique traits that are highlighted in this sub-move are often not tied to the offer. Rather, it is related to factors like location and queues. These traits are often considered hassles in normal circumstances. However, despite these hassles, these businesses are still ongoing and doing well. In fact, customers actually go through these hassles of lining up/ searching the remote places just to purchase the product offered. This factor increases consumers’ confidence in the reputation of these businesses as it also reflects positively on the product and services being offered. The examples below will help to further illustrate this point:

Table 4.5: Examples of Highlighting Unique Traits (HUT)

| Examples | Criteria | Can be viewed at: |
|--|---|--------------------------|
| ... <i>Kak Maimon</i> ’s place is simply known as ‘ <i>Kedai Takde Nama</i> ’ (the nameless shop). Her shop is not easy to find, especially if you’re not familiar with the area... | The place is nameless and is difficult to find. | Appendix A Review 14 |
| As I mentioned earlier, this <i>gerai</i> is virtually known only the people who work in the area, and the location isn’t really people friendly either. | The place is less-known and less strategic. | Appendix A Review 9 |

| | | |
|--|--|--------------------------------|
| <p>You have to take number here and at 7am, mine is already a whopping 33. Sigh...</p> | <p>The place has long queues and customers have to wait.</p> | <p>Appendix A Review 2</p> |
|--|--|--------------------------------|

Table 4.5, continued

The examples above clearly highlight the ‘hassles’ customers faced in patronising these eateries. However, customers still willingly endure these inconveniences in order to purchase the products offered. This indicates the products being sold are worth the inconveniences. In other words, food sold here must be good enough to try despite the inconveniences. Customers will then be prompted to read further and find out more about the product. This is in line by the findings reported by Lee (2013).

Sub-move 3: Customer Endorsement (CE)

This sub-move is also one that is common in many genres apart from reviews. The CE sub-move consists of endorsement by customers who have sampled the product or service and are satisfied with the results. Their positive approval of a certain offer indirectly increases the acceptance of other customers towards the offer. Potential customers are more receptive towards the product/service when endorsements are given by customers who have tested the products. Their validation serves as an evidence of the quality of the offer. This sub-move can also function to provide additional credibility as it serves as an authentic perspective by a customer. It is their non-paid, honest opinions. The following depicts how this sub-move is realised:

Table 4.6: Examples of Customer Endorsement (CE)

| Examples | Criteria | Can be viewed at: |
|---|---|-------------------------|
| One of their most memorable moments was when they received an order of 2000 (!!!) packets of <i>nasi lemak</i> for some Korean and Japanese visitors. | Their customers include foreign visitors who might taste this Malaysian cuisine for the first time. | Appendix A Review 12 |
| The word is that it got the name ‘royale’ because the Sultan of Kedah used to send his workers (servants? Staff?) to buy it for him, as it is very nearby <i>Istana Anak Bukit</i> , the state palace. | Their customers include the Ruler of the state, the king himself. | Appendix A Review 11 |
| Their long tenure in <i>Bangsar</i> has garnered them regular customers from all over Malaysia, Singapore and even Indonesia. They have an Indonesian customer that makes a yearly pilgrimage to KL just to have a taste of their <i>nasi lemak</i> . | Their customers include regulars from neighbouring countries. | Appendix A Review 10 |

From the examples provided, various types of customers and level of endorsements can be seen. Customers can consist of both international and local. International customers represent a high level of endorsement. The *nasi lemak* dishes served to foreign visitors should represent the best of Malaysia. Similarly, a royal endorsement is also considered strong as the dish would have to be up to par and be fit

for a royal. The mention of ‘regular customers’ reflects the constant effort in maintaining the high food standards. These endorsements do not merely affirm potential customers of the credibility of the eateries. They are seen to further strengthen the positive image of these places; subtly persuading customers to purchase the products.

Sub-move 4: Expansion of Outlet

The EO sub-move is the final sub-move of the EC move. Like its counterparts, EO serves to create confidence among potential customers to entice them to try a certain offer. This sub-move is realised by mentioning other outlets run by the same owner. This indicates the expansion of business. Business expansion often takes place when the product or service is very well-received by the public hence prompting more set-ups to meet customers’ demand. The intention of including this point in the reviews is to build their assurance towards the product being offered. Examples of this sub-move can be found as follows:

Table 4.7: Examples of Expansion of Outlet (EO)

| Examples | Criteria | Can be viewed at: |
|--|--|--------------------------------|
| <p><i>Nasi Lemak Pak Ayob</i> started their business at the <i>Seksyen 6 pasar</i>, and as customers flocked beneath its small roof, they saw fit to expand their stalls to other locations. Now they have two other stalls at <i>Seksyen 20</i>; one inside a <i>mamak</i> shop, and the other here, beside the road in front of KPJ Selangor Medical Center.</p> | <p>The business started small and now has expanded to two more stalls.</p> | <p>Appendix A Review 3</p> |

| | | |
|---|---|------------------------|
| Due to the popularity of her stall and to meet growing demands, her husband, Abang Ramli has set up another <i>nasi lemak</i> stall on another location in Uptown. | They have expanded to one more stall in another location. | Appendix A Review 7 |
| His wife does most of the cooking while Pak Abu and his son manage the restaurant. They started with a small stall in 1997 and relocated to their current location in 2003. | The business expanded from a small stall to a restaurant. | Appendix A Review 1 |

Table 4.7, continued

In the examples provided, the expansion of outlets usually involves the addition of new outlets in a different location or the upgrade of a stall to a proper shop. The mention of these points indicates that business has grown and is stable. The growth and stability of the business is highly associated with the product being sold. It reflects the high standards and quality of the product. Customers must generally favour the product to continuously support the business. The product must also be good enough to sustain current customers and attract potential ones. These justifications then function to convince readers of the *nasi lemak* being sold and subsequently purchase them.

Move 4: Introducing the Offer (IO)

This move can be considered as the most important move in the study. The reviews in this study are centred on the specific Malaysian dish, *nasi lemak*. Without the product or service, then a review is rather pointless or might not be even considered a review. The IO move plays an important role in introducing the product or service to customers. It informs the readers about the offer. In this move, the readers are provided with the description and function of the product. This is done by providing elaborate

details on the product as well as highlighting special features of the product. Therefore, this move demonstrates a large usage of adjectives as it involves description of products. In this study, many adjectives are used to accommodate the reviewer's expression on the product.

IO is also seen as a move to convince readers to purchase a product. Sufficient product information is necessary to influence readers. The IO move usually holds the necessary details of the product. Equipped with proper information, the readers will then be truly convinced of the product. This will lead them to desire the experience of the product which will prompt them to buy the products. The ability to create the desire to purchase a product explains the abundance of positive connotations and tone used in this move. Positive remarks and stances project a positive image for the product. They are necessary in strengthening the influence the IO move has on potential customers. This phenomenon is typical in promotional genre. In fact, the IO move is adapted from Bhatia's (2004) rhetorical moves for promotional genres. Although the main communicative purpose of a review is to inform, findings from the current study seem to contain the aforementioned promotional features.

According to Bhatia (2004), this move consists of three other sub-moves namely which will be further explained in the subsequent paragraphs:

- Sub-move 1: Offering product (OP)
- Sub-move 2: Detailing the offer (DO)
- Sub-move 3: Indicating the value of the offer (IVO)

Sub-move 1: Offering Product (OP)

This sub-move introduces the product. In this study, sub-move OP appears at the start of the review in the form of a visual as well as after Move 1 to Move 3 is being

realised. OP often occurs in a sentence, a one-liner to introduce the product. This sentence marks a transition from the history and background of the eatery to the product itself. Henceforth, the review becomes more focused on the product and its features. A few instances which demonstrate this sub-move is presented below:

Table 4.8: Examples of Offering Product (OP)

| Examples | Criteria | Can be viewed at: |
|---|---|---------------------------------|
| <p>Yup folks, what makes Chef Fauzey's <i>nasi lemak</i> truly great is his version of <i>nasi lemak goreng</i> or FRIED NASI LEMAK (yes it's that good it deserves capital letters).</p> | <p>Product is introduced in uppercase. After this sentence, the product is further described.</p> | <p>Appendix A Review 13</p> |
| <p>They open the stall by 7am and people are already waiting. The <i>nasi lemak</i> is definitely the star.</p> | <p>Uses a single sentence to highlight the main product.</p> | <p>Appendix A Review 14</p> |
| <p>Anyway, there's "Uncle" and Sani, who makes drinks, the daughter that serves, and <i>Makcik Buluh</i> herself, "Aunty", who every morning busies herself, preparing breakfast for the office workers who almost exclusively make up the customers. And part of this breakfast spread is her <i>nasi lemak</i> (RM1.20).</p> | <p>Product is introduced in as belonging to a breakfast spread. It is highlighted to set apart from the rest.</p> | <p>Appendix A Review 4</p> |

From the examples provided, the products were introduced in a single sentence. Although the introduction of these products is straightforward, the products are described according to certain features. In the first example, the author highlighted the product in uppercase because it is ‘fried *nasi lemak*’ which sets it apart from the rest of its counterpart. The description of *nasi lemak* in the second example indicates that it is perhaps the best product out of the whole spread. While the third example does not indicate the *nasi lemak* as the best product, it is specifically mentioned and even includes the price. The author narrowed down the scope of the ‘breakfast spread’ and focused on the *nasi lemak*. Another observation that can be made is that all these products are presented in a positive light. In this sub-move, the product is said to be introduced ‘formally’ and ‘officially’ for the first time (though there may be mentions of the product before this sub-move occur). It is undoubted that the author attempts to present a good first impression of the product to the customers. This is reasonable as the chances of the audience reading further increases if the product is beneficial or good.

Sub-move 2: Detailing the offer (DO)

DO is where further details on the product is provided for the customers. At the same time, this sub-move is also where features of the product which are deemed relevant and necessary are highlighted. By highlighting specific features of the product, the interest of potential customers can be garnered. Since the current study is focused on *nasi lemak*, this sub-move almost always contains descriptions of the three main elements of a *nasi lemak* which are:

- Coconut rice
- *Sambal* – Chili relish made with other spices and ingredients like onions.
- *Lauk* – Accompanying side dishes that go well with *nasi lemak*.

Here are a few tabulated instances from the reviews where this sub-move is realised:

Table 4.9: Examples of detailing the offer (DO)

| Elements | Examples | Criteria | Can be viewed at: |
|---------------|---|--|------------------------|
| Rice | The rice is fragrant with a delicate fattiness to it. The rice crumbles easily... | Describes the smell and texture. | Appendix A Review 2 |
| | Score one: the rice, crumbly and white, had that wonderful creaminess, that quintessential ' <i>lemak</i> ', and was touched by the fragrance of the banana leaf and I must say a hint of <i>pandan</i> . | Describes the appearance, texture and smell. | Appendix A Review 3 |
| <i>Sambal</i> | The <i>sambal</i> is not overly sweet and has just enough heat. So, if you love chillies, this could be a bit mild for your liking. | Describes the taste and the level of spiciness. | Appendix A Review 5 |
| | First off, there's the basic <i>sambal</i> . Light in texture, it's not too heavy on the oil and not super thick. It's a solid, spicy and slightly sweet <i>sambal</i> mixed in with some anchovies. | Describes the texture and taste of the <i>sambal</i> | Appendix A Review 8 |

| | | | |
|-------------|---|--|-------------------------|
| <i>Lauk</i> | The Famous chicken is prepared and fried onsite. Skin is crispy and golden brown, well-seasoned with curry powder, lemongrass and fennel, marinated for a day and then dredged in corn flour before frying to help bind all the wonderful spices together. | Describing how fried chicken which is one of the popular <i>lauk</i> is being prepared | Appendix A Review 10 |
| | Next is the <i>Daging Bantai Jer</i> . Beef slices are boiled, then pounded and cooked with shallots, garlic and onions. I actually thought that it was <i>dendeng</i> but the beef slices are bigger and no lemongrass is added in the recipe. Soy sauce is used to sweeten and brown the meat. <i>Daging Bantai Jer's</i> gravy has a thick consistency quite similar to <i>rendang</i> . | Describe the preparation of a popular beef dish. | Appendix A Review 1 |

Table 4.9, continued

The descriptions provided in the reviews are generally vivid. The author creates the vividness by using descriptions which involve as many senses as possible. Even though the reviews are on food, the author did not limit the description to just the taste of the product. The explanation of the rice often includes describing its texture which is as important as the taste. A crumbly texture is generally preferred among Malaysian. On the other hand, the description of the *sambal* always involves the mention of its

spiciness level and the combination of different taste. The level of spiciness varies according to individual and could be a pulling or resisting factor to customers. As for the *lauk* descriptions, the author adopts a different approach. Instead of focusing on the taste and texture, the author provided a brief explanation on how the dish is being prepared. This enables the readers to visualise the process as well as the ingredients used. The readers will then be able to gauge the overall quality of the dish. It is also interesting to note that the lexical choice and structure used to describe these elements are not meant for mere reporting. They carry positive connotations and attempts to persuade clients to try out the product.

Sub-move 3: Indicating Value of the Offer (IVO)

This sub-move indicates the price. Besides that, IVO also explains the benefit of a particular product to customers. It is either done in a straightforward manner where the benefits are listed or positive evaluations by users are put forth. Effective claims by certain companies or brands can also be part of this sub-move. Positive evaluations by users (including the reviewer) appear to be the most prominent sub-move in this study. The specific pricing may not be available in all the reviews. However, the author provides justification as to whether the product is value for money. When the pricings are considered to be on the high side, analysis shows that the author uses the justification that the products are value for money to convince potential customers.

The findings also demonstrated that although the review is supposed to focus on *nasi lemak*, there are bound to be mentioned of other complementary dishes. This can include various options like tea, curry puffs and even another popular dish. The various options give the customers the impression that they are receiving a favourable offer. This is because they not only get to taste some delicious *nasi lemak* but also other dishes which are as good. In other words, the mention of other options functions as an

additional reason for customers to visit, further solidifying the argument meant to persuade the customer.

Table 4.10: Examples of Indicating Value of the Offer (IVO)

| Examples | Criteria | Can be viewed at: |
|---|---|--------------------------------|
| <p>On this particular visit, I went for a sampling of the <i>sambal kerang</i> (RM4.50), <i>sambal sotong</i> (RM4.50), <i>beef rendang</i> (RM5) and a generous piece of battered fried chicken (RM4.50)</p> | <p>Prices for different <i>lauk</i> are clearly stated.</p> | <p>Appendix A Review 2</p> |
| <p>There are two great things in this food court we'd like to highlight. The <i>nasi lemak</i> and the kopitiam tea.</p> <p>Oh... this tea is so smooooth, it just glides through the tastebuds, teasing it a little before easing its way down.</p> | <p>Besides the <i>nasi lemak</i>, tea is also another popular option.</p> | <p>Appendix A Review 9</p> |
| <p>I particularly like their curry puffs. The potato puffs are really addictive, especially when you're hungry, you just can't stop at one. The best thing about them is that they keep very well. You can <i>tapau</i> them for a mid-afternoon snack to go with your tea.</p> <p>They also have chocolate cake, mini doughnuts (Super delicious – dense and</p> | <p>Introducing other small bites besides <i>nasi lemak</i>.</p> | <p>Appendix A Review 6</p> |

| | | |
|---|--|--|
| sweet) and <i>Kuih Kodok</i> (Deep fried Banana Balls). | | |
|---|--|--|

Table 4.10, continued

The first example mentions the specific pricing of the dishes. This is one way this move is being realised. Another way of indicating value of in these reviews is the mentioned of other offers. These offers, be it a drink or a snack, are highlighted alongside the *nasi lemak*. They are deemed as popular as the main dish simply because they complement the main dish. The tea described enticingly in the second example can go very well with *nasi lemak*. The same is observed in the third example where these snacks can be enjoyed after having the *nasi lemak* breakfast. These alternatives combine with the main dish to create that ‘perfect’ meal. For instance, good hot tea and *nasi lemak* appears to be a complete breakfast set. Having curry puffs or chocolate cake after *nasi lemak* can be likened to having dessert after the main meal. This gives the impression of a ‘complete’ meal. By offering options, customers not only have more reason to visit, but also entitled to choose which product to purchase. They can either add on to the main dish or if they are not convinced by the main dish, they can opt for another offer. In this way, the reviewer is emphasising that customers will surely benefit from visiting the place.

Move 5: Personal Recommendation for Action (PRA)

This is a new move which the researcher identified based on the findings of this study. PRA is a blend of the ‘Endorsement’ move and the ‘Urging Action’.

Endorsement is an optional move in Ng’s (2015) study on milk formula pamphlets as research and statistic would work better in increasing customer’s faith. Similarly, Nurulain’s (2014) study on car advertisements recorded only 2.1% frequency for the Endorsement move. This is because customers would need to personally test drive a

vehicle instead of relying on testimonies as selection taste may differ. In the case of food reviews, the situation is slightly different as food is a much more universal element than cars.

Food is a large part of the Malaysian culture and is indeed a uniting factor among Malaysians. Hence, it is a norm to hear opinions from other Malaysians when it comes to food. Endorsement for food review comes from those who have tried certain cuisines before and approve of them. In the EC move, customers' endorsements were of major significance whereas this move focuses on the reviewer's personal endorsement. On the other hand, 'Urging Action' remains as important in this study as with past studies. This is due to the fact that it plays a significant role in prompting customers to take immediate action after reading the piece which for this study refers to food reviews.

In this move, the reviewer does not merely affirm that the product is good or merely urges consumers to try out the *nasi lemak*. In the PRA move, the reviewer acknowledges that the food is good and at the same time prompts customers to try it out. This move also appears to be more personal and contains tips and advices that go along with it. The personal elements enable the reviewer to establish rapport with the audience and make the review more trustworthy. More importantly, the intention of convincing the audience to purchase the offer is also being downplayed by the personal elements. In other words, this move masks the intention of coaxing the customers further by subtly including personal tips and advices. This move often occurs towards the end of the review, in one or two sentences which sometimes also serves as a concluding remark. The following are some examples of the PRA move:

Table 4.11: Examples of Personal Recommendation for Action (PRA)

| Examples | Criteria | Can be viewed at: |
|--|--|--------------------------------|
| <p>But the <i>nasi lemak</i> here at Atan's is, for me at least, a quintessential example of this national dish: simple, cheap and pretty damn satisfying. Just go easy on the <i>lauk</i>!</p> | <p>Endorses the goodness of the <i>nasi lemak</i>. The last sentence is a presumption cum invitation that customers will visit and hence the advice to go easy on the <i>lauk</i>.</p> | <p>Appendix A Review 2</p> |
| <p>For lung aficionados who don't mind waking up early to sample the best <i>paru goreng</i> in KL, I urge you to try the ones sold at R.A. Even if you're not an earlyriser, you'll have to try it at least once. I won't be surprised if the <i>paru goreng</i> here would actually motivate you to wake a little bit earlier than usual because they're just so totally worth it.</p> | <p>Claims the <i>paru goreng</i> to be the best in KL and urge customers to try it. They also may have to wake up early so they won't miss out on the <i>paru goreng</i>.</p> | <p>Appendix A Review 5</p> |
| <p>Around 1030 a.m. the <i>lauk</i> dishes are already displayed, so you're always welcome to opt for extra condiments to your plate of rice or <i>roti</i>. What more can you ask from a restaurant that only wants to cheer up your mornings?</p> | <p>Indirect recommendation of side dishes. Ending with a note that the restaurant has got all it takes to start your day cheerily.</p> | <p>Appendix A Review 8</p> |

In the first example, we see the author strongly endorse the product in three simple adjectives: ‘Simple, cheap and pretty damn satisfying’. The last adjective is also emphasised by the phrase ‘pretty damn’. The three adjectives also summarised the *nasi lemak* and urges the customers to try. Similarly, in the second example the reviewer uses the claims the dish to be the best of its kind in KL and prompts the client to try. The reviewer also goes as far as stating that the customers may even sacrifice their sleep just to get a taste of the *paru goreng*. This demonstrates a strong endorsement too. The author shows strong endorsement in the third example by presenting the notion that the outlet has all it takes to a good start in the morning. This is made apparent in the question, “What more can you ask from a restaurant that only wants to cheer up your mornings?” It implies that everything a customer needs for a cheery morning can be found here. The personal endorsement provided by the reviewer in the 13 reviews where the move is found is typically strong. The reviewer usually provides a positively strong summary on the product and uses it to urge customers to try out the product. This urge is also strengthen subtly when the reviewer provides tips and advices assuming the customers have already decided to visit. The customers may or may have not come to a decision yet. By presenting personal opinions in this manner, the reviewer seems to already ‘decide’ for the customers; making them inclined to give in to the ‘decision’. The PRA move can be observed as a move that functions mainly to urge customers to purchase or try the products.

Move 6: Soliciting Response (SR)

The function of this move is similar to the *Urging Action* move (UA) in previous studies. UA seeks immediate action from readers by prompting them to contact relevant channels that offer this product. This is realised by providing them with address or contact details so they can find out more about the product. In the current study, the location of the *nasi lemak* outlet is always mentioned in the review but not in specific

details. Although the full address is not provided within the text of the review, it can be found in the webpage alongside the review. The intention of providing the location in is to subtly urge customers to pay a visit and try the *nasi lemak* themselves. This realisation of will be known as Move 6 (a) where it is found within the text of the review (text-internal feature).

The findings of the study also demonstrated that the realisation of this move extends beyond provision of address and contact details. Readers can also find out more information regarding the product by leaving Facebook comments which can be viewed publicly. This element of analysis exists outside the review text. It is not placed within the review text but plays a significant role all the same. This is a text-external feature and will be known as Move 6 (b).

