



**Faculty of Language and Communication**

**VIRALITY OF MALAY LANGUAGE POSTINGS ON  
FACEBOOK: AN ANALYSIS ON CONTENT AND  
LINGUISTICS ATTRIBUTES**

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**VIRALITY OF MALAY LANGUAGE POSTINGS ON FACEBOOK:  
AN ANALYSIS ON CONTENT AND LINGUISTICS ATTRIBUTES**

by

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This final year project is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the  
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2020

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## **ABSTRACT**

The increasing use of Facebook among users from different walks of life has made it one of the main sources of information. The extra attention given to these Facebook posts has created a phenomenon known as “virality” in which a post can be shared to hundred thousand of users within a short time, way faster than the mainstream media. While previous studies have investigated viral postings from the perspective of business and mostly in English posts, this study aims to linguistically analyse the Malay language postings on Facebook that causes them to be viral in terms of content and linguistics attributes. Using textual analysis of 100 Facebook postings from various topics that went viral with a corpus size of about 10,000 words, this study captured the content and language attributes of each post and tabulate them accordingly. The results showed that the main content attribute of viral postings is largely related to family-related advices while the most common linguistic features are the use of personal pronouns as well as high occurrences of adjectives. In terms of writing styles, it was found that arguments/debate and anecdote are the most popular. The findings from this study have provided valuable input to social media marketers in creating content that would reach out to more users. Future research, however, can increase the scope of viral postings by increasing the number of sample and also correlate with other demographic factors.

## **ABSTRAK**

### ***TAHAP PENULARAN PENGHANTARAN BAHASA MELAYU DI FACEBOOK: ANALISIS TERHADAP CIRI-CIRI KANDUNGAN DAN LINGUISTIK***

Penggunaan Facebook yang semakin meluas dalam kalangan pelbagai golongan pengguna telah menjadikan medium tersebut sebagai wadah informasi yang utama. Peningkatan perhatian yang diberikan terhadap penghantaran (*postings*) di Facebook telah mewujudkan satu fenomena yang dipanggil “tular” atau “viral” di mana sesuatu penghantaran dapat mencapai ribuan pengguna dalam masa yang singkat, malah lebih laju daripada media arus perdana. Kajian-kajian lepas tentang skop kajian ini lebih menjurus kepada perspektif perniagaan dan tertumpu kepada penghantaran dalam bahasa Inggeris. Tujuan kajian ini adalah untuk mengkaji ciri-ciri kandungan dan linguistik penghantaran yang tular di Facebook. Dengan menggunakan analisis teks terhadap 100 penghantaran di Facebook yang tular dan saiz korpus dalam 10,000 patah perkataan, kajian ini menganalisis ciri-ciri kandungan dan linguistik setiap penghantaran dan dibandingkan secara sistematik. Dapatan kajian menunjukkan kebanyakan penghantaran yang tular adalah berkaitan dengan nasihat kekeluargaan manakala ciri-ciri linguistik yang utama adalah penggunaan kata ganti diri dan adjektif yang tinggi. Dari segi gaya penulisan pula, teknik hujahan dan penceritaan adalah paling popular. Dapatan ini dapat menyumbang ke arah penghasilan kandungan yang lebih berkualiti oleh pemasaran media sosial supaya dapat mencapai ke pengguna sasaran yang luas. Kajian-kajian akan datang boleh menambah skop penghantaran yang viral dengan meningkatkan bilangan sample dan mengaitkan dapatan dengan faktor demografik.

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

DBP	<i>Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka</i>
LIWC	Linguistic Inquiry and Word Content Tool
MIM	Mobile Instant Messaging
SPIN	Situation, Problem, Implication and Need-payoff

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Background of the study

The growing number of users in the social media has prompted researchers to relook at traditional communication theories and how new media is changing the way humans communicate. Rasmussen (2018) stated that digital communication platforms had turned humans into attention seekers in which that what makes a conversation stays longer is the way a piece of information is crafted for attention. This situation is what makes “virality” something that a lot of Internet users are crazy about. The trend has also been taken advantage by business organisations and campaign organisers through what they termed as “viral marketing” (Beeler, 2000, p. 3).

The term “virality” is often regarded as the possibility of certain content to rapidly spread within a community either through word-of-mouth or other means (Strapparava, Guerini, & Özba, 2011). In the spreading process, according to Strapparava et al. (2011), there are several pertinent components that play their roles and these include “the nature of the spreader and of the audience, the structure of the network through which the information is moving and the nature of the content itself” (p. 357). While virality is largely used in the context of marketing (Mills, 2012), studies pertaining to language use has gained the interest of language researchers in recent years. This is due to the fact that a content can only be viral due to certain strategies in language use apart from the impact of the creator or author who may

have been popular such as celebrities or prominent figures. Chu (2011), for instance, noted how Facebook group postings can go viral due to the way it is written aiming at specific audience even when no media elements such as graphics or videos are included. Thus, it indicates a strong influence of linguistic features in determining the virality of certain content.

## **1.2 Problem Statement**

Previous studies related to the virality of user-generated content in social media have focused on its impact on businesses and society, particularly in the social marketing field (Bennet, 2017). Social marketers seem to be interested in which posts would reach out to a greater number of target customers and what type of content style would be useful. However, most of these studies were done by investigating the role multimedia elements such as videos, memes and animated images (Dale, Raney, Janicke, Sanders, & Oliver, 2017; Taecharunroj, & Nueangjamnong, 2015) with little emphasis on language or linguistic aspect of the posts. Studies that did analyse linguistic elements are noted to be predominantly in English language context and in the areas of persuasive language (Al-Rawi, 2019; Strapparava et al., 2011) and rhetorical analysis (for example, based on Aristotle's ethos, pathos and logos). There are also studies that look specifically at topics of certain posts (Hall, Breeden, & Giacobe, 2019)

There is still opportunity to uncover the attributes of viral postings in social media particularly in text-based content. This is because without the help of visuals, a purely text-based posts can still reach millions of users. It is even more interesting to note how postings written in local languages such as Malay can reach out to huge audience despite being a minority language in the social media platforms. This seems to suggest that there are specific linguistic elements within the post that causes it to be viral and further study should be conducted to reveal more about the dominant elements within a content. This study emphasises

the last part, which is the content of viral postings, particularly in the context of Malay language due to its more widespread usage among Malaysians.