The integration of the Facebook comment section is to solicit response from the readers. This indirectly prompts them to visit the place and try out the dishes served. Everyone including the reviewer's team, *FriedChilies* and fellow proprietors can view these comments and respond to them. Members of the public may also contribute their comments respectively. This strategy of realisation differs from its counterparts which mostly involve print genres. In print genre, spontaneous interaction cannot be done and requires more effort. For example, one may need to write in to provide feedback on a certain product reviewed on print genre. The procedure to do so requires significant time and effort. Response from relevant party is also not as immediate compared to online genre.

Conversely, in online genre, readers are able to comment immediately after reading the text. All they need to do is to own a Facebook account which majority people already have. This can be perceived as one of the advantages of online food reviews where other discourses or texts can be used to complement the main genre/text.

In this case, Facebook, an online social media platform is integrated into the review for the ease and benefit of the readers. A few instances of these moves are tabulated below:

Table 4.12: Examples of Soliciting Response (SR)

| Examples | Criteria | Can be viewed at: |
|--|--|-------------------------|
| In an old <i>taman perumahan</i> , at the corner of Lorong Tiong Nam 1 and Jalan Tiong Nam, at the backroads of Jalan Raja Laut, lies a stall. | Description of precise location. | Appendix A Review 4 |
| ... <i>Nasi Lemak Kukus Fauzey</i> in PJ Oldtown is a food truck selling, well, nasi lemak. | Description of location | Appendix A Review 13 |
|  <p>The screenshot shows a Facebook comments section with three replies. The first reply is from Jojet Insan Mulia asking 'How to fine this place????'. The second is from Mohd Zainie mentioning a bus stand. The third is from Amelia Atsuko wondering if it tastes greasy. The fourth is from Alia Ali mentioning leftover nasi lemak.</p> | Facebook comment. A fellow reader asking for exact location and was replied by another reader. | Appendix A Review 8 |

At a glance, the Soliciting Response move may appear as a move which prompts readers to give their feedbacks. However, upon scrutiny, this move is actually promotionally inclined. This is because the move also prompts readers to try out the products offered. The highlight of this move is Move 6(b) where a text-external feature is used to further strengthen what the move intends to achieve. The usage of other discourses in complementing the main genre/ text is known as interdiscursivity.

Interdiscursivity is a strategy used to enhance the realisation of a move. Essentially, this strategy is helpful in realising the underlying intentions which the author attempts to achieve in the text.

In the current study, Move 6(b), 7 and 8 are text-external features which reflect the digital component of the review. This is because these moves are only made available in online genres and might not be found in print genres. Besides this, interdiscursivity is also seen in the introductory text. The online food reviews always begin with an introductory text followed by the rest of the rhetorical moves. This element can be classified as a different discourse which is embedded in the reviews. Its form and function will be discussed separately alongside the roles of visuals in the following chapter.

Move 7: Establishing Discourse Community (EDC)

This is yet another move associated with online genres where the main purpose of the move is to build a community of frequent web visitors. This move provides a platform for like-minded users to exchange opinions and interact. According to Askehave and Nielsen (2005), this move is often realised via a login facility. However, in this study, this move is realised by the Facebook comment section as well as FriedChilies' Facebook page. In Move 6(b), the Facebook comment section realises the soliciting response move. If one scrutinises the webpage, one will notice that there are other social media accompanying the review to complement it. Twitter, for instance, is boxed up in a section of its own where tweets are being streamed live. However, only Facebook-related buttons and sections are being integrated into the review. The decision to associate Facebook page to the review is perhaps due to the huge popularity of Facebook among social media users. Instead of making another account to be part of the online community, readers can now use their Facebook account to do so. They just need

sign in their Facebook account and they are free to share the review and interact with other members about the review. Hence, to be part of the online discourse community is relatively effortless. By owning a Facebook account, the readers get access to FriedChilies' Facebook page. FriedChilies Facebook page is updated with their recent news, blogposts, reviews, events. The public has the access to like, comment, share and post on their Facebook page. It is truly a platform for members of the same interest to come together and share their thoughts. Below are instances of how this move is being realised:

Table 4.13: Examples of Establishing Discourse Community (EDC)

| Examples | Criteria |
|---|--|
|  | <p>Members respond to other member's query. Members are also free to leave their thoughts and comments. Other members or the admin (<i>FriedChilies</i>) can choose to respond should they want too.</p> |


| | |
|--|--|
| <p>three decades. The Friedchillies crew paid a visit to Nasi Lemak Alor Corner...</p> <p>by Eévan S. Photography <small>CK Fri, October 24, 2014</small></p> <p>MALAY</p> <p> Like 200 people like this. Sign Up to see what your friends like.</p> <p>Jalan Alor. Two words that mean only one thing to most if not all Malaysians (and tourists too!): FOOD. So well known it is for food that a move by DBKL to change the</p> | <p>The ‘like’ button indicates how many persons have actually liked the review on Facebook. One only needs to be logged in on Facebook to do so.</p> |
|--|--|

Table 4.13, continued

These examples can be found in all the reviews. Hence, it can be viewed in all appendices. The EDC move provides an avenue for customers to find out more information regarding the product and discuss similar ideas. This will subtly create the desire in customers to try out the products offered. The topic of discussions in the comments usually involves general inquiries on the outlet and the product being offered. The comments are informative in manner as they are random and spontaneous remarks. Hence, they are usually neutral. Another important point to note is the number of Facebook ‘likes’ for the particular review. A higher number of Facebook ‘likes’ demonstrates a higher approval of the product by the public. This also generates a positive image for the product. The inclusion of this information in the page is to cleverly entice customers to purchase the product. Readers feel inclined to try out the product knowing that is good and approved by other readers too.

Move 8: Promoting External Organisation (PEO)

This move is seen to promote other services, product or brand. This usually takes place in the form of banner advertisements. However, in the current study, this move is being realised via a prompt urging readers to sign up for Facebook. This can be seen in the example below:

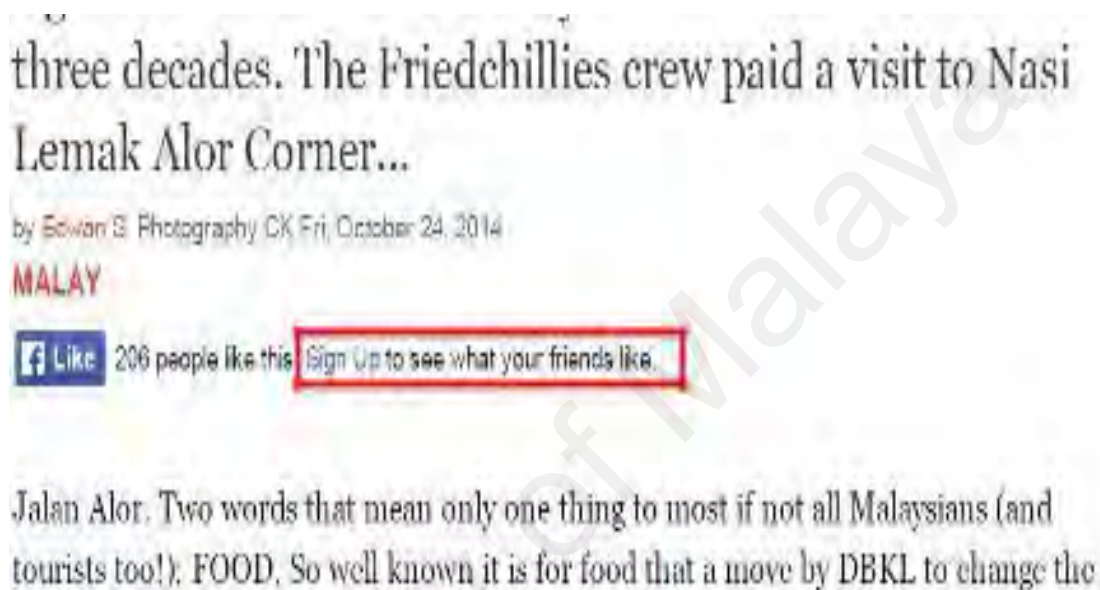


Figure 4.14 Example of Promoting External Organisation (PEO)

The PEO move is realised by the blue font words serve as a hyperlink. This link directs readers to Facebook homepage when they clicked on it. Facebook is not directly related to the review. Therefore, this move is seen as promoting an external organisation alongside the product that is being reviewed. Although indirectly related to the review, Facebook's role in promoting the product is clearly seen in Move 6 and Move 7. In order for both moves to be realised effectively, it is necessary for readers to have their own Facebook accounts. Hence, the main intention of this move is actually to urge readers to sign up for Facebook so that they can become part of the discourse community. Once signed up, readers will be linked, reminded and updated on the product offered. This can be considered a marketing strategy where the product is being

reinforced. To enhance this move, the phrase “to see what your friends like” after the hyperlink “sign up” is included. Most foodies and those who seek food-related information will see this as an incentive or reference and subsequently, be convinced to sign up.

In moves 6b, 7 and 8, the usage of interdiscursivity is also observed. Interdiscursivity is realised when Facebook comments and features were integrated into the review. These elements are of a different discourse from online reviews namely, the online social media discourse. Facebook, on its own, also possesses a different communicative purpose. The data of this research demonstrates how features of a different discourse (Facebook) are extracted and placed in the review to realise these moves. Interdiscursivity is a common form of rhetorical strategy and is increasingly utilised to realise communicative purposes and rhetorical moves in genres (Bhatia, 2012).

It must also be noted that in the peripheral of the online food review’s webpage, this move proves to be very prominent. The right side of the review contains four sections where the three bottom sections are actually realisations of this move. The first section is to promote FriedChilies TV, the second part is to promote FriedChilies top ten posts while the third section is where live tweets are streamed alongside a Twitter follow button. Content in these sections are not directly related to the product being reviewed but is placed within the webpage and not within the review.

4.4 Conclusion

The analysis of rhetorical move presented in this chapter clearly demonstrates how the communicative purpose of informing audience is being realised. Besides that, findings in this chapter also show that strong promotional elements are present in the

data. Even though certain features in the review appear to be informative, they can also carry out a different function where they fulfil the private intention of the review. If one scrutinises rhetorical move critically alongside the rhetorical strategies, one will be able to identify the private intention which the author is trying to achieve subtly in the review; the promotional intent. Move 3 (Establishing Credentials) and Move 4 (Introducing Offer) of the rhetorical structure of online food review can be deemed as the most prominent promotional moves in the reviews even though it is supposed to be informative. Unlike the other moves, these two prominent promotional moves were developed extensively through three to four sub-moves in order to achieve promotional intent. These moves are explicitly realised through the realisation of at least one, if not all, sub-moves in the reviews. They are contained in Bhatia's rhetorical move for promotional genre. This reflects the promotional intent subtly woven in these reviews. On the other hand, moves 6b, 7 and 8 reflects the embedding of different discourses into the review. The features embedded are elements which give rise to online or new media. They are elements which print media possesses and can only be found in digital genres. Interdiscursivity is used to also subtly incorporate other discourses into review to fulfil certain communicative purpose or private intention. In this case, it is used to also integrate certain promotional function besides performing the informative role.

Therefore, it can be concluded that online food reviews belong to mixed genre where its communicative purpose is to inform as well to persuade. On the surface, online food reviews are seen to contain the configuration of an online review which is informative. However, despite its main communicative function (to inform), promotional elements are also present in the review. Prominent rhetorical moves in the study are found to be of Bhatia's (2004) rhetorical moves for advertising discourses. Besides that, this notion is further emphasised when the private intention present in these reviews is strongly promotional. Rhetorical strategies such as multimodal

features, linguistic features and interdiscursivity are exploited to realise this private intention.

These findings strengthen the need to revisit the communicative purpose of the review genre. Further analysis must be done to identify whether the main communicative purpose remains informative or has it move towards the promotional spectrum. In order to establish this, visuals and relevant discourses will be examined in the next chapter. These elements of rhetorical strategies will be scrutinised and their roles discussed. The results of analysing these rhetorical strategies will contribute in in determining or establishing the communicative purposes, genre type and genre description. This will also help determine or establish whether reviews are inclined towards informative or promotional genre.

CHAPTER 5: RHETORICAL STRATEGIES OF ONLINE FOOD REVIEWS: ANALYSIS OF VISUALS AND DISCOURSES

5.1 Introduction

This chapter is dedicated to explaining the rhetorical strategies found in the analysis and synthesis of the data. It highlights the role of visuals and the accompanying discourses alongside the significance of these elements. In Chapter Four, components of rhetorical strategies which included linguistic features, multimodality and interdiscursivity were analysed. The analysis was done to complement the rhetorical moves present. This current chapter extends the analysis of rhetorical strategies by focusing on usage of visuals and relevant discourses. These components are largely observed in the data and cannot be ignored in the analysis. Chapter Five presents the most prominent findings of the study.

5.2 Rhetorical Strategies: Visuals and Relevant Discourses

Rhetorical strategies are used to realise the rhetorical moves of a genre. In the past, rhetorical strategies in genre studies are mainly focused on the linguistics features contained in the data. Bhatia's (2004) stated that rhetorical strategies started with the statistical significance of lexico-grammar. A relevant example is Pollach's (2006) research on product reviews on consumers' opinion website where she highlighted the word length, sentence style, use of pronouns and the paralinguistic features. In her research, Pollach researched on the rhetorical strategies by only focusing on the lexico-grammatical features of the text. However, since the current research data encompasses both text and visuals, there is a need to analyse beyond just the linguistic features. In addition, there is also a need to analyse these visuals in a more comprehensive manner as these reviews contain a higher visual to text ratio.

In the current study, the researcher adopts the notion of multi-perspective genre analysis proposed by Bhatia, Flowerdew and Jones (2008) which was discussed in Chapter Two to analyse visuals. This notion states that genre analysis does not consist of only textual analysis but also include components of multimodality and context. In bid to include the proposed components, the researcher chose to also extend the current study beyond the textual component and include multimodality as part of the analysis as well. However, the multimodal element which was focused upon in this study focused strictly on visuals as rhetorical moves and the significant roles they play in the review. Layout, saliency and modality are not looked at and are considered off the research parameters. The analysis of visuals is also deemed apt as these reviews contain high visuals to text ratio.

There are previous genre-based studies that involved multimodal discourse analysis. The inclusion of visuals and layouts into analysis were previously studied by Nurulain Abdullah (2014), Cheong (2013) and Teo (2008). Their findings reported that visuals, layout and multimodal features are intrinsically linked to the rhetorical moves of a particular genre. Apart from establishing the notion that visual are used as a form of rhetorical strategies, the current study also aims to explore how visuals are presented in the text subtly realise the private intentions embedded. The roles of visuals are not restricted to simply realising the rhetorical moves. To a certain extent, they may be considered as a move on its own.

Apart from analysing visuals, the researcher also extends the analysis of rhetorical strategies by studying relevant discourses. The researcher does this by attempting to explore the data at a discourse level instead of the word or sentence level. Accompanying discourses in the review are analysed and their functions in the review are also discussed. This is because there is a need to study the role of promotional discourses in realising the rhetorical moves and in achieving private intentions of a

particular genre, especially when the genre is supposed to be informative and non-biased.

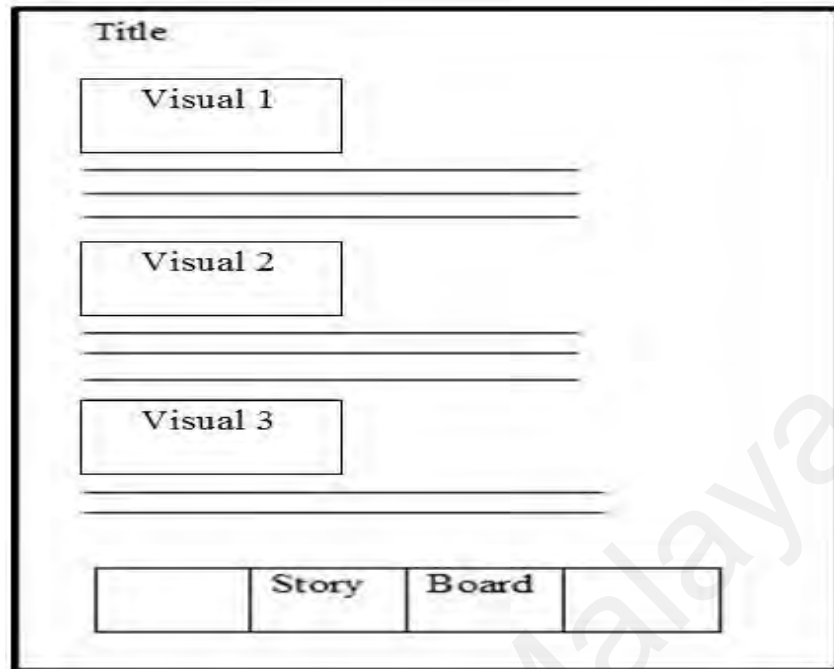
The researcher draws upon Bhatia's (2012) claim that the incorporation of other discourses into a genre is sometimes used as a strategy to establish private intention. In the case of the current study, the analysis of the diverse accompanying discourses can further strengthen and justify the promotional elements which exist in the reviews. As discussed in Chapter 4, the rhetorical moves reflect the promotional nature of the review. In this chapter, the researcher attempts to highlight the incorporation of discourses as a form of rhetorical strategy. These discourses as rhetorical strategies in turn realises these rhetorical moves.

5.3 Visual Analysis

As mentioned in the earlier part of this chapter, contrary to the claim that online genres are prone to be disorganised, the online reviews follows a generally rigid structured organisation. This is also seen in the organisation of the visuals in the review. The analysis of data shows that visuals are found throughout the review and at the end of the review, a storyboard of visuals is present. There are at least three individual visuals to be found in each review while the number of visuals varies in the storyboard.

The main visuals are usually placed at the top of the webpage after the title but before the review. The subsequent ones are placed in the middle, usually after two paragraphs or so depending on the length of reviews. The following illustration demonstrates the position of these visuals in the review:

Figure 5.1: Visual Layout



5.3.1 Main Visual


Visual 1 is the first visual a reader would encounter when visiting the webpage. Out of all the 16 reviews, 14 reviews contain *nasi lemak* as their main visual. Nearly all these visuals in the 14 reviews are close-up shot of the *nasi lemak* sold at the respective places. The visual of *nasi lemak* is chosen to grace the top of the page even before the review. This is not surprising at all as it is the feature product of the review. In fact, from the analysis, Visual 1 can be rightfully considered as the main visual. This is because Visual 1 provides readers with a glimpse of what the review is all about: *nasi lemak*. The main visual serves to establish the content of the review. The readers know what to expect of the content simply by looking at it. Indirectly, this visual also contextualises the product so as to prompt the reader to read the review.

Further to this, the main visual is also seen to realise Move 1 of the rhetorical move which is Attracting Attention. It acts as a compliment to the role of the title in the review. The vividness of colour and top position which the main visual possesses,

contributes in capturing the attention of the readers. In addition to this, its size which is large enough also fulfils the function of attracting readers. Visuals are bound to attract readers to discover more about the review compared to bare words. They are important persuasive elements which evoke emotions of the viewer towards the product (Messaris, 1998).

The main visual can also be presumed as a branding strategy as the main visual is usually a shot that portrays the unique visual of a *nasi lemak*. It functions to convince readers that this particular serving of *nasi lemak* is different from other servings out there. This is achieved by showcasing what the specialty of the nasi lemak be it the packaging size, rice texture and colour, or simply alongside the *lauk* selections that goes along with it. Table 5.1 portrays selected examples that illustrate this function.

Table 5.1: Examples of Visual 1 as AA

| Examples | Criteria | Can be viewed at: |
|---|---|--|
| <p data-bbox="323 1341 730 1379">Nasi Lemak Marvellous</p>  | <p data-bbox="1023 1346 1238 1809">Showcases ready-to-serve authentic <i>nasi lemak</i> with generous amount of sambal.</p> | <p data-bbox="1273 1346 1430 1473">Appendix A Review 1</p> |

| | | |
|---|--|--------------------------------|
| <p>Nasi Lemak V3 Corner</p>  | <p>Close up shot of a single plate of <i>nasi lemak</i> topped with fried egg with runny yolk.</p> | <p>Appendix A Review 4</p> |
| <p>Nasi Lemak Kak Sanah</p>  | <p>Showcases a waiting number because queuing system highlights how good business is.</p> | <p>Appendix A Review 6</p> |
| <p>Nasi Lemak Pak Ayob</p>  | <p>Showcases the vendor serving a waiting customer from an array of <i>lauk</i>.</p> | <p>Appendix A Review 3</p> |

Table 5.1, continued

Despite the different variation of main visuals, it is undoubted that these visuals play an important role as first impression of the review. The main visual makes a pitch to

the readers so as to lure and encourage them to read further. This is accomplished by showcasing the unique traits or selling point of the *nasi lemak*.

5.3.2 Complementary or Supporting Visuals

Visuals 2 and 3 represent a type of visual which is found throughout the review apart from the main visual (Visual 1). Visuals 2 and 3 as identified in Figure 5.2 (visual layout) are not limited to two visuals. Most reviews have two to three visuals while others have up to four visuals. These visuals function as supporting visuals where they provide extra information or details in relation to the Main Visual. Similarly, these visuals are also found to realise certain moves belonging to the rhetorical moves.