### **1.3 Aim and Objectives**

This study aims to linguistically analyse the Malay language postings on Facebook that causes them to be viral in terms of content and linguistics attributes. This study will be conducted to address the following objectives:

- i. to categorize Malay language postings on Facebook that are viral in terms of their topics
- ii. to identify the linguistic attributes of those viral postings in terms of vocabulary frequency and writing style.

### **1.4 Operational Definition of Terms**

#### **1.4.1 Virality**

Virality - Virality means that “information objects spread the way that viruses propagate”. Hence, virality has become a common way to describe how thoughts or information move through a human population, or the internet, social network sites in particular. In this study, the virality of a Facebook’s posting is measured by the total number of share (which should exceed at least 500 times) and likes/reaction (which should exceed at least 5000 likes) (Weng, Menczer, & Ahn, 2013). In order to be viral, all postings are made in public mode and viewable by everyone.

#### **1.4.2 Malay Language Postings**

The Malay language refer to the official and national language of Malaysia where its usage is regulated by Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka (DBP). In this study, it refers to the

forms of Malay used by Internet users via Facebook which may contain some slangs or dialects and the Malay language postings were obtained from Facebook.

### **1.4.3 Content Attributes**

In content analysis, Stemler (2001) stated that the main content attributes of texts can cover topics, themes and point of view. It generally refers to what a text or sample conveying as a whole. In this study, it refers to the topics of postings which went viral, such as personal life, health, news, products, etc.

### **1.4.4 Linguistics Attributes**

Linguistic attributes may refer to the sub-components in linguistics or any elements that are related to linguistics studies (Buck et al., 1998). In this study, the researcher focuses on two aspects which is vocabulary frequency and writing style. The vocabulary frequency will identify the categories of words usage while the writing style focuses more on the stylistic elements.

## **1.5 Significance of the study**

The outcomes from this study may provide evidence for deeper understanding on content virality via social media, which is often directed on the popularity of the author. Hansen et al. (2011), however, formulated a theory that content is more likely to be viral when it is produced for good friends to share or when a person spread bad news. Their theory seems to be true but they did not run linguistic analysis on the data they showed as examples. A similar finding was reported by Berger and Milkman (2012) and they suggested future study to focus on the linguistic attributes of the viral content as their study was on psychological factors of



content readers. Hence, this study would be able to contribute in understanding how content on the social media is constructed in order to become “viral” from linguistics point of view.

In terms of practical significance, the findings from this study would be able to contribute to the area of digital social marketing by helping content writers to gather important features of viral content. This would help them to produce content that is likely to reach out to larger audience. Study in this area is still lacking although the importance of addressing the issue is huge as more and more Malaysians are using social media not only for communication purposes but also business and marketing purposes.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents a review of related literature pertaining to the topic of this study. It aims to reveal the gap in previous research by examining the methods used as well as reported findings to inform the current study. Previous studies are scrutinized according to the key variables in this study to ensure that the researcher is able to conduct the study with a sound methodological guidance.

#### **2.2 Virality in Social Media**

In general terms, virality is defined as the “tendency of a content to spread quickly in a community by word-of mouth” (Strapparava et al., 2011, p. 357). When a content is viral, it tends to spread almost instantly and within hours it could reach thousands of users. Virality is often affected by three elements, the spreader or the author, the target audience and the nature of the content itself (Mills, 2012). The spreader or the author element would be rather straightforward to explain in a way that a post by a famous personality is more likely to be viral than a commoner. The target audience focuses on how a post is successful in knowing what they want. The content, on the other hand, refers specifically to how the content of the post is produced and it itself should be analysed thoroughly (Mills, 2012).

Guerini et al. (2011) stated that virality is a phenomenon strictly connected to the nature of the content being spread, rather than to the influencers who spread it. They also argue that virality is a phenomenon with many facets, (i.e. under this generic term several different effects of persuasive communication are made up and they only partially overlap). Studies by Karimiyazdi and Mokhber (2015) on Improving Viral Marketing Campaign via Mobile Instant Messaging (MIM) Applications argues that the predictors (entertainment and purposive value of message, market mavenism, social identity, and MIM applications) influence individuals' intention to forward a viral message and it is anticipated that all the contributing factors have a positive effect on it.

Virality in social media content is also studied in terms of the social media metrics (e.g. number of Likes and Shares). Kim (2018) conducted an online experiment to check whether social media metrics have any effect on the perception of a certain message. The experiment was done on 394 participants whereby they were shown a Facebook post related to health risk that was manipulated with different virality metrics (i.e. high and low number of Likes and Shares). The findings showed how a post with high number of Likes managed to increase the perceived influence of the content on a person as well as others. It also showed an increase in behavioural intentions such as asking someone else to follow what is written in the post. However, the study has its limitation in terms of acknowledging the fact that the content itself may affect the perception of the participants regardless of the number of Likes or Shares. It was noted in Kim's study that the Facebook post was made up in a "fake environment" and does not reflect the actual live usage of Facebook. It is, therefore, important to also check the features of the content in increasing virality, and not merely judging on the metrics.

From the scope of business marketing, Borges-Tiago, Tiago and Cosme (2019) investigated the motivation for social media users to engage in viral communication. They conducted a survey on 292 social media users through an online questionnaire. The

questionnaire focused on five measurement scales: Internet usage, social pressure, emotion tone, arousal and meaningfulness. Each of these scales contain items that require participants to respond to. By using structural equation modelling, the results revealed that meaningful content seems to influence users in sharing communication. They also found that heavy users of social media tend to value meaningfulness of the content more than other groups (social-driven and search-driven groups). Their study suggests that the content for each social media posting is crucial in turning it into a viral piece of information and careful consideration is necessary to ensure that what is meaningful to the audience can be highlighted. In the Malay language postings, this could also be the case as more and more content are produced in the language.

### **2.3 Malay Language Postings**

With the Malay language being the official and majority language in Malaysia, the amount of Malay content produced and shared on social media is obviously large and its likelihood to be viral is higher. In terms of the language use, the interest of past researchers, however, is more on the use of slangs and abbreviations. Omar, Hamsani, Abdullah, Abidin and Alam (2011), for example, developed a corpus of Malay abbreviations used on social media. Their study analysed 1000 social media postings and identify uncommon use of Malay abbreviations. Some of these abbreviations are “x” to mean “*tidak*” (no), “*aq*” to refer to “*aku*” (I) and “*camne*” to refer to “*macam mana*” (how). These abbreviations are seen to be following the same trend that is happening to other dominant languages such as English. It also gives the glimpse of the kind of Malay language use which will be visible in most social media contents.

In a more recent study, Chekima and Alfred (2017) conducted sentiment analysis on Malay social media texts (8,026 postings) using natural language processing techniques. Their study investigated the features that contribute towards improving analysis of Malay social

media content. These include handling of slangs, mix-languages (*bahasa rojak*) and emoticons. Unlike the study by Omar et al. (2011), Chekima and Alfred quantify the use of Malay words in social media content in terms of its dominant usage among the Malaysian social media users and found out that most Malay content on social media is influenced by English style of writing. Yeo and Ting (2017) also studied the extensive use of netspeak in Malay although there is no current corpus database that compile all those coined words. Malaysian social media users seem to use netspeak at ease and largely influenced by their peers. A new slang like “*membawang*” (to mean gossiping) can go viral within a day and become widely used within weeks. These studies provide an important indicator the researcher of this study to take necessary steps in identifying the Malay language use in viral content.

In the local context, Harun and Yusof (2015) investigated the influence of the Malay language in Javanese community in Malaysia. They noted that in various social media platforms, the Javanese language is more widely used in conversations although in some occasions they also mix other languages. It is interesting to note that the Javanese language is still utilised by the Javanese community. In particular, the Javanese colloquial or “*ngoko*” is popular among the speakers. Despite that, there is a decline in terms of the usage of Javanese language as whole. This could be a result of the more dominant status of the Malay language and how social media platforms are filled with more Malay language usage. The study by Harun and Yusof (2015) has also provided valuable insights on the trend of using Malay and Javanese languages in social media particularly on Facebook. It suggests that investigating Malay postings in social media is timely and useful in order to further understand the trends among the Malay language users.

### **2.3 Content Attributes**

In relation to the Malay viral content on social media, the analysis covers two key aspects: content and linguistics attributes. In terms of content attributes, as explained earlier, Mills (2012) based on his SPIN framework, covers the spreader or the author, the target audience and the nature of the content itself. For the content, Mills (2012) stated two key elements which are likeability and shareability. Likeability is the degree to which a content is engaging to the audience and shareability is their willingness to distribute the content. A content would go viral if both elements are high. However, Mills (2012) did not specifically mentioned the kind of content that would achieve high likeability and shareability.

Kwon, Abbar, and Jansen (2016) empirically tested Mill's framework by using 1,000 news articles in Arabic languages for analysis. Their study included both content and linguistics attributes in their analysis with additional analysis using LIWC and sentiment analysis tools. The results from their study shows that the topic of the article is not a predictive element of virality of Arabic language news articles. They noted that linguistics aspects and writing styles of the articles are the most accurate predictive attribute of Arabic news article virality. Kwon et al. (2016) included linguistic attributes of lexical choice, syntax (sentence structure) and figurative languages. This is similar to the study by Strapparava et al. (2011), who also included persuasive languages in their analysis of social media texts in Digg platform consisting of; 135,367 stories. Their study serves as a reference for the researcher to decide which attributes should be included in the present study.

The study by Bruni, Francalanci and Giacomazzi (2012) was conducted to check on multimedia content on Twitter. They aimed to find out the relationship between multimedia information and the level of virality of certain posts. In their study, they hypothesized that "posts with multimedia content are more retweeted than posts without a link, posts linking a photo are more retweeted than posts linking a video, and posts linking a video raise more

sentiment than posts linking a photo” (p. 2). The gathered findings done through experimental study supported all three of the hypotheses. It was concluded that multimedia content affected the number of retweets as well as the speed of gathering high number of retweets. While their study focuses on multimedia content, there is still a need to look at the other aspects of the content such as in terms of topics and whether they are targeted on specific audience or not. This will be addressed in this study as a review of previous studies suggested a lack of focus in this aspect.

## **2.4 Linguistic Attributes**

Linguistic attributes that are commonly associated with Malaysians are reviewed by the researcher in order to provide a more holistic view of what to be expected in the content they produced. In Ting and Chai’s study (2013) on language features of discussion texts written by Malaysian students, they found out the prevalent use of “because”, casual connectors and modal verbs especially “will” and “can”. While their study was done on English writing, it gives a hint on the style of writing that Malaysians tend to use, including when they are writing in Malay. There is a need to look at linguistics attributes of viral content from various dimensions and not solely from figurative or persuasive language used alone. The choice of using certain language features as revealed in previous studies should also be examined. Hence, this study aims to identify the important attributes that emerge from the viral content produced in Malay language on social media, particularly Twitter.

In addition, the study by Piskorski, Sydow and Weiss (2008) added important ideas on how certain linguistic attributes can be identified through viral postings. Their study found more than 200 linguistic-based attributes that were capable of indicating the differences between spam and non-spam classes. The corpora that they used were also able to identify the linguistic elements found in large dataset of spams. Although this study was mainly on spams,

the nature of spam is similar to viral postings as they tend to spread faster than usual. It is important to know that specific linguistic attributes of certain postings can be used to form a pattern for future classification.