Although Visuals 2 and 3 can display anything related to complementing and promoting the main product, the researcher manage to identify five categories which these visuals can be placed under. These five categories are as follows:

- | | |
|------------------------|---|
| Outlet | – Shots featuring the place or stall and its surrounding. |
| Customers | – Shots featuring the customers usually waiting to be served or queuing for their turn. |
| <i>Lauk</i> selections | – Shots featuring the <i>lauk</i> selection available at the stall. |
| Other dishes | – Shots of side dishes that are popular besides the featured dish, <i>nasi lemak</i> . |
| Owner | – Shots featuring the owner/ vendor of the product or place. |

The table below demonstrates the frequency of occurrence for each image under these categories:

Table 5.2: Occurrence of Visual 2 & 3 according to Categories

| No. | Review/ Categories | Outlet | Customers | <i>Lauk</i> Selections | Other dishes | Owner/ Vendor |
|-----|---------------------------------------|--------|-----------|---------------------------|-----------------|------------------|
| 1. | Nasi Lemak Marvellous | | | / | / | |
| 2. | Nasi Lemak Atan | / | / | / | / | |
| 3. | Nasi Lemak Pak Ayob | | | / | | |
| 4. | Nasi Lemak V3 Corner | / | | | / | |
| 5. | RA Nasi Lemak | | | / | / | |
| 6. | Nasi Lemak Kak Sanah | | | / | / | |
| 7. | Nasi Lemak Kak Hani | | | | / | |
| 8. | Nasi Lemak Ceria | | | / | / | |
| 9. | Nasi Lemak Tanglin | / | / | | / | |
| 10. | Nasi Lemak Famous | | | / | / | |
| 11. | Nasi Lemak Royale Kedah | | | | | / |
| 12. | Nasi Lemak Ali @Lebuh Pantai | | | | | / |
| 13. | Nasi Lemak Kukus Fauzey | | | | | / |

| | | | | | | |
|---|------------------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| 14. | Nasi Lemak Alor Corner | / | / | / | | |
| 15. | Nasi Lemak Kak Maimon | / | | | | / |
| 16. | Nasi Lemak Bumbung | / | / | | / | |
| Total Number of Reviews it Occurred in | | 6 | 4 | 8 | 9 | 4 |

Each category which is represented by different visuals performs a specific function. Similar to Visual 1, these visuals were not positioned in the review merely for aesthetic reasons. The first category of supplementary visuals usually showcases the outlet and its surrounding serves to provide readers with the real representation of the place. It is used to show the actual venue so that the readers could visualize it. They are more likely to visit these places if they have an idea of how the place resembles. These shots featuring the outlets can be said to Not only help readers to visualize but immerse themselves into the venue, especially with the use of attractive professional photography of the location, making it more convincing for readers to visit the place themselves and purchase the product being sold. Hence, visuals under this category realises Move 3 of the rhetorical move, Establishing Credentials (EC).

Another category which appears to fulfil the Establishing Credentials (EC) move is the category of visuals that feature customers. Usually, these visuals portray customers waiting to be served, queuing in line, or simply a crowd happily enjoying their food. The projection one can perceive from these visuals is that the food served must be good. The quality must be good up to the point where potential customers are

willing to line up and purchase them. The depiction of crowds also gives an overall impression that is good. It signifies that customers frequent these places. Indirectly, they are endorsing these places, building up readers' confidence in the place. Hence, visuals from this category can be said to realise Sub-move 3 of Move 3 which is Customer Endorsement (CE).

In addition to realising Move 3, another rhetorical move which is being realised is Move 4 namely, Introducing the Offer. This move is clearly fulfilled by the category which contains visuals showcasing the array of side dishes found at the eateries besides *nasi lemak*. Usually these visuals would portray trays of *lauk* selections arranged side by side. These visuals are vivid and colourful to give readers the closest details possible to the real dishes. By inserting this category of visuals into the review, the readers will also be able to find out what interesting dishes they can pair with their *nasi lemak*. This will also prompt potential customers to visit. Their visit will be deemed more worthwhile as they not only get to enjoy *nasi lemak* but also great selection of *lauk*. This category specifically realises Sub move 2 of Move 4 which is Detailing the Offer.


In addition to this, visuals belonging to the category which showcase popular dishes other than *nasi lemak* also fulfil the aforementioned sub move. Visuals in this category comprise of dishes other than the featured product but are as popular. Frequently presented in the close-up shots format, these dishes could comprise of the side dishes or a completely new dish. They are dishes which are considered as popular options besides the *nasi lemak*. Similar to the previous category, visuals under this category further encourage customers to visit because the place offers more than just *nasi lemak*. However, with this category, they also take function a step further by providing options to customers. These visuals not only show customers what can be added on but also alternatives to the featured product. If any circumstances, customers

choose not to have the *nasi lemak*, they can always have another option which is also good if not as popular. In this way, this can also be seen as a marketing strategy where back-up products are highlighted to further convince customers.

The final category identified comprises of visuals featuring the owner/ vendor of the place. These visuals are often close-up photographs of the vendor smiling amicably. Generally, these visuals create a friendly atmosphere and radiate warmth all throughout. Their function is to appeal to the readers at a more personal level by including human presence and close-up shots. This allows readers to relate better, thus, feeling a connection to the place despite not being personally there yet. In other words, these visuals enable the establishment of rapport with the readers to a certain extent. Once rapport is established, readers are more prone to make the decision to pay a visit to these outlets as they already feel connected.

Instances from each category are illustrated and explained in the table below:

Table 5.3: Examples of Visuals 2 & 3 according to Categories

| Examples | Criteria | Can be viewed at: |
|---|---|---------------------------------|
| <p>Outlet</p>  | <p>A shot of what the shop looks like: without a signboard/ name.</p> | <p>Appendix A Review 15</p> |




| | | |
|--|---|---------------------------------|
| <p>Customers</p>  | <p>Customers being served and waiting in line to served</p> | <p>Appendix A Review 9</p> |
| <p><i>Lauk</i> selections</p>  | <p>The array of <i>lauk</i> on display, vivid and colourful</p> | <p>Appendix A Review 14</p> |
| <p>Other dishes</p>  | <p>Apart from <i>nasi lemak</i>, curry puff is also their major hit at this outlet.</p> | <p>Appendix A Review 6</p> |

Table 5.3, continued

| | | |
|---|--|---------------------------------|
| <p>Owner/Vendor</p>  | <p>Owners of the <i>nasi lemak</i> place smiling amicably.</p> | <p>Appendix A Review 12</p> |
|---|--|---------------------------------|

Table 5.3, continued

5.3.3 Storyboard

The storyboard is considered as another form of visual in the review. Out of the 16 reviews, the storyboards were found in 13 reviews. Positioned at the end of the review, the storyboard is a collection of random visuals related to the feature product. It can be likened to a collection of visuals in the form of a short story. This usually includes all three visuals elaborated above and sometimes, extra visuals for the readers to view. One would expect a fixed number of visuals to be found here since the analysis thus far has demonstrated rigid organisation in other parts of the review. However, this is not the case for the storyboard. Certain reviews contain more than 10 visuals while some only contain three. Similar to Visuals 2 and 3, the visuals in the story consists of the *nasi lemak* (NL), *lauk* selection (LS), other dish (OD), outlet (O), owner/vendor (V) and customers (C). The following table summarise the sequence and occurrence of visuals according to reviews.

Table 5.4: Visual Sequence in the Storyboard

| No | Reviews | Sequence |
|-----|------------------------------|---|
| 1. | Nasi Lemak Marvellous | NL → OD → OD → OD → LS |
| 2. | Nasi Lemak Atan | LS → O → LS → NL → OD |
| 3. | Nasi Lemak Pak Ayob | O → C → LS → NL → NL → NL |
| 4. | Nasi Lemak V3 Corner | NL → NL → NL → OD → OD → NL |
| 5. | RA Nasi Lemak | LS → LS → OD → OD → OD → OD → NL → NL → NL → O → C → NL → OD |
| 6. | Nasi Lemak Kak Sanah | V → Que numbers → LS → LS → OD → NL → OD → Packaging → V → V |
| 7. | Nasi Lemak Kak Hani | V → OD → NL → NL |
| 8. | Nasi Lemak Ceria | O → OD → NL → NL → OD → NL → OD → OD → OD → OD |
| 9. | Nasi Lemak Tanglin | NL |
| 10. | Nasi Lemak Famous | NL → NL → OD |
| 11. | Nasi Lemak Royale Kedah | LS → NL → LS → NL |
| 12. | Nasi Lemak Ali @Lebuh Pantai | O → O → NL → NL |
| 13. | Nasi Lemak Kukus Fauzey | NONE |
| 14. | Nasi Lemak Alor Corner | V → OD → LS → NL → LS |
| 15. | Nasi Lemak Kak Maimon | NONE |
| 16. | Nasi Lemak Bumbung | NONE |

From table 5.4, it can be concluded that there is no particular sequence in which these visuals occur. Except for the three reviews that do not contain a storyboard, *nasi lemak* appeared in all 13 storyboards. The occurrence of visuals also includes other popular dishes at these outlets. This perhaps serves to highlight the main attractions to these places since the storyboard is their last opportunity to highlight the key features of the place and influence customers' decision. On the other hand, the occurrence of all three visuals indirectly confirms the significance of these visuals.

The structure of the storyboard consists of a large-sized visual and a row of thumbnails under this visual. Readers could view the photographs by scrolling through the thumbnails where the visuals are enlarged. The readers can also click on the larger visual to view another photograph. These visuals are aligned horizontally in a sequence that switches to the right. This gives the reader a sense of flipping through a book or in this case, browsing through a proper collection of visuals. Besides that, photographs which are presented in a sequence and in the form of a story provides a richer and "real" experience or context/situation compared to a photograph presented as a visual.

The strategic position and the structure of the storyboard is line with its functionality which will be further elaborated. From the data analysis, it can be concluded that the storyboard acts as a summary to the whole review. Unlike a single photograph which is used to complement or act as a move, a sequence of photographs in the form of a story board develops and constructs the whole rhetorical/generic structure of the "story" or important moves/content which are highlighted in the review.

These visuals are accompanied by relevant captions to which gives ample explanation about the visual. The storyboard then summarises the story of a whole review in a series of visuals and caption. This feature is, especially useful for readers who need quick details about the review. It provides readers with concrete, sufficient at-a-glance information for readers who do not have time to read the review or for those

who do not favour or prefer browsing visuals to reading text. Figure 5.2 below is an example of a storyboard which can be found in Appendix A, Review 12.

Figure 5.2: Example of Storyboard



The storyboard not only functions as a visual summary for the readers, it also realises promotional intent of the review. This function is realised by the caption as well as the visuals in the storyboard. The visuals serve to entice potential customers by how good a product look. The captions work alongside these visuals to contribute in persuading customers to purchase the product. These captions are also written in the voice of the author which appears to be more personal and friendly in the bid to further establish rapport with the readers. The following is the analysis of an example which can be found in Appendix A, Review 5 which contains 13 visuals which is the highest number of visuals among the rest of the storyboards. It also contains five categories of visuals: *nasi lemak* (NL), *lauk* selection (LS), other dish (OD), outlet (O), and customers (C). The sequences in which the visuals occur are as follows:

LS → LS → LS → OD → OD → LS → NL → NL → NL → O → C → V → NL → OD



1st Visual – *Lauk* Selection

Caption: Lovely additions for your *nasi lemak*.

Three traditional nasi lemak essentials are the main focus here: cucumbers, fried peanuts and hard-boiled eggs. They are usually packed readily with the *nasi lemak* and the *sambal*. However, some may choose to not have any and go for the basic sambal and rice only. Some may want more of these three. In this picture, they are placed in separate trays. In this outlet, customers have the freedom to either take the amount they want or to skip them altogether according to their preferences. The word ‘lovely’ is used to describe these ‘additions’ in the caption. Cucumbers, fried peanuts, and hard-boiled eggs are not prepared in using any extraordinary method. Cucumbers are just sliced, the peanuts fried and the eggs boiled. They are perhaps the same in every *nasi lemak* outlet. Hence, the word ‘lovely’, upon deeper synthesis, is an exaggeration. However, it presents these ‘addition’ in a positive and enticing manner. This visual realises Sub-Move 2 of Move 4, *Detailing the Offer* (DO) where details of the product are being specified.



2nd Visual - *Lauk* Selection

Caption: Plenty of *lauks* to choose from.

The visual shows trays brimming with different *lauk* that are available

at this place. Instead of including individual visuals of each dish, a visual of the dishes collectively was chosen. The array of dishes gives the reader the impression that there are many options to choose from. This is further strengthened by the caption. This visual also realises the *Detailing the Offer* (DO) move where details related to the product are provided.



3rd Visual – *Lauk* Selection

Caption: *Ayam goreng panas anyone?*

This visual showcases one of the side dishes (*lauk* selections) individually. It is a close-up shot of a fried chicken dish which is golden brown with crispy skin. The word used to describe this dish is ‘panas’ which means the chicken dish here is usually freshly fried as it is still hot. The caption is a straightforward offer to the readers as it is in the form of a question instead of a mere description. This is done to capture the interest of the readers so that they would want to try the dish. This visual realises the *Detailing the Offer* (DO) move as it includes further details of the product.



4th Visual – Other Dishes

Caption: *They sell kuih too.*

In this visual, the author introduces other dishes that are not related to *nasi lemak*. These are extra dishes which can be eaten as an appetiser or a dessert. It complements the main dish which is the *nasi lemak*. The caption is a simple description which indicates

that besides the main dish, readers have other alternatives. This visual realises the Sub-move 3 of Move 4, *Indicating Value of the Offer (IVO)* as it indicates other extra benefits readers can enjoy while at this place.



5th Visual – Other Dishes

Caption: *Kuih cara.*

Similar to the 4th visual, this visual showcases other dishes complementary to the main dish. It is a close-up shot so that the readers can see the colour and texture of the *kuih*; green, brown and fluffy. This serves to capture the attention of the readers in order for them to consider trying the product. The caption is straightforward where the author simply stated the name of the dish. Since it an ‘extra’ benefit which customers can enjoy, this visual realises Sub-move 3 of Move 4, *Indicating Value of the Offer (IVO)*.



6th Visual – Other Dishes

Caption: *Udang goreng kunyit...mmm.*

This visual is similar to the 3rd visual featuring a side dish individually. It is a close-up shot of prawns fried with turmeric. The prawns look delicious in a crispy, yellow shade. Like the previous visuals, it captures the attention of the readers and persuades the reader to try. The caption lends the visual a positive endorsement with the additional ‘mmm’. It affirms what the readers thought that the dish is indeed delicious. This visual realises the *Detailing the Offer (DO)* move by providing details of relevant dishes.



7th Visual – *Nasi Lemak*

Caption: *Nasi lemak with sambal sotong.*

This visual showcases the main dish alongside a side dish. Customers can always choose to have the main product only. However, visuals featuring *nasi lemak* in this storyboard are all paired with side dishes. The inclusion of side dishes is to prompt readers to add on. The rice and *sambal* is seen alongside the *sambal sotong*. The side dishes do not cover the rice to provide the readers with a glimpse of the rice texture; crumbly and not clumpy. Its caption is straightforward stating the main dish and the name of the side dishes. This visual realises the *Introducing the Offer (IO)* move as it introduces the main product for the first time.



8th Visual – *Nasi Lemak*

Caption: *Nasi lemak with kangkung and telur mata*

This visual is similar to the 7th visual. Here, the main dish is served alongside two side dishes: *kangkung* and *telur mata*. In this shot, the egg is seen to top the rice and is the focus of the visual. Its yolk slightly runny. Again, this is to entice customer to add on to the main dish. The caption contains the same structure with the 7th visual where the main dish mentioned alongside the side dish. This visual realises the *Detailing the Offer (DO)* move since it is actually focusing on the side dish.



9th Visual – *Nasi Lemak*

Caption: A barrel of hot and steamy *nasi lemak*.

The visual shows the rice which is a main component of the *nasi lemak*. The rice captured in a barrel gives a glimpse of the amount of *nasi lemak* they are able to sell. A barrel of rice is a huge amount indicating that the demand of the product is also high. This indirectly positive endorsement. The visual also showcases the texture of the rice which is crumbly. Its caption describes the barrel of rice as ‘hot and steamy’ indicating the freshly-prepared condition of the rice. This also serves as another form of endorsement. This visual realises the *Detailing the Offer (DO)* move as it provides further details regarding the main product.



10th Visual – Outlet

Caption: A humble place selling awesome *nasi lemak*.

The outlet is showcased in this visual. It shows condition of the outlet together alongside a few customers. The inclusion of customers in the visual serves as an endorsement. It is also an evidence that people truly come and eat at the place. It is obvious that the place is definitely a five-star restaurant. The caption provided describes the place as ‘humble’ which is a euphemism for unfanciful. The caption also endorses the *nasi lemak* as ‘awesome’. The usage of these words is to present this product and outlet in a positive light. This is done to persuade customers. This visual realises Sub-

move 3 of Move 3, *Customer Endorsement* (CE) as this visual is to establish the credentials of this place using customer endorsement.



11th Visual – Customers

Caption: Choose your *lauk* before they disappear.

This visual shows customers getting their *nasi lemak*. There are more than one customers and the *lauk* area appears to be crowded. The crowd shows customers' endorsement. The product must be good to attract a crowd. This impression is strengthened by the caption. The caption indicates that the *lauk* is often sold out and customers must be quick in getting what they want. It is apparent that the *Customer Endorsement* (CE) move is realised in this visual.



12th Visual – *Nasi Lemak*

Caption: *Nasi lemak* with *paru*.

The *paru* dish is shown here alongside the rice. As seen in the 8th visual, this visual focuses on the side dish as well. The visual shows that the *paru* are about to be cut into smaller pieces because they are huge pieces. This indirectly indicates that the serving size here is generous. The presence of *paru* and rice only also seem to indicate that the *paru* dish alone is good enough to have with the rice. The caption is simple and similar to the 7th and 8th visual. This visual realises the *Detailing the Offer* (DO) move where it provides detail on the side dishes.



13th Visual – Other Dishes

Caption: Come early for the *paru goreng*!

This visual is an individual, close-up shot of the *paru goreng* dish introduced in the previous visual. Here, the readers obtain a clearer image of the dish. Like the previous visuals, the close-up shot looks more interesting and enticing. It persuades the customer to try this dish. The caption strengthens this by implying that the dish is popular and is often sold out quickly. Customers need to come early to get a taste of this dish. This visual realises the *Detailing the Offer* (DO) move as well.

The analysis of visuals in the storyboard demonstrates that the visuals not only realises certain moves but also help to achieve the promotional intent of the review. The promotional element in these visuals are prominent. It is further strengthened by the captions which accompanied these visuals. Both the visuals and the captions combine to convince readers who are potential customers to try the products offered. In fact, the promotional elements in the storyboard outweigh its function of summarising the review. The subtle implications of the visuals and the lexical choices used in the captions are clearly in support of the promotional stance.

5.4 Relevant discourses

At this stage, one would already probably gauge that although the established communicative purpose of a review is to inform readers on the featured product, there is more than just the informative discourse contained in an online food review. The realisation of rhetorical moves by Bhatia's (2004) model for advertising discourse confirms that the genre of online food review consists of promotional elements too. Hence, there is a possibility (high) that promotional discourse is present in the reviews. Besides this, results from the analysis have also identified the different type of promotional discourses. The main types of promotional discourses identified for this research/ analysis are branding and advertising. Explanations on the accompanying discourses found in the reviews are provided in the following sections.

5.4.1 Branding Discourse

Branding is seen as an act where one tries to set apart a product by highlighting its unique traits. Randall (1997) defines branding as a fundamental strategy in order to effectively market a product or service. It involves the formation of a brand name and identity alongside the creation of 'face' for the product and the promotion of product or service. This strategy adds value to the product by making it unique. This gives the product an edge and prompts customers to want to own the product. Therefore, branding can be thought as an element of the promotional discourse where persuading a customer to purchase a product is a norm. This discourse further strengthens the claim that online food reviews do hold promotional elements despite being informative. The following are excerpts of branding discourse from the reviews.

Excerpt 5.7: Appendix A, Review 13

“There was this ‘bus guy’,” says Chef Fauzey. “He came to my stall one day and said, ‘Can you do a nasi lemak goreng?’. At first I was dumbstruck, but I decided to give it a go.” Yup folks, what makes Chef Fauzey’s nasi lemak truly great is his version of nasi lemak goreng or FRIED NASI LEMAK (yes it’s that good it deserves capital letters).

In the above excerpt, the author attempts to enhance the branding for this *nasi lemak* by highlighting that unlike other *nasi lemak* out there, Chef Fauzey’s rendition is of a unique kind because the rice is fried together with the other condiments. Traditionally, the rice in *nasi lemak* is either steamed or boiled and served alongside the other condiments. The author achieves this by creating a label for the product which includes using terms like ‘great’ alongside specific terms like ‘fried nasi lemak’ and ‘nasi lemak goreng’. These terms reflect and establish the image of the product thus becoming a label or brand which the consumers will associate with. So much so that at the mention of *Fried Nasi Lemak* or *nasi lemak goreng*, one would think of the *nasi lemak* served at Chef Fauzey.

Excerpt 5.8: Appendix A, Review 11

First thing you should know is that nasi lemak royale is pretty much a nasi kandar! We’ll get to the ‘lemak’ part in a jiffy. Now secondly, and perhaps most importantly is that it is absolutely and lipsmackingly delicious that you won’t care if it isn’t nasi lemak in the traditional sense.

The name ‘nasi lemak royale’ in itself plays a role in branding the nasi lemak. In the previous chapter, the researcher mentioned in Sub-move 3, Customer Endorsement of Move 3, Establishing Credentials that the word ‘royale’ is used because the Sultan of

Kedah happens to be a customer. In addition to this, the usage of the word ‘royale’ also gives a sense of quality. It implies that this dish is up to standards and is delicious enough that it is fit for a king. The imagery of royals and kings is linked to the dish setting it apart from the rest of its counterparts. The author also uses this linking approach to further strengthen the brand of this *nasi lemak* by likening it to another popular dish Malaysian dish, *nasi kandar*. By doing so, the *nasi lemak* is seen to be new and innovative, different from the traditional *nasi lemak*. Furthermore, *nasi kandar* also involves a wide spread of dishes/condiments, thus increases the level/ standard of the nasi lemak. The integration of *nasi kandar* into the *nasi lemak* dish elevates its standard to the highest level which is equivalent to ‘royale’. People tend to be hesitant and apprehensive when it comes to trying new things. However, the author also assures that this new creation is bound to change audiences’ perspective on what is traditional.