Another research done by Argawal and Sureka (2017) explored the issue of identifying racist Tumblr posts according to the intent of narrative. Their experimental results highlighted the role of emotion tone, writing cues and the author's social personality traits in recognising the intent of the post. Besides that, they also found that topic classification of posts and filtering non-topic-based posts improves the performance of the proposed intent classification. The identification of multi-lingual posts by doing a sentence level language detection and enhancing the translated content for identifying intent posts. the proposed approach is effective for identifying intent posts unlike previous based keyword techniques. The use of long texts in tags could provide more information about the author's intent and the content of the post.

A more recent study by Ali et al. (2019) investigated the use of fear-arousing method in checking the virality of social media postings. A total of 800 Facebook posts about Zika virus outbreak were scrutinized not only in terms of user engagement but also the characteristics of each posting in terms of language use. They noticed that when fear-arousing words or expressions were used, the tendency for a posting to go viral is drastically higher. They found that users then to treat non-news posts as lack of "sensationalist elements", which are largely designed through correct word choice as well as sentence structure. The study by Ali et al. (2019) shed valuable insights on how linguistic attributes of postings can affect user engagement and perception on the importance of the message. Their findings correspond to what was found by Argawal and Sureka (2017), whereby choice of words is crucial in dictating how a post will spread.



## **CHAPTER 3**

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents the methodology employed in order to address the objectives of the study. It begins with the explanation of the research design, followed by details of corpus selection and instrument used. The procedures in data collection and analysis are also provided.

#### **3.2 Research Design**

The study adopts a qualitative research design by using corpus linguistics as its foundation. Qualitative research design is chosen mainly because the data are largely descriptive although some quantified data will be obtained with the help of the software to allow better evaluation of the descriptive data. Specifically, content analysis was used. This method is seen as the most appropriate to the context of this study as it would be able to search underlying themes in the content being analysed. As mentioned by Bryman (2004), content analysis “emphasises the role of the investigator in the construction of the meaning of and in texts. There is an emphasis on allowing categories to emerge out of data” (p. 542). Hence, by employing qualitative content analysis, it would be able to help the researcher to understand the phenomenon of actual use of language in viral content.

For objective 1, the researcher used the Linguistic Inquiry and Word Count Tool (<https://liwc.wpengine.com>) - LIWC is a text processing program based on occurrences of

words in several categories. This will group the postings into topics and would be able to allow researcher to know what topics are more “viral” than the others.

For objective 2, the researcher used AntConc textual analytics tool was used to assist the process of obtaining the frequency counts of words in term of vocabulary frequency, stylistic elements, and types of structure. This step provides some quantified data for the researcher to analyse the posts.

### 3.3 Corpus Selection

To guide the process of corpus creation, the following check list is used. For this study, a corpus containing viral Facebook postings written in Malay language were used for analysis. A posting is considered as viral when the total Likes/Reactions and Share exceed 500 times (as recommended by Weng, Menczer, & Ahn, 2013). Total corpus size was about 10,000 words.

In this study, a total of 100 viral Facebook postings written in Malay language were compiled for analysis with the help of LIWC software. Postings that have only photos were excluded from the selection as it contains no specific text for further analysis, and it is not the intention of the study to look at abstract interpretation of images. Postings that are about illegal topic such as porn or piracy are also excluded. Only the postings without author identification were chosen, which means their names or username were hidden.

<b>Facebook Postings Compilation Checklist</b>	
Postings is written in Malay language	<input type="checkbox"/>
Postings is shared more than 500 times	<input type="checkbox"/>
Postings does not contain graphics only	<input type="checkbox"/>
Postings does not contain illegal materials (porn, piracy, etc)	<input type="checkbox"/>

Figure 3.1. Checklist for Facebook postings compilation

### **3.4 Instrument**

The main instrument of this study is using the LIWC and AntConc applications. These were used to assist the process of obtaining the frequency counts of words in terms of vocabulary profiles, stylistic elements, and types of structure.

### **3.5 Data Collection Procedures**

In collecting the data, public Facebook posts written in Malay language that meets the “viral traits” set (500 reactions/share or more) were searched using the Facebook Advanced Search tool (<https://www.facebook.com/>). The output from the search results were transferred to Excel for sorting purposes. The identity of the author was not copied as the focus of the analysis is on the content and not the author’s popularity. Then, the chosen postings were ranked from the most viral to the least viral by referring to their number of “like and reaction or share”. This process was stopped once the corpus size is deemed sufficient for qualitative analysis (at least 10,000 words).

After that, based on the list of postings, the filtering process were then conducted to exclude unnecessary or unwanted postings based on the criteria mentioned in Figure 3.1. The main purpose of this process is to ensure the content contains text to be analysed and there are not extra elements such as graphics that might disturb the interpretation of the content. Also, this is to avoid spam-based materials such as advertisements or porn from being accidentally included in the analysis.

Subsequently, the compiled list of Facebook posts was used for data analysis. Each posting was marked in terms of frequency of words use within each post using AntConc software. A sample of this is shown in Figure 2. The purpose of doing is to examine the words used by the author in their viral content. The compiled list of Facebook posts was then used for data analysis.