Excerpt 5.9: Appendix A, Review 6

Despite the early hour (ungodly by some standards) a swarm of people descend on the stall, seemingly out of nowhere. There’s a queue numbering system to help with crowd control. According to En. Asmi, this system was implemented about three years ago, after a customer suggested it to them.

It’s the only nasi lemak stall I’ve seen that asks you to take a number.

Service is brisk and well organized as I waited for my number to be called.

The system ensures that you’ll be served quickly on busy days, roughly no more than 15 mins. But sometimes they get huge orders (someone actually bought 200 packs one morning for an event) so by the time you come most of the *lauks* are already finished. To be on the safe side, give them a call if you're planning to buy several packets.

In this review, branding is done by the author via by highlighting the popularity of the place. This is done cleverly and subtly via a feature which other places do not possess, a

queuing system. The author mentioned in the excerpt that this stall is the only one which she has seen that requires customers to take a number. This system can already be considered as branding in itself because it sets the place apart from all other stalls. Besides that, this feature also creates an image which enables customers to identify it with. Customers will now automatically associate this stall with the queuing system so that at the mention of a *nasi lemak* stall which requires customers to take number, this stall would appear in mind. It is significant to note that the queuing system does not merely represent a unique feature. This system is also an indirect indication of how popular the stall is where people are willing to line and wait to buy their *nasi lemak*. It gives the impression that the food served here must somehow be delicious to attract the crowds indirectly casting a positive light on the image of this brand.

It must also be noted that the choice of words the author uses in branding these products are numerous positive adjectives like ‘great’ and ‘lipsmackingly delicious’ which are superlatives in one sense. This makes the reviews appear to lean towards the positive side and even come across as bias. Nevertheless, these words are common in promotional discourses as they are bound to be persuasive in nature.

5.4.2 Advertising Discourse

Besides branding, another prominent discourse found in the reviews is the advertising discourse. Advertising is defined by the Merriam-Webster dictionary as “publishing or broadcasting advertisements” (n.d.). Advertisements are widely known as a tool to sell or promote products or services. Kathpalia (1992) mentioned that advertisements consist of different categories from picture-caption reminder advertisements to embedded genres. These different categories employ different approaches in the promotion of product and services (Bhatia, 2004). However, they share the main communicative purpose which is to persuade customers to purchase the

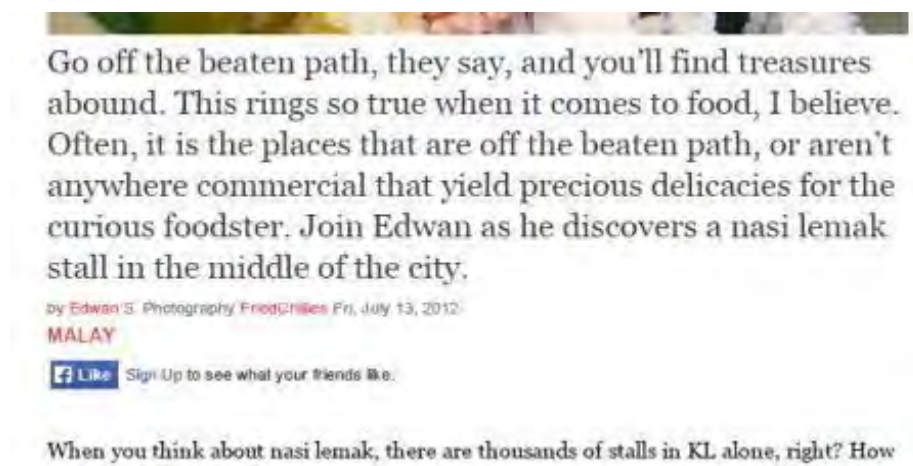
product or service offered. This particular discourse is manifested in the review in the form of Introductory Text.

This Introductory Text occurs after the main visual and just before the review begins. It is given a marked emphasis in the review by possessing larger font size and is placed above the author's byline and date. This chunk of text is thus separated from the review itself. As a result, one can conclude that the Introductory Text is part of the whole review but not the review itself. It leads to the review by providing a brief introduction to the review. It also includes the scope and the focus of the review so that readers can gauge the content of the review just by reading it. While it fulfils the function of being informative, the whole paragraph can be categorised under the advertising discourse. Similar to the storyboard genre, the Introductory Text functions as a summary as well as a promotional agent in advertising the product, *nasi lemak*. The following examples demonstrate the usage of advertising discourse in the introductory texts:

5.4.2.1 Advertising discourses based on AIDA Model

The following analysis shows an example of Introductory Text which realises the Attention, Interest, Desire and Action (AIDA) model which is adopted in advertising and marketing.

Figure 5.3, Appendix A, Review 4



Attention

The author uses a familiar analogy of taking the road less travelled to capture the readers' by utilising the phrase **off the beaten path**.

Interest/ Desire

Then, he proceeds to pique the readers' interest and desire by stating that delicious, good quality food are usually found in hidden, unknown places. Words like **'treasure'** and **'precious'** are also used to generate the audiences' interest. These words are associated with the product offered. In this case, the product is a *nasi lemak*. It serves an indirect implication that the food served at the place must be good and valuable like 'treasures'.

Action

This is implemented using the steps The last sentence prompts the reader **to 'travel'** with the author in his quest that leads him to a *nasi lemak* outlet. This paragraph persuades potential customers to **'join'** the author in sampling the product. It prompts the reader to read further and obtain necessary information. Subsequently, readers are bound to be convinced to try out the product. The author also cleverly employs the analogy of finding a treasure in describing his quest of discovering the *nasi lemak* place. This implies that the outlet he is visiting is less known and not commercialised. These are features of attraction which excite food lovers.

5.4.2.2 Advertising discourses based on Bhatia's (2004) Promotional Move

Structures

In Figure 5.4, the excerpt of the Introductory Text realises the moves proposed by Bhatia (2004) in his rhetorical moves for promotional text.

Figure 5.4, Appendix A, Review 2



In this example, endorsement an advertising discourse move found in Bhatia (2004) rhetorical moves for promotional text is utilised. The author introduces *nasi lemak* as a typical cure to the late-night cravings and proposes a place to get it for supper. Similar to the previous example, the author then invites the reader to go with the author to *Nasi Lemak Atan*. The author also pointed out that the place is a famous supper spot among clubbers and workers. Another positive endorsement is when the author states that the customers “enjoy a few packs of *nasi lemak*” instead of one pack. A good impression of the product is being created here. The readers are bound to assume that the nasi lemak served is delicious to the point that one pack is not enough to satiate the customers’ craving. The author also provides some information on the operating hours of the outlet by including phrases such as ‘ungodly hours’ and ‘wee hours of the morning’. Not many *nasi lemak* outlets operate after midnight as nasi lemak is generally a breakfast

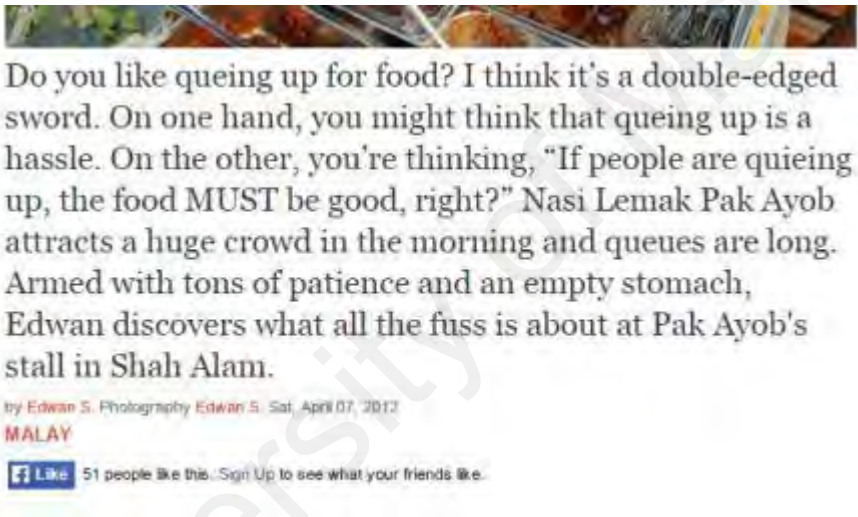
meal. By using these phrases, the author is also implying that now *nasi lemak* lovers can now easily have *nasi lemak* for supper. In this way, the author actually provided the readers with a supper solution.

5.4.2.3 Advertising discourses based on AIDA model and Bhatia's (2004)

Promotional Rhetorical moves

This example of Introductory Text demonstrates that both the AIDA model and Bhatia's rhetorical move for promotional text are employed.

Figure 5.5, Appendix A, Review 3



The screenshot shows a Facebook post with a header image of food. The main text of the post reads: "Do you like queuing up for food? I think it's a double-edged sword. On one hand, you might think that queuing up is a hassle. On the other, you're thinking, 'If people are queuing up, the food MUST be good, right?'" Nasi Lemak Pak Ayob attracts a huge crowd in the morning and queues are long. Armed with tons of patience and an empty stomach, Edwan discovers what all the fuss is about at Pak Ayob's stall in Shah Alam." Below the text, it says "by Edwan S. Photography Edwan S. Sat, April 07, 2012" and "MALAY". There is a "Like" button and text that says "51 people like this. Sign Up to see what your friends like." At the bottom, the start of another paragraph is visible: "One Sunday morning I found myself queueing up at a stall in front of a hospital in".

Attention

The author uses a question on queue to draw the attention of the readers. Subsequently, the author presents his views on queuing up for food. The author proposes that a long queue signifies that the food is confirmed to be of quality or else why would people sacrifice their time to do so.

Interest/ Desire

The author does this by placing an emphasis on the quality of the food. This include using the uppercase for the word 'MUST'. The second question is also meant to pique

the interest of the readers and make them curious about the product. He, then, introduced the outlet and prompted the readers to read on about his journey in determining the reason of the ‘fuss’ at the stall.

Action

The author urges action from the readers in this text subtly. The invitation to join Edwan on his quest to discover the nasi lemak at Pak Ayob’s stall is done imperceptibly. Unlike the previous examples, the author only uses a single verb ‘discovers’ in this Introductory Text. The structure of the last sentence of the text poses as an indirect invitation. Its narrative tone and fronting of the phrase “armed with tons of patience and an empty stomach”, projects the impression that the readers are going on the journey with him. This example does not include an imperative prompting the readers to take action. Instead, the author urges the reader to read further by piquing their interest in finding out the reason behind the fuss. This is manifested in the last sentence where it makes the readers curious and read on.

Similar to the previous example, this paragraph also utilises the advertising discourse moves by providing endorsement for the product being sold at the place. The author deliberately spelt out the endorsement by claiming that customers are willing to queue up purchase the product. He describes crowds as ‘huge’ and lines as ‘long’. This means that many people are purchasing the product. Long queues and big crowds are imageries used by the author to increase the readers’ credibility towards the product. As mentioned by the author as well, queues can only mean that the food served is so good that it is worth the hassle. This notion is also supported when the author mentioned that he is “armed with tons of patience”. Another emphasis is seen in the word ‘must’ which the author purposely placed in uppercase.

The instances presented in this subsection demonstrate that Bhatia Advertising Discourse moves are also found alongside the manifestation of the AIDA model. The Introductory Text contains endorsement which is a move for promotional text. It is emphasised in either through words or sentences in general. In relation to the usage of AIDA model, all three examples showed that in a single paragraph of the Introductory Text, the author managed to include all four points of the AIDA model. The first point, attraction is realised in the appearance of the text itself. As stated earlier, the font size used for this text is larger and short. This is bound to attract audience to read it. Reading the Introductory text will then lead the readers to the review itself to find out more. The second and third points of AIDA, interest and desire are being realised by the discussion of a relatable topic or analogy. This is where the author proposes topics like queue and supper. The author always ends the paragraph by urging action. This is done by inviting the readers to 'join' in and find out more by reading on. The use of AIDA model in these paragraphs proves that they do indeed function as an advertisement apart from being informative. The embedding of this discourse is done very cleverly through the Introductory Text.

5.5 Conclusion

This chapter discusses the significant roles of visuals and discourses as rhetorical strategies. Visuals do not merely complement the rhetorical moves but can sometimes act as move as well. A combination of visuals can form a genre and be used to complement another genre as seen in the storyboard of the review. Similarly, the relevant discourses that exist in the reviews can contribute to a formation of a genre. The Introductory Text of a food review can be compared to or have similarities of an abstract of a journal article. This is because it functions as a summary as well as a

promotion of the main text. More importantly, both visuals and discourses clearly strengthened the private intention of promotional intent the review. This is done so cleverly and subtly that on the surface level the promotional intent cannot be easily detected. This notion is further solidified in relevant discourses through the usage of Bhatia's advertising discourse and AIDA.

Therefore, despite embodying both communicative functions of informing and persuading, online food reviews can be concluded to be promotionally inclined. The analysis of rhetorical strategies in this chapter alongside findings from Chapter Four confirms this. Further elaboration on this notion is provided in the following chapter, Conclusion.

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CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION

6.1 Introduction

The final chapter of this study presents an overall summary of the research that has been conducted. Besides that, answers to the research question stated in Chapter One will also be discussed in this chapter. Limitations of the study alongside recommendations for future studies are also acknowledged in this chapter. This research hopes to create awareness among readers of reviews and consumers of products and services regarding informative content and the promotional intentions. It also hopes to highlight the need for related authorities to monitor and evaluate the generic description or genre type of text-discourse published in the mass media, especially for genres published with subtle promotional intentions.

6.2 Summary of the Findings

The study is a genre-based study where 16 online food reviews were analysed based on three important components which formed the basis of the study. These components consist of the communicative purposes, rhetorical moves and rhetorical strategies that form a particular genre. The third component of the study, rhetorical strategies is where the research focus lies. This is also the component rhetorical movewhich sets apart the research from previous studies. The current research takes into account the usage of visuals and relevant discourses and explores how they are used to realise the communicative purpose and rhetorical moves of the genre. Findings show that visuals can act as a move in the online reviews besides fulfilling the communicative purpose of the study. As for the relevant discourses, two distinctive discourses were observed, namely the branding and advertising discourse. They both belong to the promotional discourse. This strengthens the promotional elements in the

data. Findings from Chapter 4 demonstrated that the review is a mixed genre. Aside from the known communicative purpose, there are private intentions present in the genre. These intentions are realized through rhetorical strategies which are inclined towards promotional purposes. Thus, this study also explores how rhetorical strategies are used in achieving the private intentions of online food reviews.

Based on the literature review cited in Chapter Two, the main communicative purpose of online food reviews is deemed to be unbiased and a form of person-to-person communication. This means that the reviewer writes from his own, individual point of view and not on behalf of any other sponsors or companies. The reviewer's main concern is to prepare his or her honest opinion to aid the readers in their decision-making. The rhetorical move and strategies function to realise this communicative purpose. However, the communicative purpose of a genre can be manipulated by using rhetorical strategies to achieve private intentions. In the case of the current study, although reviews are supposed to be mainly informative, findings show that promotional intents exist across the data and are strongly manifested by the usage of visuals and accompanying discourses. This affects the generic description or genre type of food reviews.

The analysis of the rhetorical move in online food reviews shows that there are eight moves which occurred in the review. All eight moves are considered to be obligatory as they occurred at least once in each review. The most prominent moves recorded were Move 3, Establishing Credentials (EC) and Move 4, Introducing Offer (IO). Both moves included sub-moves which can be extensively elaborated. These moves belong to Bhatia's (2004) rhetorical move for promotional discourses. This affects the initially set communicative purpose for the genre that online food reviews function mainly to inform. This will be further elaborated in the upcoming sections where the researcher addresses the research questions contained in Chapter One.

Features relating to the online component of these reviews are also seen in Move 6, Soliciting Response (SR), Move 7, Establishing Discourse Community (EDC) and Move 8, Promoting an External Organisation (PEO). These moves are catered specifically to digital genre and hence, rarely occur in print genre. Although SR is usually realised in print genre by the provision of address and contact detail, this move is realised by the addition of text-external features in digital genre. Text-external features are features that exist outside the review but are relevant and related to the review. An instance of this from the data is the Facebook comment section mentioned in Chapter 4. Text-external features can be seen as an accommodation of print text features in digital genre. It breaks away from the traditional linear reading method in print media and is reorganised differently online.

As for the rhetorical strategies involved, the present research concentrates on the usage of visuals and accompanying discourses in the reviews. According to Swales three-level genre model, rhetorical strategies realises the rhetorical moves which in turn realises the communicative purpose of the study. In this study, visuals are analysed as moves. Both visuals and relevant discourses were analysed especially to see how private intentions are being subtly incorporated in the genre. Visuals were found to realise AA (Attracting Attention), EC (Establishing Credentials), and IO (Introducing Offer) moves. In addition, the storyboard which contains a series of visuals is found to be heavily promotional in nature. Similarly, there are two main relevant discourses found in the review: branding and marketing. Both discourses commonly occur in promotional genres. The rhetorical strategies used seem to indicate that visuals and relevant discourses are subtly used to insert private intentions in these reviews.

6.3 Discussion and Conclusion of the Study

6.3.1 Communicative Purpose of Online Food Review: Informative and Promotional

This sub-section will answer the **Research Question 1**, “**What is the communicative purpose of Malaysian online food review?**” The discussion will help establish whether these reviews contain communicative purposes which are informative or promotional or both.

Online food reviews are categorised under the review genre. Numerous studies have been conducted on the organisational structure of reviews. As seen in Chapter Two, reviews are often described as reports written by customers containing their personal and unbiased opinions about a product or service. At the mentioned of the word ‘report’, one could immediately gauge that its main function is to provide information. Bhatia (2004) placed reviews alongside academic introductions and reports. Essentially and traditionally, these genres are non-promotional in nature. While they do take upon the appearance of mixed genre and are becoming increasingly promotional, their main communicative purpose is still to supply relevant information (Bhatia, 2004).

The findings of the study prove otherwise. Although there are moves which fulfil the informative function of the review, the manifestation of promotional intent in the reviews can be largely seen in the main moves as well as in the rhetorical strategies. These elements were subtly and cleverly interwoven in the review. At first glance, the review appears informative with personal opinions and relevant information. Upon closer scrutiny, one realises that the main moves contain elements that sells the product being reviewed. Moreover, the rhetorical strategies used in the reviews are manipulated

to include private intention. From the storyboard of visuals to the relevant discourses implemented in the review, there is an abundance of promotional elements. In fact, the rhetorical strategies are mainly utilised to realise the promotional intent in ‘reviewing’ the product.

Therefore, the communicative purpose of the reviews does not conform to the current/original description proposed earlier in the study. These online food reviews fall under the category of promotional more than informative. The communicative purpose of these reviews has clearly shifted from providing information to branding and marketing. This does not in any way mean that these reviews cease to be informative. They carry both functions but its main role is to promote the product instead of providing information. This is due to the fact that readers would be less convinced by a promotional piece compared to an informative one. In this research, most of the reviews only report the positive aspects of the product. This is common in promotional text as the strength of the products is usually highlighted. Hence, promotional elements are subtly woven into an informative piece for better chances of appealing to readers’ attention.

This also gives rise to the concept of mixed genre which has become more common than ever that assigning a sole communicative purpose to a specific genre seems unjustifiable. Mixed genre cannot be classified into fixed categories of communicative purposes. Instead, they should be seen via a continuum perspective. This continuum consists of two different communicative purposes as its extreme end. Genre exists on this continuum where they can move up or down the continuum depending on the communicative purpose the genre are inclined towards. The appearance of the genre may also not reflect its main communicative purpose due to the manipulation of rhetorical moves and strategies to achieve private intention. In the case of this study, online food reviews are promotionally inclined when it is supposed to be

informational. Rhetorical strategies were used to achieve the private intention which is promotional.

A widely-known promotional mixed genre is the advertorial. Advertorial is described as a genre which contains the advertisement and editorial genre. It contained elements from the advertorial genre like colourful visuals and noun phrases which contributes to the positive appeal of a particular product (Bhatia, 2004). At the same time, advertorials is written from the perspective of the author and emphasises on the author's opinion (Bhatia, 2004). This is a typical feature of an editorial. However, in advertorials, the author's opinion is rarely negative. Reviews are also seen to share these features of an advertorial. Reviews contained visuals and as mentioned in Chapter Four, they are always positive regardless of the shortcomings of the place or product.

Hence, the communicative purpose of online food genre is to promote even though it should be limited to informative purposes or restricted to unbiased review of information.

6.3.2 Rhetorical moves: Promotionally Inclined

This sub-section will answer **Research Question 2, "What are the rhetorical moves of Malaysian online food review?"** The discussion will help in determining whether rhetorical moves realises the main communicative purpose of being informative or promotional.

Despite the earlier claim by Kwasnik and Crowston (2005) that online genres may appear "somewhat disorganise in structure", the findings of the study again demonstrate otherwise. Throughout the 16 reviews, moves 1 to 8 occurred sequentially almost all the time with AA (Attracting Attention) being the first move and PEO (Promoting External Organisation) as the final move seen in the review. All eight moves were recorded as 'Most Obligatory'. This is consistent with the findings in the

pilot study mentioned in Chapter Three where half of the data were analysed. The remaining eight reviews demonstrated similar results during analysis.

EC (Establishing Credentials) and IO (Introducing Offer) composed more than half of the text in these reviews and are considered prominent moves in these reviews. The EC (Establishing Credentials) move usually occurs after the Introductory Text to convince the reader of the credibility of the places offering the products. This is done via implementing one or more sub-moves under the EC (Establishing Credentials) move which are PE (Period of Establishment), HUT (Highlighting Unique Traits), CE (Customer Endorsement), and EO (Expansion of Outlet). This move is to persuade readers to find out more about the product. The next move, IO (Introducing Offer), then provides the information regarding the product to readers. Information was presented in a persuasive manner where the reviewer uses elaborate and vivid descriptions and adjectives involving all five senses. Written in a creative and deceptive manner, the presentation of this information serves to prompt customers to try/ purchase the product.