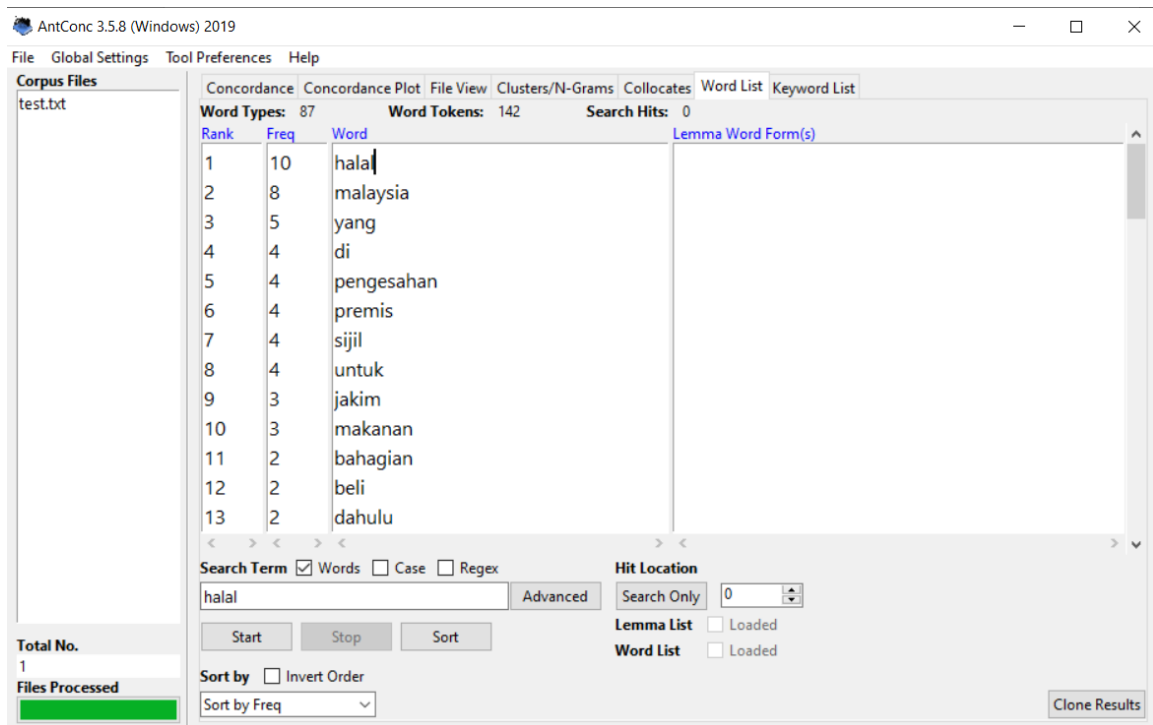


Figure 3.2. Frequency of words used in a Facebook's postings

### 3.6 Data Analysis Procedures

To address the first objective, the viral posts were screened for its topics using the checklist mentioned earlier. The tool determines the generic topic of each postings for example, health, entertainment, sports, and so on. The researcher then cross-checked these categorisations to ensure its accuracy.

Once they have been categorised by topics, the content of the posting was analysed thematically. They were then categorised accordingly based on the emerging themes which are commonly found in social media (Mills, 2012) as shown in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1

*Framework of thematic analysis*

<b>Theme</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Sample Tweets</b>
<b>Advice/Tips</b>	Guidance or recommendations offered with regard to careful future action.	<i><u>Kalau rasa diri tu tak berapa sihat, jangan abaikan diet yang sihat. Tengok saya ni, makan angin jer.</u></i> <i><u>Bila tak de mood nak belajar, boleh lah cuba rehat-rehat otak dengan berjogging ya. Ni nasihat saya lah.</u></i>
<b>Gossips</b>	Casual conversation or reports about other people, typically involving details which are not confirmed as true.	<i><u>Betul ke si Alif Aziz tu curang lagi? Semalam dengar daripada member kata dia tu keluar dengan perempuan lain.</u></i> <i><u>Dengar kata Manchester United tak jadi nak jual Pogba. Dia tu memang dari dulu lagi nak pergi kot. Tak pastilah..</u></i>
<b>Rants/Ramblings</b>	Talk or write at length in a confused or inconsequential way. (Typically marked with abusive use of punctuations and aggressive words)	<i><u>Kenapa tiap-tiap kali tengok filem Marvel ni saya tak dapat kawal perasaan ni!!!! Ahhh.....pengarah dia guna teknik apa entah. Jom nangis dulu!</u></i> <i><u>Suka hati korang lah nak buat apa. Ada aku kesah?????? Masalahnya aku tak de masa nak layan semua ni.</u></i>
<b>Self-Promotion</b>	The behaviour of openly promoting oneself or one's actions intentionally.	<i><u>Bukan nak puji diri lah, tapi kan, semenjak saya guna krim ini, memang wajah makin putih. Kalau tak percaya tengok sendiri muka saya ni.</u></i>

Any themes that were not fitting into the current scheme of analysis were re-examined and To ensure validity, definition of the themes are pre-determined, so that the researcher can categorise the postings accurately.

For the second objective, the postings were read again and analysed according to vocabulary frequency and writing style. The researcher then tabulated the results and compared the patterns of use. An example of how this is to be done is shown in Figure 3.3

*My dear, saya dah ribu kali ulang, badan kita hanya perlu 70-100mg vitamin C sehari. Tak perlu tambah banyak, hanya perlu 70mg. Banyak kajian telah dibuat.*

*(Vocab profiler will identify the repeated words use. Then the researcher will identify the pattern of sentence structure. The main style is to do repetition but with implied meaning of putting blame on the readers for not following the advice).*

Figure 3.3. Sample of coding process

To ensure reliability of the analysis, the researcher crossed check through multiple readings of the postings as well as gather second opinion from suitable experts. In this case, the data were coded and gathered systematically for comparison purposes. Any questionable coding was scrutinized and subsequently removed from the analysis.

### 3.7 Limitations of the Study

The present study was confined to Facebook postings that were viral based on a random search through the platform. There could be instances where some viral posts were not accessible by the researcher due to privacy settings of the content author. Also, the current study focuses only on two key elements of linguistics attributes, mainly frequency of words as well as writing styles.

## CHAPTER 4

### RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

#### 4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the results based on the objectives of the study, namely identifying the content attributes and linguistic attributes of viral postings in the Malay language. A discussion based on previous findings are also provided.