A new move discovered in the study is the PRA (Personal Recommendation for Action) move. It is a move which combines both the 'Endorsement' move and the 'Urging Action' move. In this move, the reviewer emphasises the summary strongly and urges the readers to take immediate action after reading the review. On the surface, this move may come across as the reviewer's personal opinion which is a norm in reviews. Deeper analysis reveals that through this move, the reviewer is indirectly providing his/her endorsement for the product (which is positive across 16 reviews). Furthermore, the immediate 'action' the reviewer prompts the reader to take is actually for the readers to try out the products. In other words, the reviewer is actually urging the potential clients to buy the product.

The analysis of rhetorical moves also established some unique features of the digital nature of the genre. This is shown in the final three moves SR (Soliciting Response), EDC (Establishing Discourse Community) and PEO (Promoting External Organisation). Interestingly, these moves are text-external features which mean that they are outside the review but are linked and relevant to the review. They realised roles and functions that only exist in the digital realm like instant response and the establishment of online discourse community. The integration of Facebook features into the webpage is the main way of realising these moves. Readers are invited to like their page on Facebook and provide response via Facebooks comments. This is not surprising as Facebook is widely used and is one of the popular social media today. Every time readers log in to their Facebook accounts, they will also have the opportunity to connect with other foodies and receive updates from FriedChilies. Facebook makes it easier for FriedChilies to reach their audience. Without Facebook, readers only get information when they search FriedChilies specifically on the Internet. Instead of waiting for readers to come to them, FriedChilies can now go to their readers via Facebook.

Overall, it can be concluded that while the rhetorical moves realise the informative communicative purpose, they also subtly contain promotional intents. The strong promotional inclination of the online food genre is witnessed through the use of Bhatia's (2004) rhetorical moves. Besides that, other discourses like Facebook were also used to strengthen the promotional intent of the genre. Thus, the rhetorical moves of online food reviews are promotionally inclined despite containing rhetorical move fulfilling the informative function.

6.3.3 Rhetorical Strategies: Integration of Private Intention

In this sub-section the answer to **Research Question 3, “How do rhetorical strategies realise the rhetorical moves and achieve private intentions?”** will be provided. In addition to that, a discussion on how private intention and rhetorical moves are realised will also be included.

The rhetorical strategies used in this genre challenges the main communicative purpose of the study which is to provide information. Even the informative appearance it takes upon is not sufficient to support its supposedly main communicative purpose. This is because the rhetorical strategies are clearly utilised to subtly integrate the private intention into these reviews. Visuals and the accompanying discourses in the webpage are utilised to subtly convince potential customers to purchase the products. Although the promotional intent is seen in the earlier rhetorical moves, it is strongly manifested in the usage of visuals and discourses. It is almost as if the main function of rhetorical strategies in this genre is to promote the products reviewed.

While Visual 1 realises the important role of attracting attention, Visuals 2 and 3 in the genre realises the two prominent moves, EC (Establishing Credentials) and IO (Introducing Offer). These visuals under different categories either serve to increase the credibility of the place or to provide details of the product. To build the confidence of potential customers, visuals 2 and 3 showcases long queues to indicate how the business is doing. This will provide the customers with a good impression of the place and persuade the customer to try out the product. Sub-move 2 of Move 4, DO (Detailing Offer) is realised by visuals portraying close-up shots of dishes, array of dishes and the actual photo of the place. From these visuals, readers are provided with concretised ideas and detailed information of the product and place. They are also more likely to evoke emotions and affirm the customer that they definitely have to purchase the

product. The writer has exploited not only textual features but also visual features to achieve private/promotional intentions in the form of a move or part of a move. The combination of visual-text provides a synergetic effect on promoting the product.

The storyboard is another feature which contains strong promotional elements. The storyboard is a series of visuals alongside caption which summarises the whole review. In fact, one could simply go through the storyboard to know what the review is all about. Like Visuals 2 and 3, the visuals in the storyboard realises either the EC (Establishing Credentials) or the IO (Introducing Offer) move. Hence, they are bound to realise the private intention of persuading the readers to purchase the product. However, the storyboard consists of another component which further strengthens this attempt: the caption accompanying the visuals. Instead of direct descriptions of the visuals, the captions include persuasive remarks, adjectives and witty invitations for customers to test the product. They not only draw customers' attention but also further convince customers. The writer promotes the product not only to readers who enjoys reading reviews but also to readers who prefers looking at or browsing through a set of attractive visuals with captions. The story board also promoted the product either as an Introrhetorical moveductory stimulus or as a Concluding stimulus, depending on which one does the reader approaches first in reading the review. In either approach, the promotional intent is reinforced.

One only needs to analyse the relevant discourses to conclude that the genre is promotionally inclined. The two main discourses in this study both belong to the promotional discourse: branding and marketing. Branding discourse is found in chunks of text found in the review. This is cleverly done by the reviewer when he/she tries to set apart the product from the rest by creating or highlighting the speciality of the place or product. It makes the product different from the rest and even a negative aspect of the *nasi lemak* can be transformed into a unique trait by word play. For instance, the

nasi lemak is special because it is simple, basic and packed in small packs unlike the rest complicated, big portions one out there. The usage of the original, familiar Malay terms like *paru goreng* and *ayam goreng* instead of using the translation is also a branding strategy. This makes Malaysian-ised the context of the text, giving the readers' a sense of authenticity. It emphasises that these *nasi lemak* are Malaysian.

On the other hand, marketing discourse is seen in the Introductory Text that attracts the readers' attention simply by its appearance (larger font size) and position (after the headline, before the review). In the concise, single paragraph of the review's summary the famous marketing model, AIDA is thoroughly implemented. The promotional intent is already achieved if the readers skim through this paragraph.

The rhetorical strategies realises the rhetorical move of online food genre through the usage of visuals which can act as a rhetorical move. On the other hand, the private intention of this genre is achieved through the usage of both visuals and relevant discourses. The promotional intent is strongly reinforced by both visuals and the discourses accompanying the reviews.

6.4 Limitations of the Study

This study is concentrated on online reviews in a Malaysian website where only reviews of *nasi lemak* are analysed. As there is no regular publication for reviews on *nasi lemak*, only 16 reviews managed to be collected in the span of four years. Some relevant reviews were also dismissed as they did not adhere to the minimum of 400 words per text. Due to the nature of the study which is exploratory and not generalisation, the study involves only one Malaysian website. Time constraint is also attributed to this decision. Besides that, the study is also done in a Malaysian context where all interpretations and discussion are carried out through a Malaysian perspective.

Due to constraints, the study is also only involves the textual perspective of Bhatia's (2004) multi-model perspective. In terms of multimodality, the study managed to only focus upon visuals and not the other aspects of multimodality like icons and positioning.

6.5 Recommendations for Future Research

For future studies, the researcher recommends the expansion of the scope of study. Studies can involve other popular rice dishes like *nasi kerabu* and *nasi kandar* apart from rice dishes. Future research may also consider recent popular food trends such as food trucks and burgers. In addition to that, data can also be collected from more than just one website. This is so that comparison can be made amongst the data and a stronger justification can be made in order to generalise. Studies can also be extended beyond the Malaysian context. This can also lead to a comparative study.

In terms of adapting perspectives in the analysis of data, perhaps the ethnographic perspective can be integrated into future studies. This will further substantiate the claims made regarding the genre especially when it comes to the realisation of moves and integration of private intentions. Interviews can be held with professionals to find out more details related to the genre used in a particular discourse community.

Rhetorical strategies studied via the socio-cognitive perspective are also a relatively new and interesting area to explore. Bhatia, Flowerdew and Jones (2008) proposed a few rhetorical strategies which are utilised in the appropriation of generic resources. Studies can be conducted based on these as mixed genre is definitely becoming increasingly popular. It will also be interesting to discover new roles of multimodality in the integration of private intentions in genres. In addition to this,

studies which include audience reception can also be conducted. This involves obtaining feedbacks from the readers via interview. These feedbacks are then analysed to confirm the analysis of communicative purpose, rhetorical moves and rhetorical strategies carried out beforehand. Audience reception falls under Bhatia's ethnographic perspective.

6.6 Implications

The findings of the study shows that online food reviews are promotionally inclined despite the main communicative purpose of a review is to inform. This stance is supported by the rhetorical moves of the reviews where Bhatia's moves for promotional discourse are prominent moves. The new additional move of Personal Recommendation for Action (PRA) is yet another move which realises the promotional intent of the reviews. However, the private intention of promoting a product is realised the strongest by the visuals and accompanying discourses. These rhetorical strategies is cleverly utilised to subtly integrate and realise the private intention of the genre. Limitations that were put forth in the study indicate that there are still much to be explored. Hence, it is the researcher's intention that this study will spur other researchers to undertake this type of research in the future. This research hopes to create awareness among readers of reviews and consumers of products and services regarding informative content and the promotional intentions. It also hopes to highlight the need for related authorities to monitor and evaluate the generic description or genre type of text-discourse published in the mass media, especially for genres published with subtle promotional intentions.

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APPENDIX

University of Malaya



Home > Where To Eat > Malay > Nasi Lemak Marvellous

Nasi Lemak Marvellous



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Foodster's Verdict Nasi Lemak Marvellous



Taste



With plenty of Nasi Lemak offered in KL sometimes you're spoilt for choice. Occasionally you crave for something simple...like Nasi Lemak bungkus. Small pre-packed Nasi Lemak with some sambal and a sliver of boiled egg. How can you resist these teeny but yummy packs?

by Farah Photography [FriedChillies](#) Sun, January 29, 2012

MALAY

Like [Sign Up](#) to see what your friends like.

Nasi Lemak Marvellous in Bukit Indah is known for their teeny packages of this Malaysian favourite. Tiny in stature but huge in popularity this family-run business is helmed by Pakcik Abu and his wife Makcik Yasimah. His wife does most of the cooking while Pak Abu and his son manage the restaurant. They started with a small stall in 1997 and relocated to their current location in 2003. Most people opt to tapau their Nasi Lemak for small gatherings or to eat at home. One guy even ordered 200 packs for an event. I prefer to dine in. Their packs are so cute that I finish my first one in a couple of minutes. Rule of thumb is 2 packs per person and you eat them on their own or with the lauk. I definitely recommend the latter. In my opinion, it's the lauk at Marvellous that sets them apart from other nasi lemak joints that I frequent.



The taste of the nasi lemak here is similar to what you probably ate in your school canteen. Sambal is mild and rice is infused with a hint of coconut. This is fine by me because the accompanying dishes are the ones that seal the deal. The best lauks here are the Ayam Masak Merah and an unnamed beef dish which is like a hybrid of dendeng and rendang. (When I asked Makcik Yasimah for the name of the beef dish, she just said, "Takde nama. Ni resipi bantai jer." - "I don't have a name for this dish, it's a recipe I got when I just mixed random stuff together.") So the beef dish for the purpose of this review should be dubbed Daging Bantai Jer. Other lauks sold here are paru, sambal sotong and fried chicken.



Let's start with the Ayam Masak Merah. It's such a popular order that it usually is the first one to run out every night. Chicken pieces are fried first then cooked slowly in a tomato based gravy. This reminds me of the Ayam Masak Merah that I get in Kuching. Not spicy but more sweet and less tangy than the usual Peninsular version. Makcik Yasimah also puts in loads of shallots and onions. Shallots are blended in the gravy and onion slices are added last into the mix so you get lovely caramelised onion rings along with the chicken. The sticky and thick gravy cling to each chicken part perfectly so you can mix it in with the rice.

Address: 23-G, Jalan Medan Indah 2, 68000 Ampang. (opposite the Bukit Indah Police Station)
Tel: 019 2720595 (Pakcik Abu)

Open: 6.30 pm till midnite (daily)

Pros: Simple Malay food that won't break the bank.

Cons: The roads leading here are notorious for their traffic jams.

Price Range: RM 10 😊😊😊😊

Parking: Canlah

Certification: Muslim Owned

Map:

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FRIEDCHILLIES tv

Let's Eat-lah with Hong Leong Bank
10.00 mins
9 Special Dish from 9 Trucks!

Meet the I Eat Nasi Lemak 2014 Heroes
10:00mins
I Eat Nasi Lemak is Back!

GREAT! FOODPRENEURS Section
5:00 mins
GREAT Foodpreneurs doin' Great Stuff

I Eat Burgers Thanks Everyone!
3:00 mins
Thank you for rocking I Eat Burgers 2014.



Next is the Daging Bantai Jer. Beef slices are boiled, then pounded and cooked with shallots, garlic and onions. I actually thought that it was dendeng but the beef slices are bigger and no lemongrass are added in the recipe. Soy sauce is used to sweeten and brown the meat. Daging Bantai Jer's gravy has a thick consistency quite similar to rendang. The difference is in the absence of kerisik so it doesn't have the smoky coconut taste that's usually associated with rendang. It is absolutely delicious and a definite must-try if you get a chance to dine here.



Another specialty at Marvellous is the Mee Udang. Egg noodles are cooked in a briny seafood broth served with prawns, celery, carrots and fried shallots. The portion is generous but I would have liked it if the broth was thicker. You can order this if (gasp!) you're not a Nasi lemak fan.

They say that imitation is the best form of flattery. If people start to copy you then it's a sign that you've made it. This is what happened with Marvellous. It is so famous that various stalls have been using their name to sell nasi lemak as well. Pakcik Abu is quite surprised when customers start to ask him about his other branches. In actual fact, there's only one true Nasi Lemak Marvellous and it's this one. Ask any of the Bukit Indah residents and they'll tell you the same thing. With more than ten years in the business, this is the real McCoy so beware of imitations.

Time and time again I find myself here even though there are many other options in the area. After so many visits here I realized the reason. Pakcik Abu and Makcik Yasimah put in one of the most essential thing into their food. They keep it simple, cooking just enough so they can still maintain the quality. What most places these days lack is the rare ingredient that Pakcik Abu and Makcik Yasimah instill in their cooking. That rare ingredient is sincerity. This quality is often neglected but once in a while you uncover it in places like this. That's why customers stay loyal to this place. Nasi Lemak Marvellous have survived the years because they've retained the sense of sincerity and steered clear



How-To Know Good Cencalok

1.00 mins

Simple tips on how to pick the good briny stuff

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of being too commercial. You can taste their love in every grain of their rice.

More Photos To Drool On



Tiny mounds of rice ready to be packed...



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-The New York Times -

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Nasi Lemak Atan



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Foodster's Verdict Nasi Lemak Atan



Taste



There's always space in our tummies for Nasi Lemak especially when we have the attack of the munchies at an ungodly hour. Here's a place that can be your next supper destination. Take a stroll to an old part of KL with Edwan as he brings us to Nasi Lemak Atan, a place where the post-clubbing crowds converge with night-shift workers to enjoy a few packs of nasi lemak before they head home in the wee hours of the morning.

by Edwan S. Photography Edwan Tue, February 28, 2012

MALAY

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Everyone has an opinion as to what constitutes a truly excellent nasi lemak. Some swear by the infusion of ginger and whole black peppercorns in the santan used to cook the rice; some like their sambal to be tongue-burningly hot, whilst others favor the sweeter, mellow kind; there are nasi lemak fans who stack their plates with various lauk, and then there are the purists who only want the quattro of ikan bilis, fried peanuts, cucumbers and eggs. So let's not get started as to what makes a perfect nasi lemak because it'll be a never-ending debate with too many voices. What I want to do now to simply point you to a fine example of the breed: the nasi lemak at "Nasi Lemak Atan", and if there's one thing I'm very certain of, it's the fact that for most Malaysians, there is ALWAYS time for some nasi lemak, come rain or shine, night or day.



Address: Lot 1185 1A Lorong Haji Hussein off Jalan Haji Hussein, Chow Kit, Kuala Lumpur
 Tel:
 Open: 6pm-5am
 Pros: Cheap, delicious nasi lemak
 Cons: Lauk is actually rather pricey
 Price Range: RM10-RM20 🍴🍴🍴
 Parking: Canlah
 Certification: Muslim Owned
 Map:

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In a part of KL I like to call Old KL (you know, the KL before there was KLCC and Pavilion) is a stall I discovered by accident one late night some time ago. As it turns out, this stall has been in operation since the 1970s. It was kinda dark and bare-boned, with tables and chairs, a food counter and nothing else. A single painted sign said "Nasi Lemak Atan", and on that food counter were stacks of freshly packed nasi lemak and plenty of lauk to choose from. Now a more recent visit has shown some changes; the sign is now blinking LEDs, and the stall now has a roof, with much better lighting to boot. The eponymous Atan is no more, and the stall is now run by his son, Helmi. The place opens at 6pm everyday and operates to 5am; unsurprisingly, the bulk of the customers are hungry night-hawks wanting a relatively cheap meal after a night out.




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Here, the nasi lemak is freshly packed in the familiar old newspaper and banana leaf combo right in front of your eyes, and you get to choose how many packets you want using plastic baskets. Then you make your way down the food counter to choose the various lauk on offer. On any given day, expect to find several varieties of sambal such as sotong, ikan bilis and kerang. In addition to beef rendang, there's also sambal goreng featuring beef lungs and chicken gizzards, gulai ayam, and of course the ever-popular telur mata and ayam goreng. Upon opening the packet of plain nasi lemak (80sen/packet), you're struck by the simplicity of it all. The packet is small (most customers usually take more than one!), and is a simple rice-sambal-egg affair. It is pretty quintessential if you ask me. Dig in especially when piping hot and freshly packed. The rice is fragrant with a delicate fattiness to it. The rice crumbles easily and the accompanying sambal is almost perfectly balanced, with the fiery chili being tempered by the sweet, almost jammy onions. Even the portion size is pretty spot on; ample enough not to weigh you down if you have just one, and small enough that it doesn't seem too worrying if one is to eat more than one packet!

Raise the bar by adding some lauk. The lauk selection pretty much caters to all variations of the nasi lemak pairing. On this particular visit, I went for a sampling of the sambal


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 3:00 mins
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kerang (RM4.50), sambal sotong (RM4.50), beef rendang (RM5) and a generous piece of battered fried chicken (RM4.50). The sambal kerang had an unmistakable 'kerangness' to it, sweetish, with a hint of iron from the cockles. The sambal sotong featured blanched sotong kembang paired with a spicy sambal that seemed to have crushed peanuts mixed in, which was a wonderful play of textures between the springy sotong and peanuts. The beef rendang was quite tender, with the accompanying gravy being a greasy, spicy flavor bomb. You could almost taste each individual spice distinctly on your tongue. Even the ayam goreng was satisfyingly salty and greasy. The side-dishes were great accompaniments for the relative simplicity of the nasi lemak.



If there was one complaint, it wasn't on taste. Rather, I found the prices for the lauk to be a little bit on the wrong side of 'cheap'.

So like I mentioned earlier, by no means is this the 'perfect' nasi lemak, because I think that such a thing has yet to exist. But the nasi lemak here at Atan's is, for me at least, a quintessential example of this national dish: simple, cheap and pretty damn satisfying. Just go easy on the lauk!

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Pick a lauk to go with your teensy pack of Nasi Lemak..they even have nuggets if that rocks your boat



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Nasi Lemak Pak Ayob



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Foodster's Verdict Nasi Lemak Pak Ayob



Taste



Do you like queuing up for food? I think it's a double-edged sword. On one hand, you might think that queuing up is a hassle. On the other, you're thinking, "If people are queuing up, the food MUST be good, right?" Nasi Lemak Pak Ayob attracts a huge crowd in the morning and queues are long. Armed with tons of patience and an empty stomach, Edwan discovers what all the fuss is about at Pak Ayob's stall in Shah Alam.

by Edwan S. Photography Edwan S. Sat, April 07, 2012

MALAY

Like 51 people like this. Sign Up to see what your friends like.

One Sunday morning I found myself queuing up at a stall in front of a hospital in Seksyen 20 Shah Alam for nasi lemak. The stall' name is Nasi Lemak Pak Ayob, and it's quite well known as the few nasi lemak stalls where you have to queue for your food.

Nasi Lemak Pak Ayob started their business at the Seksyen 6 pasar, and as customers flocked beneath its small roof, they saw fit to expand their stalls to other locations. Now they have two other stalls at Seksyen 20; one inside a mamak shop, and the other here, beside the road in front of KPJ Selangor Medical Center. I've heard there was another location in Seksyen 13 (or was it 10?) but couldn't verify.

I guess one of the biggest indicators of success in food and beverage operations is whether or not you manage to open one or more locations, regardless of what type of

joint you are: - stall, cafe, restaurant and so on. I think a lot of food sellers and owners would love the enviable problem of supply trying hard to keep up with demand.



They only open during the morning, as I unfortunately found out the night before, and you have to be quick as they run out pretty fast.

Anyway, after enduring a 10 minute queue (with others behind me!), I finally got my nasi lemak. A basic packet goes for RM1.50, and for that you get the usual egg, cucumber, ikan bilis and peanuts with a healthy dollop of deep, blood-red sambal. Extras? They have fried chicken, beef rendang, sambal bilis with petai, two types of kerang dish, and sambal sotong.

Luck wasn't on my side on this day as they'd run out of my preferred lauk for nasi lemak, which was fried chicken and beef rendang, so I settled for sambal bilis with petai (RM3) and the rendang kerang (RM3.50). It was a tapau affair, so I rushed back home to see and taste if the nasi lemak is worth the queue.

The rice came packaged in grease-paper and banana leaf. The portion is generous, easily able to fill a hungry tummy in the morning and perhaps for lunch. Best of all, the nasi lemak was still hot and steaming out of the packet.