#### 4.2 Results

##### 4.2.1 Content Attributes of Viral Malay Language Postings

The viral Malay postings that were chosen based on their number of shares and likes were analysed using LIWC for their prominent themes or topics. Based on 100 postings that were screened, Table 4.1 shows the most common themes and their number of occurrences.

Table 4.1

*The category of Malay language postings on Facebook that are viral in terms of their topics*

<b>Theme</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Total viral posts</b>	<b>Overall</b>
Advice/ Tips	Family	8	23
	Religion	5	
	Health	4	
	Caution/ Lesson	3	

	Financial	2	
	Entertainment	1	
Gossips	Family	1	3
	Religion/ Supernatural	1	
	Celebrity	1	
Rants/ Rambling	Family	2	5
	Caution/ Lesson	1	
	Health	1	
	Financial	1	
Self-promotion	Health	3	9
	Advice	2	
	Family	2	
	Entertainment	1	
	Religion	1	

Most of the viral postings were in the category of advice/tips and mostly centred on the scopes of family and religion. This is followed by self-promotion and rants. Across the major themes, it can be noted that family and health seem to be dominant in the viral postings produced in the Malay language. Table 4.2 shows some of the sample postings gathered in this study.

Table 4.2

*Sample postings of the main themes*

<b>Theme</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Sample posting</b>
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Advice/tips	Family	<p><i>“Abang nak kahwin lagi...”</i></p> <p><i>Melawak ke, xde niat ke, saja2 ja ke, ketahuilah yg hati seorang isteri tu dah pun terguris dgn kenyataan diatas...</i></p> <p><i>Lelaki yg waras dan berakal takkan sebut langsung akan ayat ini kerana dia tahu yg isterinya akan ingat sampai bila2 walaupun ianya sekadar satu gurauan...</i></p> <p><i>Kesannya sgt2 mendalam bg seorang isteri...</i></p>
Gossips	Religion / Supernatural	<p><i>Kes api terbit sendiri ni lama dah berlaku, tapi baru baru ni dia mai pulak. Ini konpem kerja sihir. Dah ramai perawat pi merawat. Hilang sat, jadi lagi.</i></p> <p><i>Benda ni dihantar berulang ulang utk menyeksa jiwa tuan rumah dengan izin Allah.</i></p> <p><i>Teringin gak nak pi tengok. Tapi apakan daya jauh yakmat. Moga tuan rumah ni banyak bersabar dengan ujian dan jangan berputus asa meminta bantuan Allah.</i></p> <p><i>Kepada yang menghantar, sedar sedarlah. Dunia ni tak lama mana pun.</i></p> <p><i>Yang dok kata ini semua auta la, ada minyak bawah tanah la, zaman moden takda sihir la, ketahuilah bahawa sihir itu wujud, dalilnya banyak dalam Al-Quran. Bermula dari surah Al-Baqarah Tuhan dah sebut tentang Harut dan Marut.</i></p>

		<p><i>Terkenang masa Ayah aku kena game sihir dulu sampai batuk keluar darah. Ayah dah tak boleh rawat sendiri, dia panggil kawan dari Perlis mai tolong rawat. Aku dengan arwah Abg Long yang pi buang bungkusan sihir tu kat Sungai Prai. Masa bawak bungkusan tu, naik basikal 2 orang berasa macam 5 orang dok tumpang sekali. Last2, kami tolak ja basikal sampai ke Titi Karen.</i></p>
<p>Rants / Rambling</p>	<p>Financial</p>	<p><i>Sahabat2 B40...</i></p> <p><i>Dengan bantuan 1600 ini, kita akan menjadi kaya...!!!</i></p> <p><i>Kedudukan kewangan kita akan setaraf dgn founder2 produk...!!!</i></p> <p><i>Org kaya pun jeles bila kerajaan bagi 1600 kat kita... 1600 ni, dia guna bayar gaji bibik dia ja...1600 ni, dia guna beli selipar dia ja...1600 ni, dia bleh belanja dlm masa kurang setengah jam...</i></p> <p><i>Tapi bila kerajaan khususkan bantuan kewangan sebyk 1600 kepada golongan B40, maka katanya "the poor will become richer..."</i></p> <p><i>Dah lama tak mencarut, tp mls nak mencarut plak...</i></p> <p><i>U might be good in what u do, especially business, but do you really have senses?</i></p> <p><i>Bila Allah s.w.t bagi kekayaan kpd kita, itu adalah satu ujian yg berat utk kita sebenarnya...if u felt lucky to have a life like that, then u r wrong...kekayaan akan</i></p>

		<p><i>membutakan hati dan membuatkan diri semakin hanyut sekiranya digunakan bukan pd tempat yg sepatutnya...</i></p> <p><i>Be thankful for what u have and stop arguing or too concerned on what B40 received...don't compared your life with our shoes coz we wore selipar jepun, and u wore Crocs...</i></p> <p><i>Nota kaki : Dah mcm kita mintak duit dia pulakkkk...deyy, please compare apple to apple la, why u want to compare apple with longan...</i></p>
Self-promotion	Entertainment	<p><i>Sambil drive ni, kepala aku ligat buat karangan ampa tau tak? Bukan senang nak bagi orang gelak, seram, happy, sedih dalam 1 story. Pernah sekali polis tahan, dia tanya nak pi mana encik? Slow sangat bawak keta. Selamba ja aku jawab...nak pi Surabaya tuan. Pasai masa drive tu aku sedang karang kisah Dorm Hotel Surabaya dalam kepala.</i></p> <p><i>Apa pun, tunggu la sat lagi. Ada intro nak up.</i></p>

The samples given above shows the typical topics that motivate users to share the post and, in the end, made it viral. It is interesting to note how these posts were also shared by non-Malay ethnic groups in Malaysia, signifying the cross-cultural influence of the postings as well as the suitability of the topics that are relatable to most Malaysians.