Score one: the rice, crumbly and white, had that wonderful creaminess, that quintessential 'lemak', and was touched by the fragrance of the banana leaf and I must say a hint of pandan. Score two: the sambal, so splendid in color and texture (it reminded me of a well-cooked Mexican mole-negro), was a great balance between spice and sugar. I'm not usually a big fan of sweetish sambals, but this was just excellent. The chillies had a rich spiciness to it, almost chocolatey, and the sugar and onions balanced it out most beautifully. The accompaniments were also excellent side-notes; crunchy ikan bilis and peanuts, and a not-overcooked slice of egg, and fresh cucumbers.

Address: Nasi Lemak Pak Ayob (stall behind Petronas Seksyen 20, in front of KPJ Selangor Medical Center)
Tel:
Open: Open daily, 0700
Pros: Truly excellent nasi lemak, with sambal to die for
Cons: The lines, and how fast lauk runs out
Price Range: RM 10 🍴🍴🍴🍴
Parking: Canlah
Certification: Muslim Owned
Map:

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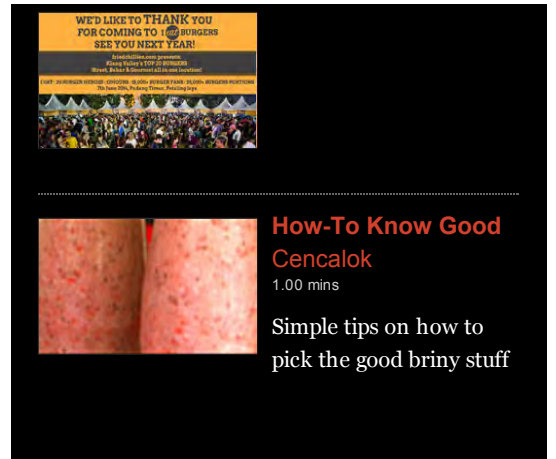
The lauk, too, was excellent: the sambal ikan bilis with petai shared the same base, most likely, with the basic sambal, but was on the spicier side. The rendang kerang was decadent, spicy and tasted like the rendang your mother makes at home; yummy. But really, they were second fiddle to the excellent basic nasi lemak.

It's easy then to see why a simple nasi lemak stall now has more than one outlet, and why people are lining up to buy it. Nasi Lemak Pak Ayob is one of the best nasi lemak stalls in Shah Alam. Come and get it, and be early!

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Nasi Lemak Pak Ayob is a popular breakfast spot in Shah Alam.



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Norhidayati Ayob · Shah Alam, Malaysia

Correction nasi lemak pak ayob not started from seksyen 6.

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Andrew Ooi Boon Seng · Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

they are now at seksyen 20 <http://nasilemakpakayob.blogspot.com>

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Foodster's Verdict Nasi Lemak V3 Corner



Taste



Go off the beaten path, they say, and you'll find treasures abound. This rings so true when it comes to food, I believe. Often, it is the places that are off the beaten path, or aren't anywhere commercial that yield precious delicacies for the curious foodster. Join Edwan as he discovers a nasi lemak stall in the middle of the city.

by Edwan S. Photography FriedChillies Fri, July 13, 2012

MALAY

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When you think about nasi lemak, there are thousands of stalls in KL alone, right? How many lie undiscovered, or aren't getting enough recognition? Beats me. I do think I've found one of the good ones though.

In an old taman perumahan, at the corner of Lorong Tiong Nam 1 and Jalan Tiong Nam, at the backroads of Jalan Raja Laut, lies a stall. The stall, Gerai V3 Corner (which I think is a hilarious, and very incongruous name!) is run by a family of four.



Among the office folk there, however, the gerai is more fondly known as "Makcik Buluh", although why that name stuck, I have no idea. There isn't a single bamboo bush in sight. Anyway, there's "Uncle" and Sani, who makes drinks, the daughter that serves, and Makcik Buluh herself, "Aunty", who every morning busies her self preparing breakfast for the office workers who almost exclusively make up the customers. And part of this breakfast spread is her nasi lemak (RM1.20)



And what a nasi lemak it is.

Address: (in front of a newly constructed, as yet unnamed hotel), Lorong Tiong Nam 1, Off Jalan Tiong Nam, 50350 Kuala Lumpur
Tel:

Open: 7am

Pros: Excellent, hot, fresh nasi lemak. Don't forget your telur mata!

Cons: None, really.

Price Range: RM 7 🍴🍴🍴🍴

Parking: Difficult

Certification: Muslim Owned

Map:

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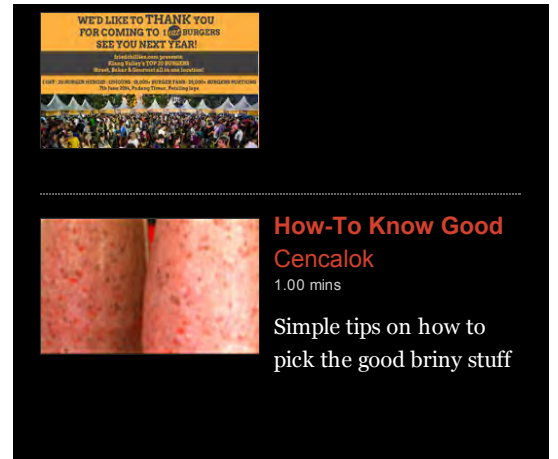
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You order directly to the Auntie, who will gruffly ask you “Mau telur mata?” (fried-egg, add RMo.8osen to the price). To this question, always answer “Yes, please.” I’ll tell you why in a bit, but first, the nasi lemak. You can choose to have it plated, or ask for it to be wrapped up, which they’ll do in banana leaf and newspaper.



Now, the nasi lemak is always hot and fresh every morning. I prefer mine to be wrapped up in banana leaf and let it steam for a few minutes; the fragrance of the banana leaf ever so subtly perfumes the rice inside. Unwrap it, and you’ll see a generous portion of rice, with sambal, peanuts, ikan bilis and cucumber slices. Honestly, one packet will fill you up well into lunch time.



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The rice is crumbly and tender, and though it is not as 'lemak' as one might think, the condiments more than make up for it. This is a nasi lemak where all the ingredients are in synergy with each other. The salty ikan bilis and peanuts add wonderful crunch, and the fresh cucumber slices give a burst of coolness. This is important, as the sambal is hot, wielding a deep, savory chili heat and flavor. Now remember the fried egg, and why I said you should always take up the offer of a 'telur mata' on top? It is because the eggs will be fried in-situ, and plopped onto your nasi lemak piping hot. The whites will be crunchy and crisped up just enough, while the yolk will still be liquid and runny. Break into the yolk and let the golden goodness ooze onto your sambal-fied nasi lemak. It's a brilliant, delicious combination of textures and flavours, a perfect reason to indulge early in the morning.

The gerai gets customers as early as 7am, which is when the Aunty starts preparing her nasi lemak. Come early if you want the nasi lemak, as it runs out pretty fast, usually by 830. It is not unknown for some office workers to buy a dozen or more packets of nasi lemak just to tapau for their colleagues.

As I mentioned earlier, this gerai is virtually known only the people who work in the area, and the location isn't really people friendly either. So, is it a treasure, off the beaten path? Maybe not.

But a damn good nasi lemak all the same.

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Generous amount of sambal are given.

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Home > Where To Eat > Malay > R.A Nasi Lemak

R.A Nasi Lemak



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Foodster's Verdict

R.A Nasi Lemak



Taste



Join Farah as she embarks on a journey to get her NL craving fix, here in the heart of KL.

by Farah Photography FriedChillies Thu, August 30, 2012

MALAY

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If we have to choose a national dish, nasi lemak would be a worthy contender. It's the most familiar and widely enjoyed dish in Malaysia. In KL, we are spoilt for choice when it comes to nasi lemak. One of our all-time-favourite NL haunt is R.A Nasi Lemak.



Paru goreng at R.A is what makes me come here over and over again. Theirs is the dry version where cow lungs are deep fried with ginger and shallots until crispy. To tenderize the lung, they boil it whole for a few minutes before cutting it into thin slices and then frying it. The texture of the lungs is like beef jerky, crisp on the outside and a little chewy when you take a bite. If you're a paru fan, be prepared to come early because these dream-worthy lungs would be one of the first things to run out every day.



Sambal sotong is also popular here. The squid is covered with thick sambal while the texture is springy with plenty of bite.

Even eaten plain, the nasi lemak here is pretty good. Rice is cooked almost al-dente so it's not clumpy and dense. It falls into individual grains making them the perfect transporter for the chilli sambal. The rice is flavoured with just a hint of coconut milk, which makes it light enough to enjoy on a workday morning. The sambal is not overly sweet and has just enough heat. So, if you love chillies, this could be a bit mild for your liking.

You can find R.A Nasi Lemak at Raja Abdullah (hence the R.A in their name), near the Dang Wangi police station. A cook named Haji Gedek created most of the popular dishes here and the recipes have remained unchanged since he started selling nasi lemak more than 25 years ago.

Address: 15A Jalan Raja Abdullah, Chow Kit, 50300 Kuala Lumpur. (Roadside stall behind Dang Wangi train station)
Tel: 0126291730 (Pn. Roslin), 0178806045 (En. Fendi)

Open: Nasi Lemak served from 7 am till noon, Mon - Sun

Pros: Doesn't burn your wallet.

Cons: Parking is a hassle.

Price Range: RM 3 -RM 7 😊😊😊😊😊

Parking: Difficult

Certification: Muslim Owned

Map:

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10.00 mins
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10:00mins
I Eat Nasi Lemak is Back!

Cheese, Coffees & Pizzas by GREAT Foodpreneurs
5:00 mins
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3:00 mins
Thank you for rocking I Eat Burgers 2014.




Although Haji Gedek is no longer around, his legacy lives on through his grandchildren, Puan Roslin and Encik Fendi. Now, they're the ones handling the business. The business has prospered and nasi lemak fans still flock here every day to get their nasi lemak fix. With so many fans, it's no wonder that R.A goes through 5-6 barrels of rice daily.


Another plus point for R.A are their prices. Even though it's located smack in the middle of the city, the prices have remained low. For 'nasi lemak biasa' you only need to pay RM1.50 and even with lauk, a plate of nasi lemak would usually only cost about RM3.50. This makes breakfast here tastes even more tastier!



For lung aficionados who don't mind waking up early to sample the best paru goreng in

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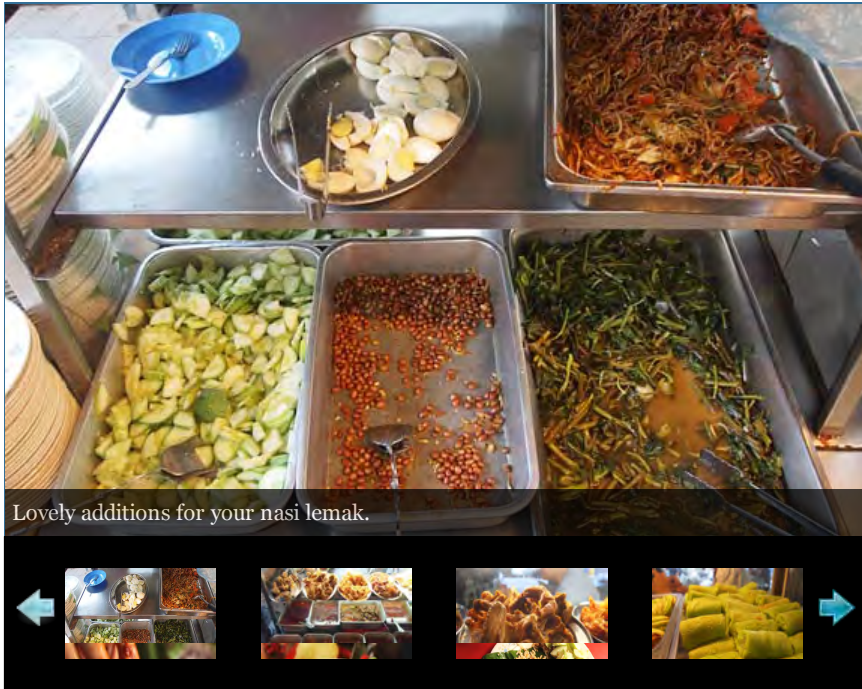
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KL, I urge you to try the ones sold at R.A. Even if you're not an early-riser, you'll have to try it at least once. I won't be surprised if the paru goreng here would actually motivate you to wake a little bit earlier than usual because they're just so totally worth it.

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Nasi Lemak Kak Sanah



There are different kinds of nasi lemak stalls. There's the one where you go when you don't feel like walking or the one where you go to when your wallet is feeling skinny. And there's always this one stall everyone in the area knows but doesn't quite talk about. It's that stall that drags you out of bed at sunrise and compels you to trek towards it in order to satisfy your nasi lemak craving. In my case, that stall is Nasi Lemak Kak Sanah. You have to take number here and at 7am, mine is already a whopping 33. Sigh...


by Danielle Photography [FriedChillies](#) Sat, November 03, 2012

MALAY

 Like 11 people like this. [Sign Up](#) to see what your friends like.

Nasi Lemak is a much-loved breakfast meal for Malaysians and because of their popularity, you can usually find a stall set up in most neighbourhoods in KL. My favourite stall is luckily located near my house. This particular nasi lemak stall started out as one of those stalls that mushroom up overnight, before quickly establishing itself as an institution through word of mouth advertising. It's operated by a friendly duo of Encik Asmi and his wife Kak Sanah (for whom the stall is named after); from the back of a lorry. Kak Sanah serves up 500-600 packets of nasi lemak a day, every morning to its crowd of loyal customers. It's quite popular with people from all walks of life, from the aunty housewife to the office worker.

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Foodster's Verdict Nasi Lemak Kak Sanah



Taste ● ● ● ● ●



The range of lauk they serve is amazing. This ranges from the typical sambal kerang, sotong, daging, ayam and kuih assortments. There is even paru goreng sambal here.



I usually go for the ayam goreng because I'm not really a fan of spicy foods. Deep-fried, just right to that point where the chicken is melt-in-your-mouth tender but not mushy. The skin is crispy in that magical goldilocks zone where it's not drenched in grease nor too dry - always just right. There's a peppery but fragrant note hidden in the spices that coats the skin which gives it a nice spicy kick.

Address: Small lorry opposite DJ Club, next to a stop sign, Jln SS 22/ 19, Petaling Jaya
Tel: 019 222 7547

Open: 6.45 am - 9 am (Breakfast)

Pros: Awesome fried chicken and generous rice portions.

Cons: You do have to take a number and queue for a packet.

Price Range: RM 10 🍴🍴🍴🍴

Parking: Canlah

Certification: Muslim Owned

Map:

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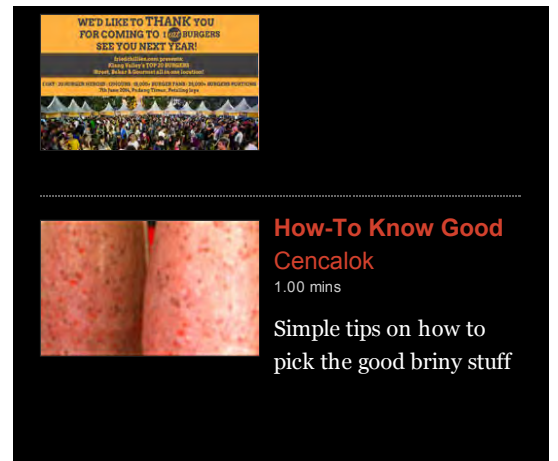
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However, if you like your food spicy then you'll like the level of spiciness that Kak Sanah's food has. Don't be fooled by the ayam masak merah. It packs a good punch. It may be sweet and sour but still rates as a "sweat as you eat and cry" level of spiciness for me. Kak Sanah's Nasi lemak stall always manages to cook chicken perfectly, no matter if it is chicken rendang or ayam goreng. If chicken is not your thing, you can try the sambal sotong or the kerang.

I need to make a special note of the generous portions they dish up at this stall. Eat a packet of their hearty nasi lemak, and you'll still be full at lunch time. I like their rice, as they have a subtle hand with flavouring. When you open your packet of rice, you can smell the santan but it is not too "lemak" and the rice perfectly complements any lauk you chose.



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I particularly like their curry puffs. The potato puffs are really addictive, especially when you're hungry, you just can't stop at one. The best thing about them is that they keep very well. You can taupau them for a mid afternoon snack to go with your tea. They also have chocolate cake, mini doughnuts (Super delicious – dense and sweet) and Kuih Kodok (Deep fried Banana Balls).

Despite the early hour (ungodly by some standards) a swarm of people descend on the stall, seemingly out of nowhere. There's a queue numbering system to help with crowd control. According to En. Asmi, this system was implemented about three years ago, after a customer suggested it to them. It's the only nasi lemak stall I've seen that asks you to take a number. Service is brisk and well organized as I waited for my number to be called. The system ensures that you'll be served quickly on busy days, roughly no more than 15 mins. But sometimes they get huge orders (someone actually bought 200 packs one morning for an event) so by the time you come most of the lauks are already finished. To be on the safe side, give them a call if you're planning to buy several packets.

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Kak Sanah, En Asmi and their daughter manning the stall.



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-CNN-

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Nasi Lemak Kak Hani (Uptown Damansara Bus Stop)



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Foodster's Verdict

Nasi Lemak Kak Hani (Uptown Damansara Bus Stop)



Taste



When it comes to my affair with nasi lemak, I do look for specific things. Sambal is key, rice should have hints of coconut and if there's a lauk selection, there should at least be one that is so spectacular that it would entice me to come to the joint over and over again.

by Farah Photography [FriedChillies](#) Tue, January 08, 2013

MALAY

Like 12 people like this. [Sign Up](#) to see what your friends like.

With Nasi Lemak Kak Hani in Damansara Uptown, the pulling factor is her ayam masak merah. A family recipe that has been passed down from her mother-in-law, their ayam masak merah differs from other places because it has an aromatic citrus flavour to it. Along with the usual tones of tanginess and sweetness that comes from chilli and tomato sauce, Kak Hani adds kaffir lime leaves to the dish to give it a fragrant kick. She uses blended dried chillies and fresh chillies in her ayam masak merah, simmering it down for hours to allow the chillies to be fully cooked thus allowing their natural sweetness to come through.



Her sambal is pretty mellow with a low level of heat so it's ideal for wussy tongues that can't handle too much chilli in the morning. It has a sticky (almost oily) consistency that makes it perfect mixed into the subtly flavoured rice. The rice has a smidgen of coconut flavour, light and fluffy. The portion of rice is quite big, your tummy will be full after just one packet.

Kak Hani has been operating in Damansara Uptown for the past 8 years. She opens as early as 6.45 am and finishes at about 10 am. She has plenty of regulars so her ayam masak merah is usually the first dish to finish every day. Due to the popularity of her stall and to meet growing demands, her husband, Abang Ramli has set up another nasi lemak stall on another location in Uptown. Both locations are equally busy but sometimes if you're lucky, when one of the stalls runs out of nasi lemak (it's usually Kak Hani's) you can go to the other one to see if there's still some left.



The nasi lemak served by Kak Hani and Abang Ramli is a no-frills affair. They have plenty of lauks to choose from but of course the one to try is the ayam masak merah. With its thick sweet gravy, it's the perfect lauk for the creamy coconut rice. For curry puff lovers, the karpap sardin here is also worth mentioning. With a flaky crust and a sardine filling generous with onions and chillies, it's also an ideal addition to your nasi lemak breakfast.

[More Photos To Drool On](#)

Address: Kak Hani's stall : Jalan SS 21/1A, Damansara Utama, (bus stop in front of Beauty & Slimming Express), Abg Ramli's stall : Jalan SS 21/56 B (in front of Bank Rakyat)
Tel:
Open: 6.45 am till 10 am
Pros: Yummy nasi lemak and ayam masak merah
Cons: Sambal can be a bit oily
Price Range: RM 10 🍴🍴🍴🍴
Parking: Canlah
Certification: Muslim Owned
Map:

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Kak Hani preparing a packet of nasi lemak for her customers.



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Nasi Lemak Ceria



The quintessential Malaysian breakfast covers a large area, but nothing quite gets us like the perfect plate of steaming nasi lemak. True to its namesake, Restoran Ceria can definitely perk up your mornings with its spoils of santan rice, spicy sambal, and some!

by [Acacia Daud](#) Photography [Acacia](#) Sat, October 05, 2013

MALAY

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It's early weekday morning and the place is packed with people. This isn't really surprising given the fact that for the last ten years, this restaurant has been steadily making a name in the business of booming breakfasts. While they have really great lauk campur lunches and fried dinner dishes, it's the morning meals that customers go for. The restaurant started out as small one corner shop that has taken over a long stretch, scattered with tables starting from 6 a.m. If you're a late riser, best make it before 10 as the food goes away fast.

Here's what you should definitely aim for – the nasi lemak, and the cakoi. The nasi lemak is a steaming plate of full, creamy, home-made rice. It's soft and fluffy, with a light scent of santan wafting away with the steam. A bite into its richness and you'll find the secret to the restaurant's success. The standard nasi lemak plate comes with a half boiled egg, slices of fresh cucumber, some nice salty nuts and the sambal. It's enough to welcome your mornings, but Restoran Ceria offers the extra mile.

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Foodster's Verdict Nasi Lemak Ceria

Address: Jalan Ru 3/9a, Seksyen 3, Wisma Mais, Seksyen 3, Shah Alam, 40000, Selangor
Tel:

Open: Mondays to Sundays, 530am - 10pm

Pros: Good delicious food

Cons: Can get full during peak eating hours, so it's hard to find a seat. Service can be slow, but friendly.

Price Range: Below RM10

Parking: Canlah

Certification: Pork Free

Map:

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Trucks!

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First off, there's the basic sambal. Light in texture, it's not too heavy on the oil and not super thick. It's a solid, spicy and slightly sweet sambal mixed in with some anchovies. While it's not out of the world, it does the trick to get your morning energy up fantastically. If you want to level up, have the sambal kerang. Tiny morsels of chewy, salty kerang flesh in hot sauce, with heavier tastes of garlic and chili. It goes amazing with the crunchy nuts, anchovies and soft egg that make up the dish.