#### 4.2.2 Linguistics of Viral Malay Language Postings

Two key analyses were done to check on the main linguistic attributes of the viral postings. There were vocabulary frequency and writing styles.

##### *Vocabulary Frequency*

In this study, the viral postings show the following frequency of vocabulary used. The top words are related to personal pronouns and words related to family. The use of adjectives was also rather high in the viral postings. This somehow shows the attempt of the post creator to make the content more personal and relate to the target audience.

Table 4.3

*Top words in the viral postings*

<b>Rank</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Word</b>
1	226	Dia
2	199	Kita
3	180	Saya
4	84	Orang
5	69	Kau
6	68	Anak
7	58	Mereka
8	49	Aku
9	46	Hati
10	40	Ayah
11	39	Suami
12	38	Masa

13	36	Org
14	35	Arwah
15	34	Duit
16	28	Mak
17	27	Isteri
18	22	Malaysia
19	21	Kawan
20	21	Kubur

### *Writing Styles*

After the postings were analysed in terms of word frequency, the writing styles were also examined (refer to Table 4.4). The most popular styles argument/debate as well as narrative/anecdotes. This suggests the tendency among Malay content creator or writers in using argument and narrative styles in social media postings as these are normally more personal.

Table 4.4

### *Writing Styles in the Viral Posting*

<b>Writing Styles</b>	<b>Number of viral posts</b>
Arguments/Debate	15
Narrative/Anecdote	14
Instructional	5
Factual Description	4
Humour/Satire	2

Table 4.5 shows some of the sample postings according the popular styles.

Table 4.5

*Sample Postings based on Writing Styles*

<b>Writing Styles</b>	<b>Sample Postings</b>
Arguments/Debate	<p><i>Beberapa doktor sosial media sudah penat dan akan berehat dari menyampaikan info tentang 2019 nCoV, kerana menerima kecaman dari beberapa orang netizen yang mempolitikkan isu kesihatan dan terlalu paranoid. Mereka sekarang beralih menulis pasai isu budak-budak Uni dok study kat McD dan suruh pelanggan lain senyap.</i></p> <p><i>Haaa saya pula, block saja mereka semua yang tiada adab, dan tutup public comment, supaya followers-followers yang awesome boleh terus mengikuti perkembangan-perkembangan terbaru tanpa membaca komen dari mereka yang suka menakutkan rakyat. Saya tak payah laa cakap pasai budak-budak study kat McD tu.</i></p> <p><i>Tapi depa yang dah kena block tu laa yang rugi diri sendiri.</i></p> <p><i>Dengar khabar, mereka dah meroyan. Haaa buat lagi perangai yang merugikan diri sendiri.</i></p> <p><i>Terimakasih.</i></p> <hr/> <p><i>"Rezeki bukan dari suami..."</i></p> <p><i>Jangan guna tagline menakut-nakutkan, memperlekehkan org lain atau bersangka buruk utk marketing dan penjualan produk...</i></p>

<p><i>"Sampai bila nak mengharapkan duit suami..."</i></p> <p><i>"Kalau jadi apa2 kat suami, mcm mna nak hidup..."</i></p> <p><i>"Kalau suami ada org lain...klu suami buat perangai...klu suami ceraikan kau..."</i></p> <p><i>Ini contoh tagline yg digunakan segelintir peniaga...nk mintak org jadi dropship, jadi agent, atau nak menjual produk tapi tak kena cara dan takde etika...</i></p> <p><i>"Bad marketing is a good marketing"</i></p> <p><i>Ayat ini tidak sepatutnya digunapakai jika ingin bertahan lama dalam pasaran...org akan benci, bosan dan muak dgn strategi menakut-nakutkan, memperlekehkan atau negativity dlm tagline pemasaran...</i></p> <p><i>Ini juga menunjukkan bahawa anda seorang yg tidak berfikir panjang bahawa rezeki itu bukan dari manusia...rezeki dari Allah s.w.t...</i></p> <p><i>Sejauh mana kita percaya yg rezeki itu dari Allah s.w.t? Sedalam mana keyakinan kita pada Allah s.w.t?</i></p> <p><i>True story, mertua saya tidak ada pendapatan sejak kematian suaminya 20 tahun yg lalu...dia hanya bergantung kpd pencen yg dia dapat selepas kematian suaminya...5 org anak dia besarkan seorang diri dgn pencen tersebut sehingga hbis belajar lalu bekerja dan mendirikan rumahtangga...</i></p> <p><i>Apa amalan yg dia buat sehingga rezekinya cukup selama 20 tahun tu?</i></p>
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	<p><i>Dia bangun tahajud ditgh mlm, dia solat dhuha, dia berjemaah di masjid, dia libatkan diri dgn aktiviti keagamaan dan dia bersedekah...</i></p> <p><i>Ini cara kita menambahkan rezeki kita...syarat utama ialah hubungan kita dgn Allah s.w.t kerana yg memberikan rezeki itu Allah...</i></p> <p><i>Tak perlu "hard sell" utk nak naikkan bilangan customer atau melariskan penjualan...kau keje mcm nak mati pun, kau usaha teruk2 pun, kau keluarkan modal berjuta pun, kau ada dropship dan agent sampai Antartika pun, klu hubungan kau dgn Allah tu ke laut, maka siapa yg akan menurunkan dan membuka pintu rezeki utk kau?</i></p> <p><i>Nak buat apapun, jgn membelakangkan Allah s.w.t, jgn bersangka buruk dgn ketentuan Allah s.w.t, jgn meletakkan hidup org lain dlm tangan kita dan jgn meninggalkan keutamaan kita sebagai hamba-Nya..</i></p> <p><i>Rezeki itu hak mutlak Allah s.w.t...</i></p>
Narrative	<p><i>Agaknya saya jarang upload gambar tgh shooting drama/filem .. sebab itu ramai yang DM saya panggil saya ustaz tanya hukum hakam agama.</i></p> <p><i>Saya bukan ustaz... saya bukan PU... saya bukan Dai. Saya tak pernah sertai program tersebut. JadiSaya tak mahu title ustaz.</i></p> <p><i>Biarlah gelaran itu diberikan kepada yang betul-betul layak dan ada tauliah. Saya tiada tauliah agama. Tanya pada ahli yang betul.</i></p>