But Ceria doesn't stop there, as another option is to have your nasi lemak with the sambal sotong. This is by far one of the more popular sambal as it runs out by 10a.m. almost on a daily basis. Delicious, chewy cuttlefish drenched in the spicy sauce. It's a scrumptious contrast between the slightly salted sotong and the sharp tang of the chili, in a mouthful with warm creamy rice. Mmm... For a slightly different take try having the nasi lemak with the paru goreng. It comes in small bite sized pieces, fried to a crispy texture that adds a pleasantly different taste to your platter. The paru itself is nicely salted and not too chewy. There's also the rending daging to try, soft bits of beef with great flavor. Another good nasi lemak add-on is the fried chicken. Have your choice of hunky breast, wing or drumstick, and it'll come succulently fried, with a thick, tasty crust. You're also welcome to add to your dish, the telur mata, lipsmacking runny yolk and soft egg whites.



10:00mins

I Eat Nasi Lemak is Back!



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Aside from the nasi lemak, a good breakfast go to is the cakoi. This light, fluffy pastry is a favourite to go to, and it's hard to find a good one anywhere. Ceria hand makes them with a delicious batter, rich with butter, a delightful mix of salty and sweet. Dip it with the kaya sauce, and you're in for the east's tasty answer to western toast. Ceria fries them on the spot by batches, though for safe measure its best to have earlier in the mornings while it's still fresh and warm, lest it gets soggy easily.



Other than that, Restoran Ceria offers tasty roti canai dishes in the mornings, so your options are always open. Go for the roti boom, or better yet, the roti tampal goyang! Slightly similar to the roti telur, except this one has a runny egg wrapped within the folds. Around 1030 a.m. the lauk dishes are already displayed, so you're always welcome to opt for extra condiments to your plate of rice or roti. What more can you ask from a restaurant that only wants to cheer up your mornings? ☺

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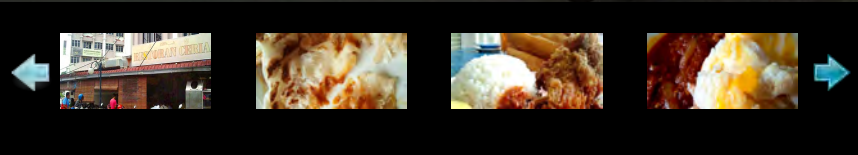
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FriedChillies



Home > Where To Eat > Malay > Nasi Lemak Tanglin

Nasi Lemak Tanglin



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Foodster's Verdict Nasi Lemak Tanglin



Taste



Tanglin brings nasi lemak nostalgia to many people and not just KLites only. Whilst nasi lemak sellers face stiff competition, Tanglin's queue is still long. Perhaps it's the experience they put in that started from way back in 1948. And that's a clear 9 years before the Malaysia achieved Independence.

by Adly Photography FriedChillies Sat, October 26, 2013

MALAY

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Nasi Lemak Tanglin has been around for ages. If you're craving for a nasi lemak, queue up for theirs somewhere along Jalan Cenderasari (opposite the Poliklinik, Off Jalan Tanglin) with everyone else. They are now in the Tanglin Food Court. If you're unlucky, the queue is very long, if you're lucky, the queue is just long. If there's no queue, then they are probably closed or the food's all gone! Queue starts long way early at about 7.30am and tapers down by about 10am.



There are two great things in this food court we'd like to highlight. The nasi lemak and the kopitiam tea. Let's put the kopitiam tea aside first and try some nasi lemak tanglin style. Tanglin started way back around 1948 by Suryati Jawirunnah and her recipe is now passed to her son Zainal which will soon pass down to Zainal's daughter. Three generations of history here.



Tanglin has the usual chicken rendang, sambal sotong and beef lung dendeng among others. From all the myriad of lauks available, my heart fell for their beef liver sambal and also sambal sotong. The sambal sotong recipe has ground peanuts giving it a slightly nutty taste with a slight chili kick. The beef liver has the sweet sambal way seeping deep into the cuts which makes it that more enjoyable eating. The rice is steamed 'ceroi' which means that Zainal's rice is not the sticky type, hence less starchy and able to soak up more of the other nasi lemak gravies.

Address: No 3, Jalan Cenderasari 3, 50480 Kuala Lumpur
Tel: 019 668 7949

Open: 8am-1pm daily

Pros: The other stalls surrounding it are good too

Cons: Parking can be really difficult in the morning

Price Range: RM 10 🍴🍴🍴🍴

Parking: Canlah

Certification: Muslim Owned

Map:

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I Eat Nasi Lemak is Back!

Cheese, Coffees & Pizzas by GREAT Foodpreneurs
5:00 mins
GREAT Foodpreneurs doin' Great Stuff

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3:00 mins
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Their nasi lemak is absolutely delicious with some telur goreng, crunchy ikan bilis, some cut cucumbers and dining out al fresco style under the trees that grow around the Tanglin food court. Do you remember that they used to be located just by Jalan Tanglin, under a huge tree that provides shade for their lone stall? You do? Then you are old.

Anyway, why does Tanglin's nasi lemak stands taller than most of the rest? Their's have a refine taste. If we were to add three to four different lauks in one plate, it will still have a balanced taste. In Malay, this is called 'kena'. A very hard feat to achieve as it requires experience and the balance of the right ingredients in each lauk so that it does not clash with one another on the plate.



Did we forget about the kopitiam styled tea? We certainly didn't! You will find walking around the tables, a small polite old man carrying a tray full of drinks, most of them are white tea served in an old kopitiam teacup. Oh... this tea is so smooooth, it just glides through the tastebuds, teasing it a little before easing it's way down. Not much aftertaste, this may be one of the best local teas I've ever had in KL. With that done, we're back on the highway joining the 'happy people' braving the morning KL traffic jams....

[Updated from earlier 2004-03-02 11:40 PM review]

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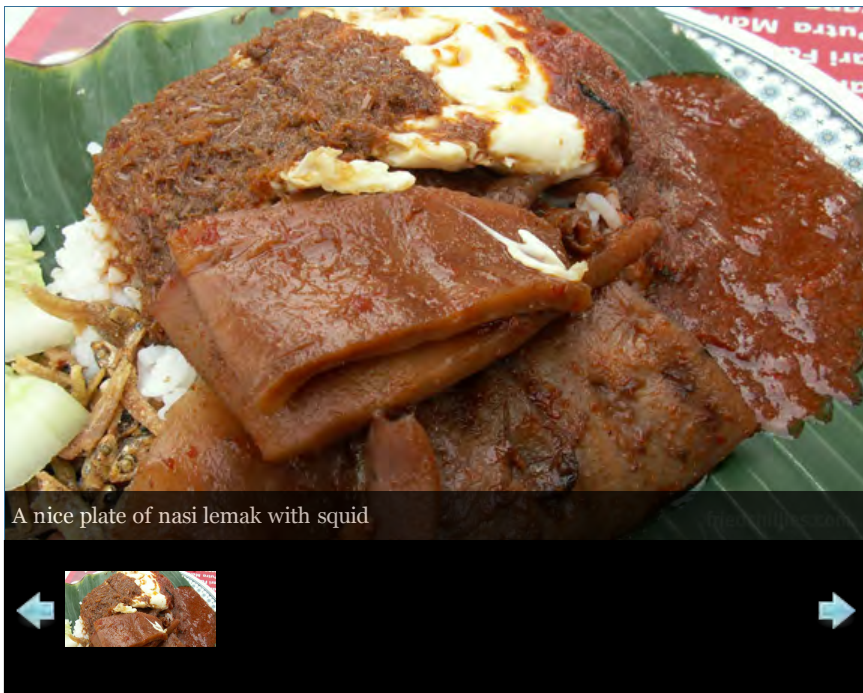
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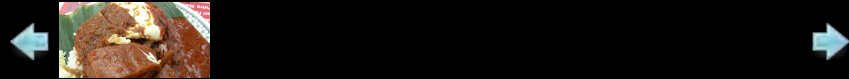
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A nice plate of nasi lemak with squid



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Nasi Lemak Famous



Those of a certain age will remember this late night Bangsar nasi lemak way before Chawan claimed Devi's Corner's spot. For this week's Nasi Lemak Mondays, Farah revisits this nasi lemak joint and finds out if it deserves it's bold name...

by Farah D. Photography Megat Fariz Izmir Mon, August 18, 2014

MALAY

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So, what makes Famous, famous? Their fried chicken, of course.

In the 90's, Nasi Lemak Famous was a small stall in Bangsar, a supper spot popular with the post-clubbing crowd trickling in from the nearby watering holes in Telawi. At first, many came for the nasi lemak but in the end, many more returned for their juicy fried chicken. Now, more than 30 years on, Famous is still striving and doing well.

The Famous chicken is prepared and fried on-site. Skin is crispy and golden-brown, well-seasoned with curry powder, lemongrass and fennel, marinated for a day and then dredged in corn flour before frying to help bind all the wonderful spices together. You can also ask them to spoon in some of crispy bits of batter into your rice. Puan Zaleha doesn't add turmeric in her marination as she says that adding turmeric will cause the chicken skin to burn easily. Customers keep on coming, so every few minutes, the fried chicken is constantly replenished. This means freshly-fried chicken with your nasi lemak every time.

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Foodster's Verdict Nasi Lemak Famous



- Address: Bangsar Selera Food Court, Jalan Telawi 1, Kuala Lumpur
Tel: 013 6741841 (Neteer) – call after 5pm
- Open: Daily 5pm - 5am (closed on Hari Raya Puasa and Hari Raya Haji)
- Pros: A variety of lauks and yummy fried chicken.
- Cons: It's an open air food court, so don't expect too much ambience here.
- Price Range: RM5- RM10
- Parking: Canlah
- Certification: Muslim Owned
- Map: [View Map](#)

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10.00 mins
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Meet the | Eat Nasi Lemak 2014 Heroes


It's no surprise that Famous uses up to 30 chickens daily during the week and 50 chickens per day during the weekend. For the adventurous eater, crispy chicken feet is also available here. You pair the fried chicken with their fragrant rice and sambal and you get a killer combo. They don't skimp on the 'santan' here, the rice has tons of 'lemak' flavour with a subtle aroma of pandan.



A 'famous' plate of nasi lemak with fried chicken and limpa


The sambal is a Johorean sambal, so it has the teeniest hint of belacan and a bit of tang from the addition of asam jawa. Its spiciness has a slow burn that teases your tongue with just enough lingering heat without the burning sensation. Not overly sweet as most of the flavour comes from the caramelisation of onions that has been cooked for 6 hours (9pm to 3am) daily.

Another specialty lauk here is the Rendang Limpa (cow's spleen). The rich earthy taste of the limpa compliments the wonderful richness of rendang gravy. The limpa texture is soft, with just a smidge of chewiness. If offal is your thing, the limpa here is something you need to try.



10:00mins


I Eat Nasi Lemak is Back!



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5:00 mins


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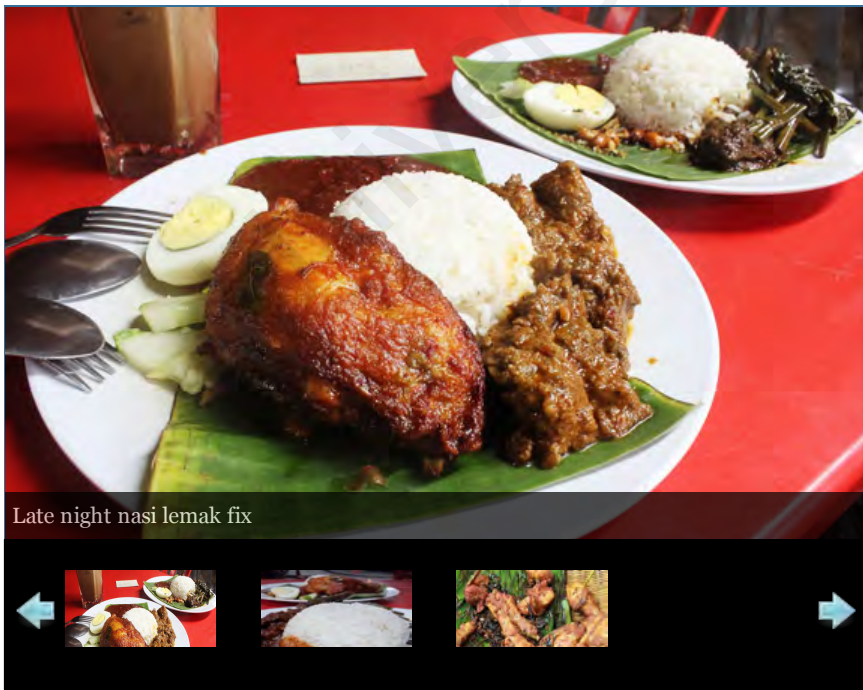
If you want to venture from the fried chicken there's other stuff too!

Other lauks on offer are rendang kerang, sambal paru and rendang daging as well as the usual condiments of cucumbers, egg, peanuts and ikan bilis. The sambal coats the paru like second skin, Puan Zaleha told me the secret is blended peanuts (you can hardly taste it), it acts like a glue, adhering the sambal to the paru. I also love that they have kangkung which I usually opt for instead of cucumbers.

Famous is a family business. The matriarch, Puan Zaleha Ali started it and came up with all the recipes and now the day-to-day operations is handled by her sons and daughters. She is friendly and has no qualms in sharing her recipes with anyone who asks her. Their long tenure in Bangsar has garnered them regular customers from all over Malaysia, Singapore and even Indonesia. They have an Indonesian customer that makes a yearly pilgrimage to KL just to have a taste of their nasi lemak.

Due to the success of their nasi lemak business, now the Famous family also offer catering services. For a satisfying nasi lemak supper, head over to Nasi Lemak Famous in Bangsar and you'll discover why they're ballsy enough to put Famous in their name.

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Late night nasi lemak fix



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Reza Abdullah

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-Adobe -

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University of Malaya

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Nasi Lemak Royale Kedah



When is a nasi lemak not a nasi lemak? When it's yellow, served with various kuahs and gravies and comes from Kedah, apparently. Edwan samples a kingly dish from the North of Malaysia.

by Edwan S. Photography CK Chun Fri, September 05, 2014

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Nasi lemak is probably THE flagship Malaysian food. Show me a Malaysian that doesn't know nasi lemak and I'll show you a unicorn. Seriously it is as ubiquitous as a food can get in Malaysia. Coconut rice, sambal and some ikan bilis, nuts and cucumber on the side. Everyone and anyone would know that as nasi lemak. But that is NOT what Nasi Lemak Royale Kedah is. Names can be deceiving, but that's not necessarily a bad thing... As the name suggests, Nasi Lemak Royale Kedah got it's start in the rice bowl of Malaysia. The word is that it got the name 'royale' because the Sultan of Kedah used to send his workers (servants? Staff?) to buy it for him, as it is very nearby Istana Anak Bukit, the state palace. We've seen pictures of very long lines at their flagship Kedah branch, so you could say our expectations were high.

Anyway, they've since set up shop in Ampang, KL. There's actually two spots: their actual restaurant and a pop up stall at Mentara Food Court.

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Foodster's Verdict Nasi Lemak Royale Kedah



Address: Main restaurant: Jalan Ampang Putra, Taman Putra Sulaiman, 68000 Ampang Pop up: Mentara@Tiara, Jalan Sulaiman 3 55100 Kuala Lumpur
Tel:

Open: 3pm - late
Pros: Delicious, filling, relatively cheap
Cons: Indigestion afterwards
Price Range: RM5 - RM15 😊😊😊😊
Parking: Canlah
Certification: Muslim Owned
Map:



Always ready to serve!

First thing you should know is that lemak royale is pretty much a nasi kandar! We'll get to the 'lemak' part in a jiffy. Now secondly, and perhaps most importantly is that it is absolutely and lip-smackingly delicious that you won't care if it isn't nasi lemak in the traditional sense.

To the rice then. The first thing that grabs your attention is the colour: it's a bright yellow. The colour comes from the practice of mixing the rice with ghee (clarified butter) and that, ladies and gentlemen, constitutes the lemak part of the rice. It's not as fragrant, but has that characteristic buttery fragrance.




Check out that colour!


So you ask for a plate of rice then choose your lauks. Kuah campur is a must here. Ask for it and the guy behind the counter will scoop about half a dozen kinds of gravy onto your rice. It's a potent and intoxicatingly tasty mix of curries, a sweet oily gravy and a really spicy one. Then opt for any number of lauks that you want. We recommend the boiled okra and freshly fried chicken. Don't forget your complimentary green chilli as well!

Hands are the way to go here. Mix the soft, pillowy rice with the kuah. Your tongue will sing as an explosion of flavours makes its way to your taste receptors. It's rich, sweet and spicy all at once. Then grab a bite of the fried chicken. It's always freshly fried with juicy, hot meat beneath a flavourful spiced crust. Not a fan of fried chicken? Get a load of their ayam madu, prawns in curry and meat dishes. You really can't go wrong here.

But one of the best things about this is that a plate of nasi and chicken only costs RM4.50! It's like nasi kandar without nasi kandar prices. The portion is huge too, so it's a great deal for hungry stomachs and light wallets. In fact you can pretty much split a full serving between two people and still walk away satiated.




9 Special Dish from 9 Trucks!



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10:00mins


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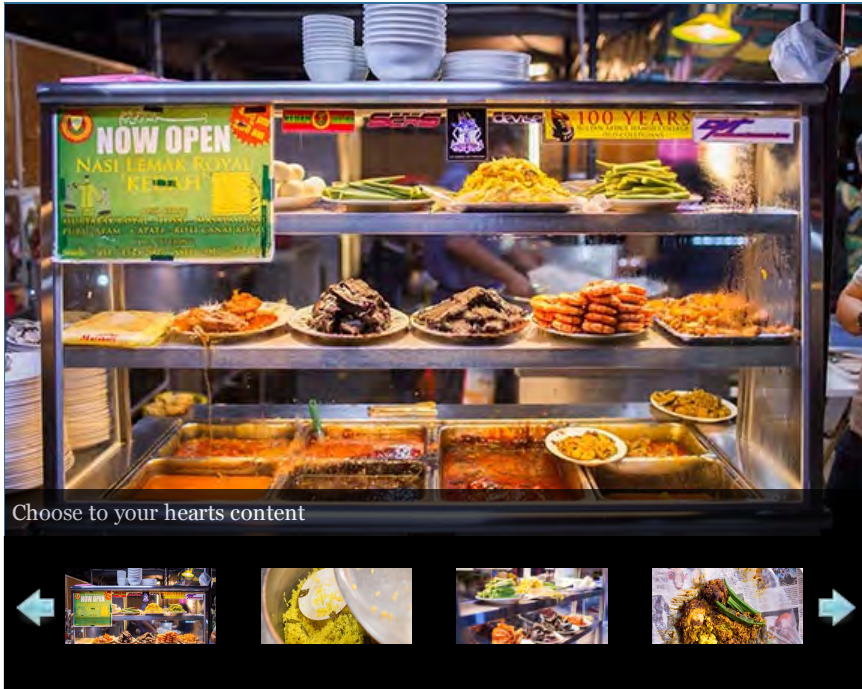
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Hmm. Maybe Nasi Lemak Royale actually means you're eating like a King then?

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Nasi Lemak Ali @ Lebuh Pantai, Penang



For the past 10 years, residents of Penang have been enjoying nasi lemak from this humble stall. Fragrant, nicely sized and absolutely delicious, the Friedchillies team visited Nasi Lemak Ali at Lebuh Pantai to have a taste.

by Edwan S. Photography CK Fri, October 17, 2014

MALAY

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Sometimes greatness is borne out of a touch of bad luck. You know what I'm talking about: that silver lining behind the cloud that bears fruit in a way one would never have imagined. That's certainly the story that En. Ali and Pn. Wasnita told us when we stopped by his nasi lemak stall in Penang. About ten years back, En. Ali was working in a factory when things got a bit, well, bad. So he and his wife decided to supplement their income by selling nasi lemak. "I had an Indonesian friend who taught me how to prepare a good nasi lemak," said the soft-spoken En. Ali. "So me and my wife decided to sell nasi lemak to make ends meet." And man, how those ends have met. Now the husband and wife duo are selling nasi lemak full time. Ask any Penang-ite about nasi lemak Lebuh Pantai and they would know which one you're talking about.

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Foodster's Verdict

Nasi Lemak Ali @ Lebuh Pantai, Penang



| | |
|----------|-----------|
| Taste | ● ● ● ● ● |
| Service | ● ● ● ● ● |
| Ambiance | ● ● ● ● ● |



Address: Sri Weld Food Court, Lebuh Pantai, Georgetown, 10300 George Town, Pulau Pinang
Tel: 016 407 0717

Open: 7am - 5pm

Pros: Cheap, delicious nasi lemak

Cons: It's in Penang!

Price Range: RM2 - RM4

Parking: Easy

Certification: Muslim Owned

Map:



The amiable En. Ali and Pn. Wasnita

The nasi lemak at En. Ali's stall comes in several varieties: ikan bilis, ikan goreng, kan kering, chicken, and sambal udang. One of the unique things about their sambal ikan bilis is that they fry the ikan bilis separately and then mix it into the sambal. This ensures the anchovies retain a crunchy texture.

The nasi lemak is packed fresh everytime. You can actually see En. Ali and Pn. Wasnita pack the nasi lemak on banana leaves. No newspaper here. You get the goodness of nasi lemak with a fresh aroma from the banana leaves.



Fresh rice and sambal everytime!

The nasi is tender with a great coconut flavour that isn't too heavy. The sambal is delicious: hot but not too hot that the flavours become muddled. There's half a boiled egg too. We noted the small shrimp they used in the sambal were fresh and could be eaten whole, shell and all. Even the small piece of ayam goreng was flavourful and juicy. Best of all the packets cost less than RM2 each, depending on what kind of lauk. The nasi lemak has garnered a steady following in the past 10 years.

"At first we sold maybe about 100, 150 packs of nasi lemak a day. Then word spread and now we're selling up to 1200 packets of nasi lemak in a day!" said the very chirpy Pn. Wasnita. One of their most memorable moments was when they received an order of 2000 (!!!) packets of nasi lemak for some Korean and Japanese visitors.

And we have good news: This is your chance to see and eat what Penang folk have been enjoying for the last ten years. Because Nasi Lemak Ali will be at I EAT NASI LEMAK 2014!

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9 Special Dish from 9 Trucks!



Meet the I Eat Nasi Lemak 2014 Heroes

10:00mins

I Eat Nasi Lemak is Back!



Cheese, Coffees & Pizzas by GREAT Foodpreneurs

5:00 mins

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3:00 mins

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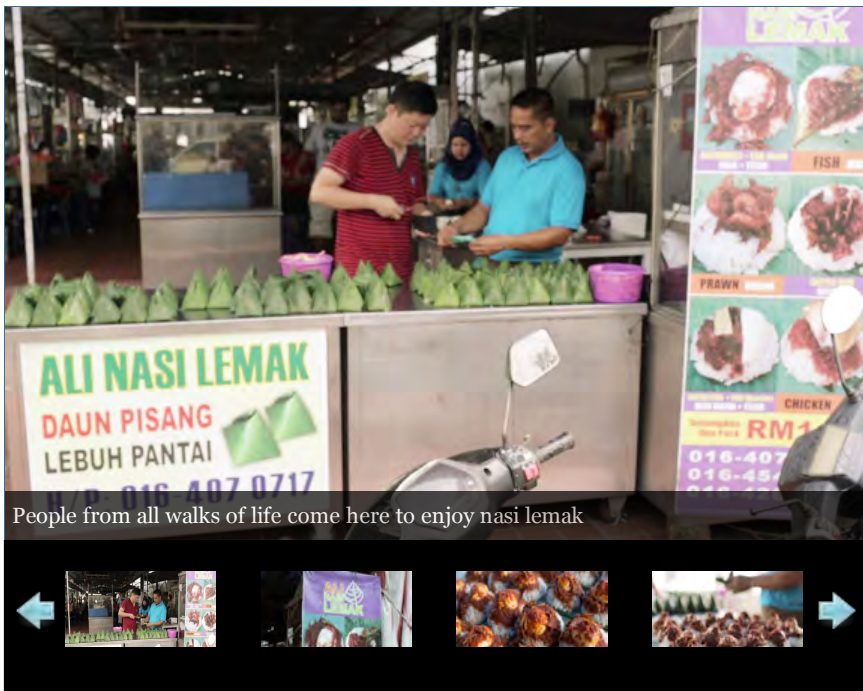
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People from all walks of life come here to enjoy nasi lemak



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-FHM Magazine-

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Nasi Lemak Kukus Fauzey



Everything tastes better fried! Chicken, bananas, ice cream... and apparently, nasi lemak too. The Friedchillies team checked out this off-key nasi lemak and only ended up wanting more.

by Edwan S. Photography CK Thu, October 23, 2014

MALAY

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Nasi lemak is a beautiful dish in the way that there are so many interpretations of it that somehow, still hold true to the 'spirit' of a nasi lemak. This is mainly because despite the variations, most people will agree on several key components: rice in coconut milk, a sambal, egg, peanuts and anchovies. But once every so often, there'll be a nasi lemak that would seem strange... but somehow work in all manners of deliciousness... Nasi Lemak Kukus Fauzey in PJ Oldtown is a food truck selling, well, nasi lemak. The proprietor, Chef Fauzey, used to work in 5 star hotels for 10 years before going off on his own. "I promised myself I wouldn't work more than a decade in a hotel," says Chef Fauzey. "Because I wanted to see if I could make it on my own." However he used to cook western dishes back in the hotel kitchen. When he started his nasi lemak business, he admitted it was a bit of a gamble. But after much trial and error and loads of feedback, he finally got it right.

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Foodster's Verdict

Nasi Lemak Kukus Fauzey



| | |
|----------|-----------|
| Taste | ● ● ● ● ● |
| Service | ● ● ● ● ● |
| Ambiance | ● ● ● ● ● |



| | |
|----------------|---|
| Address: | Behind the old bus stand, PJ Old Town, Section 3, PJ. |
| Tel: | |
| Open: | 5pm - finishes |
| Pros: | Nasi lemak goreng hurhh! |
| Cons: | None, really |
| Price Range: | RM5 |
| Parking: | Canlah |
| Certification: | Muslim Owned |
| Map: | |

FRIEDCHILLIES tv



Let's Eat-lah with Hong Leong Bank

10.00 mins

9 Special Dish from 9 Trucks!



Chef Fauzey (R) with his wife

So far, so good, right? Not so fast. One day something happened that has now cemented his reputation as one of the best unique nasi lemak dishes in town.

“There was this ‘bus guy’,” says Chef Fauzey. “He came to my stall one day and said, ‘Can you do a nasi lemak goreng?’. At first I was dumbstruck, but I decided to give it a go.” Yup folks, what makes Chef Fauzey’s nasi lemak truly great is his version of nasi lemak goreng or FRIED NASI LEMAK (yes it’s that good it deserves capital letters).

When he first did it, he fried the nasi lemak with the sambal. But the taste wasn’t quite right so he used his own secret spice mix (that is also used for his fried kuey teow). He starts off by using the same oil he uses to fry chicken for a huge flavour boost. Then he adds in the spice mix, some prawns and eggs. Then in goes the nasi lemak kukus. All this is stir-fried for around 2 minutes on a the jet-engine of an F16 fighter plane..... okay not really, but a high pressure gas burner nonetheless.



You want 'wok hei'? YOU GOT WOK HEI!

The result? A rich fried nasi lemak dish that is bursting with flavour. The spice mix goes really well with the nasi lemak while the egg adds richness. The prawns in the rice are cooked perfectly and the whole dish is tinged with ‘wok hei’ (breath of the wok). A delicious dish that only gets better when had with Chef Fauzey’s ayam goreng berempah. Despite the rich ingredients it’s not too heavy on the belly too.



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10:00mins

I Eat Nasi Lemak is Back!



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5:00 mins

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3:00 mins

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You can almost smell it from this picture.

Chef Fauzey humbly mentions that it was just coincidence that he came up with the dish. However, we believe it's his dedication and passion to deliver his loyal customers good food that borne this unusual nasi lemak variety. Nasi lemak aficionados might snub their noses at this take on our national dish... until they have a taste, of course. Then they'll be lining up at Fauzey's nasi lemak kukus for sure.

And here's your chance to have it too because hey hey :D Fauzey Nasi Lemak Kukus will be at I EAT NASI LEMAK 2014 people!

[Check out here](#) for more information regarding this years premier food event!

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Mohd Zainie · University of Malaya
belakang bus stand jalan othman petaling jaya

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Amelia Atsuko
i wonder if it tastes greasy

Like · Reply · Feb 11, 2015 5:25am



Alia Ali · Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
i love making nasi lemak goreng with leftover nasi lemak! the only weird thing is the fact that i have leftover nasi lemak at all... 😊

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"Bouyant, bold and thigh slappingly funny."

-The Sun-

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Nasi Lemak Alor Corner



Jalan Alor is famous for its seafood stalls and bustling night-time crowds. But come here early in the morning and a gem of a nasi lemak awaits you... and it's been around for three decades. The Friedchillies crew paid a visit to Nasi Lemak Alor Corner...

by Edwan S. Photography CK Fri, October 24, 2014

MALAY

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Jalan Alor. Two words that mean only one thing to most if not all Malaysians (and tourists too!): FOOD. So well known it is for food that a move by DBKL to change the name was met with vehement protests from tenants and visitors alike. It's a street that is renowned internationally as being a haven for street food of all kinds. Seafood, mamak food, tom yum shops, even ice cream and drinks. And while most of these are Chinese makan places, in the mornings you'll find a gem of a nasi lemak place: Nasi Lemak Alor Corner... Situated near the 'top' of Jalan Alor, this nasi lemak stall has been around for 32 years. In their current spot they've sold nasi lemak since 1998. It was started by En. Aznal bin Zainal when he emigrated from Indonesia. "In the beginning it was very hard. I opened the stall at 9am but still haven't managed to sell any by 11am!" says En. Aznal. "But slowly people begin to buy my nasi lemak. Soon enough, there was a line. The rest as they say, is history."

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Foodster's Verdict Nasi Lemak Alor Corner



Address: Top of Jalan Alor Jalan Alor, Bukit Bintang, 50200 KL
Tel: En. Azmi - 017 311 7449 Cik Ayu - 011 2704 7880

Open: 7am - 1030am

Pros: Great nasi lemak, nice lauks

Cons: Parking!

Price Range: RM2 - RM6

Parking: Difficult

Certification: Muslim Owned

Map:

FRIEDCHILLIES tv

Let's Eat-lah with Hong Leong Bank
10.00 mins

9 Special Dish from 9 Trucks!



This is the stall folks.

“We incorporate our Indonesian heritage as lauk for the nasi lemak,” says Ayu, En. Aznal’s daughter, referring to the loads of lauk on offer. “But the nasi lemak is classic Malaysian style.” She used to work somewhere else before deciding to help her parents run the nasi lemak business.

They open the stall by 7am and people are already waiting. The nasi lemak is definitely the star. People from all walks of life line up to buy packets of the stuff: we saw office workers, road workers, retail assistants and some, ahem, ‘creatures of the night’ buying the nasi lemak. And of course: crumbly rice (they go through 40kg of it a day) is wrapped in classic yesterdays newspaper and banana leaf. It has a subtle coconut flavour and they’re generous with condiments as well. The sambal is deep red and richly spicy with a great balancing sweetness.

Then there’s the lauk: mountains of it. We recommend the Ayam Rendang Padang: chicken is braised in their Indonesian style rendang paste for 6 hours not just for tenderness and flavour, but “It also helps keep the rendang longer. You can keep our rendang up to a month, frozen,” said Ayu who admits she’s still getting the hang of the traditional recipes. Also delicious are their chicken and potato begedil, the sambal ayam and gulai ayam padang. “Sambal sotong is also a best seller here,” added En. Aznal.



So many choices!

They’re bungkus only, and each generously portioned bungkus of nasi lemak starts at RM2. A bargain, considering how prices are pretty harsh at Jalan Alor nowadays. They run out by 10am though you might still find lauks available. Alternatively, have a gander at the various home-made kuihs they sell too. The karpap sardin and lepat pisang are tasty and make good light breakfasts.

En. Aznal used to cook everything himself with his wife. Nowadays, his wife still cooks



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10:00mins

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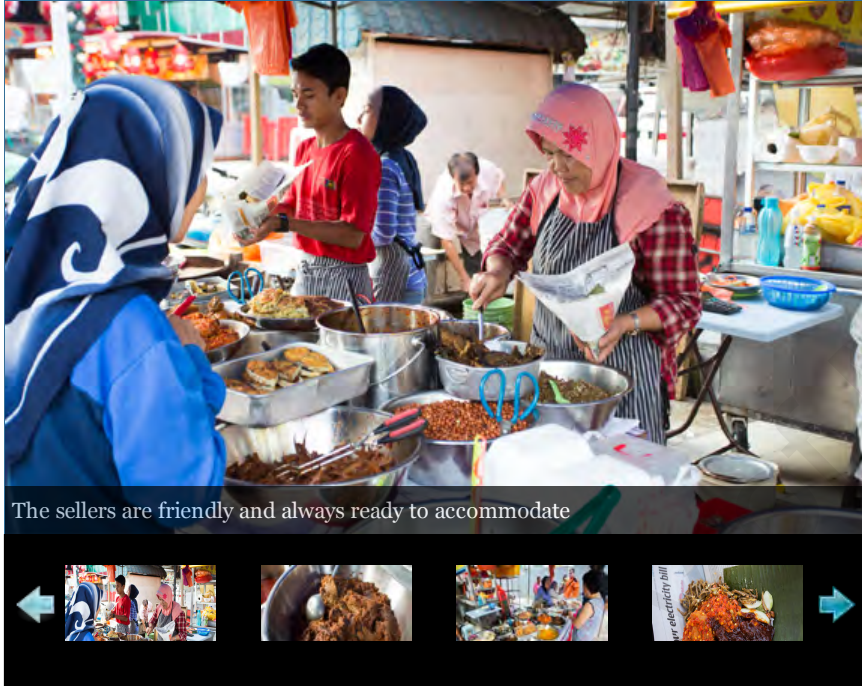
An Ice Cream Dream: Hui Ming's Story

but is assisted by their children and employed cooks. . Incidentally, the operation itself is owned and run by Ayu's brother, En. Azmi. "Nowadays I'm getting older, so I'm passing it on to my heirs," En. Aznal says while daughter Ayu smiles sheepishly.

Well, here's to another 32 years, Nasi Lemak Alor Corner. It's definitely one of the best nasi lemaks in Kuala Lumpur. And this is why in 2014, they are one of our I EAT NASI LEMAK heroes.

Come and try Nasi Lemak Alor Corners well, nasi lemak at I EAT NASI LEMAK 2014 this 2 November 2014 from 10am to 5pm at TM Convention Centre, Bangsar. For more information, check out this post here --> [HEREEE!](#)

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"The highly interactive site is on its way to achieving its mission -- getting Malaysian food worldwide recognition."

-CNN-

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Nasi Lemak Kak Maimon



Kak Maimon's shoptlot is so nondescript that it doesn't have a sign. Though the location is hidden in the housing area in Sek 17, packets of her nasi lemak are so well known that streams of loyal customers still manage to find the the sign less café to get their morning fix daily.

by Farah D. Photography Farah Mon, January 26, 2015

MALAY

Like 9 people like this. [Sign Up](#) to see what your friends like.

A good packet of nasi lemak really gets me going in the morning. When I open a packet of nasi lemak at Kak Maimon's, I am instantly taken by its simplicity. There's a generous dollop of sambal, a thick cucumber slice, peanuts, ikan bilis and a halved hard-boiled egg. The sambal here is well rounded, not too sweet and not too spicy, as Goldilocks would say, the sambal is just right. It's chunky with a deep crimson colour. Dried chillies, onions and garlic are blended and then cooked slowly for two and a half hours, allowing the aromatics to simmer and release their natural sweetness. I tried to get more info on the cooking process of the sambal, but Kak Maimon refuses to divulge any more. It's a closely guarded secret, a family recipe she learned from her mother. "Nanti, akak tak boleh carik makanlah (I won't be able to make a living if I told you)," she quips.

122 0 12

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Foodster's Verdict Nasi Lemak Kak Maimon



- Address: At the shoptlot along Jln SS 17/47, Sek 17, 46400 Petaling Jaya, Selangor (next to Syarikat Letrik Bobby Lim)
Tel:
- Open: 7:00 am to 4:00 pm, Mon to Sat (closed on Sundays and public holidays)
- Pros: Cheap and cheerful
- Cons: A little hard to find since there's no shop sign
- Price Range: RM1.50 per packet
- Parking: Canlah
- Certification: Muslim Owned
- Map:

FRIEDCHILLIES tv

Let's Eat-lah with Hong Leong Bank
10.00 mins

9 Special Dish from 9 Trucks!

Meet the | Eat Nasi Lemak 2014 Heroes




Kak Maimon wants you to try her nasi lemak for yourselves

The rice is wonderfully light, cooked with the usual coconut milk, pandan and ginger (there are of course other secret ingredients added, but true to form, Kak Maimon kept mum when I asked her).




Breakfast- sorted.


At Kak Maimon's, brown packets of nasi lemak form a small mountain along with packets of fried kway teow, beehoon and fried rice. At RM1.50 each, it will keep both your tummy and pockets happy. Formerly known as Nasi Lemak Saga because she used to set up her stall next to her Proton Saga, now Kak Maimon's place is simply known as 'Kedai Takde Nama' (the nameless shop). She has been selling nasi lemak for 34 years, moving from her humble stall to her current location in 2008.


10:00mins


I Eat Nasi Lemak is Back!


5:00 mins

Cheese, Coffees & Pizzas by GREAT Foodpreneurs
GREAT Foodpreneurs doin' Great Stuff


3:00 mins

I Eat Burgers Thanks Everyone!
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Yes this shop has no sign!

Her shop is not easy to find, especially if you're not familiar with the area, but once you come and have a taste of her nasi lemak, you will have no problems making your way here again.



Simplicity in a packet

Meatpoint TTDI

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Love #chickenrice? Then you HAVE to go to CRG Chicken RICE GUYS in #ShahAlam :D One of the best #halal #Hainanese... fb.me/4qQyYW35a
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Inilah dia #MasakLemakSiputSedut, hanya satu daripada lebih 100 lauk pauk di Restoran #SambalHijau :O Banyak kan... fb.me/4dggQnotn
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Sedapnya nampak set #makanan dalam gambar ini! Inilah dia #nasikukus daripada restoran #NasiKukusIlham di... fb.me/6NvXLnRsj
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#AyamKampung, bila di masak dengan betul mesti lembut dan sangat enak. Seperti #AyamGulaiKuning dari Restoran... fb.me/3bU12jk8o

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Shereen Lee Teng Tan · Petaling Jaya, Malaysia
Thank you Honey Ahmad

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Shereen Lee Teng Tan · Petaling Jaya, Malaysia
Which part of Sek 17?

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Honey Ahmad · Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

Go into Jalan Sek 17/21L then go to the end of the lorong and turn left into Jln Sek 17/47. The shop will be on your left next to Syarikat Letrik Bobby Lim

[Like](#) · [Reply](#) · [2](#) · Jan 26, 2015 12:09am · Edited



David Soong
Is there anything near this place? Can we have some landmark?

[Like](#) · [Reply](#) · Jan 25, 2015 6:18pm



Honey Ahmad · Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

It's next to Syarikat Letrik Bobby Lim across the lorong

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"A specialist topic content brand that provides food guides, editorial, reviews and community information for aficionados of Asian food including street food."

-Adobe -

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Since 1998, FriedChillies.com has been a website dedicated to foodies from all over the world. FriedChillies Media writes, shoots, edits, produces, publishes and dreams about food. Food in all its alluring and appetizing forms.

We think there are endless ways to showcase food be it recipes, eating habits or just people obsessing about it. So we have shows to suit the foodie in everyone (check our shows here) and we have articles, reviews, gadgets, cooking tips and much, much more. Come to Friedchillies.com and we guarantee you'll go away hungry for more. Like us.

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Home > Where To Eat > Indian > Nasi Lemak Bambung

Nasi Lemak Bambung



This alleyway is packed at night with people deep in their nasi lemak. Their specialty... a fried chicken with a golden crust. At night, its also a great place for people watching.

by Farah D. Photography Farah Mon, February 01, 2016

INDIAN

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What would drive people to dine in a back alley in SS2? Nasi lemak and piping hot fried chicken, of course! At Nasi Lemak Bambung, look around and you'll see waiters scurrying about carrying trays of nasi lemak, delivering them to tables upon tables of hungry patrons. The fried chicken is the main attraction, marinated in a bevy of spices, fried till golden, a great accompaniment to the subtly flavoured coconut rice. Even the rice is done extremely well, cooked just right, with the taste and texture spot on. Rice is not clumpy and it has a mild hint of coconut, simple yet delicious.

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Foodster's Verdict Nasi Lemak Bambung



Address: Nasi Lemak Bambung @ Sea Park, Jalan 21/11b, 46300 Petaling Jaya, Selangor
Tel: 016 4939204

Open: 5.30 pm – 4 am, Mon to Sat, 5.30 pm – 12 am, Sun. Closed on Fridays

Pros: Good food, affordable prices, brisk service

Cons: Tables are arranged quite close to each other, outdoor dining not ideal if it rains

Price Range: RM15 for 2 🍴🍴🍴

Parking: Canlah

Certification: Muslim Owned

Map:

FRIEDCHILLIES tv

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00:48 mins

Special Focus on Food Trucks!



The sambal is sweet with just a tinge of heat, I always ask for extra sambal because they can be a bit stingy with their sambal portion. Each plate also comes with a bulls eye egg, if you're lucky you get a runny yolk, which I love to mix into the rice, that yolk+sambal+rice+chicken combo is totally awesome, a wonderful medley of deliciousness.



Nasi Lemak is their ultimate money maker, but the Maggi goreng sold here is also a decent choice. The noodles are springy and not overly seasoned, it's a sinful supper snack but when you got those cravings, they just hit the right spot.

Service here is extremely brisk, food is good and prices are reasonable. Ironically, there's no 'bambung' or roof over the dining space, the name of the place actually comes from the 'bambung' over the prep area. If alleyway dining doesn't put you off, come here, take a gander and dine under the stars.



Let's Eat-lah with Hong Leong Bank

10.00 mins

9 Special Dish from 9 Trucks!



Meet the I Eat Nasi Lemak 2014 Heroes

10:00mins

I Eat Nasi Lemak is Back!



Cheese, Coffees & Pizzas by GREAT Foodpreneurs

5.00 mins

GREAT Foodpreneurs doin' Great Stuff



I Eat Burgers Thanks Everyone!

3:00 mins

Thank you for rocking I Eat Burgers 2014.

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Marmalade Chicken



The alleys are clean, I promise.

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The famous nasi lemak Shanmuga in Klang. With sweet sambal.. more onion based than chilli. Over a long cooking... fb.me/7EXwVIu8k



FriedChillies.com @friedchillies 24 Jan
Before Gourmet pop-up's were hip, these guys at the Muar Food Court has been doing it for tens of years... fb.me/4eOrnepBO



FriedChillies.com @friedchillies 24 Jan
Once upon a time ago, KLites can get a decent bowl of Kacang Pool. This one is KP Haji near the Md. Shah.

Kacang... fb.me/77td8OFO3

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