	<p><i>Saya tak mahu menjadi fitnah pada agama Islam. Kerana Saya hanya seorang pelakon biasa , seorang artis cina muslim sahaja. Apabila saya sharing tentang keindahan Islam masih belum layak di gelar ustaz.</i></p> <p><i>Baik bagi kita, tapi belum tentu baik untuk orang lain.</i></p> <hr/> <p><i>Sambil drive ni, kepala aku ligat buat karangan ampa tau tak? Bukan senang nak bagi orang gelak, seram, happy, sedih dalam I story. Pernah sekali polis tahan, dia tanya nak pi mana encik? Slow sangat bawak keta. Selamba ja aku jawab...nak pi Surabaya tuan. Pasai masa drive tu aku sedang karang kisah Dorm Hotel Surabaya dalam kepala.</i></p> <p><i>Apa pun, tunggu la sat lagi. Ada intro nak up.</i></p>
<p><b>Instructional</b></p>	<p><i>Nota Ingatan Untuk Para Suami dan Ayah.</i></p> <p><i>Bila anak kecil, anak gadis atau isteri kalian tiba-tiba keluar urat hijau di tangan, kaki atau pipi dan perutnya seperti mengandung di tengah malam.</i></p> <p><i>Jangan teruskan tidur. Bangun peluk mereka dan tiup 7x Al-fatihah di ubun kepalanya.</i></p> <p><i>Sapu pati atau minyak angin Bidara di kedua ibu kaki, nadi tangan dan tangannya.</i></p> <p><i>Anak kecil anda boleh mati serta merta, anak gadis atau isteri boleh meninggal semasa tidur.</i></p> <p><i>Ini disebabkan:</i></p> <p><i>1. Mereka dalam ketakutan melampau terlihat sesuatu yang menakutkan, mimpi yang menakutkan sehingga terjaga secara</i></p>

	<p><i>mengejut sehingga aliran jantung terlalu kencang megepam darah dan memecahkan pembuluh darah.</i></p> <p><i>2. Mereka terlalu stress,kecewa, menangis tanpa air mata tanpa diketahui puncanya.</i></p> <p><i>3. Anak kecil sangat ketakutan dan akan terus meninggal. Selalu didianogsis sebagai sawan.</i></p> <p><i>Saintifik research disebabkan oleh symptom darah tinggi dan kencing manis yang serious.</i></p> <p><i>Antara sebabnya ialah sihir yang dihantar, saka yang kelaparan tidak diketahui pemiliknya dan kerja Jin Ummu Shibyan yang membawa kuman yang menyebabkan implikasi dalam aliran darah.</i></p> <p><i>Baca ayat perlindungan 3 Kali , niatkan untuk anak anda.</i></p> <hr/> <p><i>Sekelip mata kayooo!!! Rezeki tak disangka! Horeyyy</i></p> <p><i>#UPDATE : Dah pernah check dengan Jabatan Akauntan Negara pasal Wang Tidak Dituntut?</i></p> <p><i>Semalam saya cuba cuba aje check dalam sistem. Sekali ada RM 1047.36 dalam akaun BSN. Ni mungkin akaun bank yang buka masa sekolah rendah dulu. Dah lupa ..</i></p> <p><i>So saya nak share tutorial kat sini. Check jelah. Check untuk diri sendiri dan orang penting . Yang masih hidup atau dah meninggal pun boleh..</i></p> <p><i>Step 1 : Layari <a href="https://egumis.anm.gov.my/">https://egumis.anm.gov.my/</a></i></p> <p><i>Step 2: Sign Up dengan masukkan info yang dikehendaki seperti dalam gambar ke 2</i></p>
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	<p><i>Buka email dan sahkan link yang diberi</i></p> <p><i>Step 3: Log in dan masukkan maklumat yang dikehendaki seperti dalam gambar</i></p> <p><i>Step 4: Masukkan IC individu yang kita nak check</i></p> <p><i>Sehari boleh check maximum 2 IC aja tau!</i></p> <p><i>Kalau ada nak buat tuntutan boleh download borang tuntutan dan walk in atau pos borang tuntutan yg kt download dari website ke alamat Jabatan Akauntan Negara Menara Maybank KL.. (Refer gambar Last).</i></p> <p><i>Semoga membantu.</i></p> <p><i>#share je kalau ada manfaat</i></p>
Factual description	<p><b><i>TERKINI! PENTING!!!</i></b></p> <p><i>Kementerian Kesihatan memaklumkan kepada orang ramai bahawa influenza kali ini adalah serius. Kaedah pencegahan adalah dengan mengekalkan kerongkong anda dalam keadaan lembap, jangan biarkan kerongkong anda kering. Oleh itu, jangan biarkan anda dahaga kerana sekali membran di kerongkong anda kering, virus akan menyerang tubuh anda dalam masa 10 minit. Minum 50-80cc air suam, 30-50cc untuk kanak-kanak, mengikut umur. Setiap kali anda merasakan tekak anda kering, jangan tunggu, teruskan minum air. Jangan minum banyak pada satu masa kerana ia tidak membantu, sebaliknya minum secara kerap supaya tekak anda lembap. Sehingga akhir Mac, jangan pergi ke tempat-tempat yang sesak, gunakan topeng</i></p>

	<p><i>seperti yang diperlukan terutamanya dalam kereta api atau pengangkutan awam. Elakkan makanan goreng atau pedas dan perbanyakkan makanan yang mengandungi vitamin C.</i></p> <p><i>Gejala / keterangan adalah</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>1. demam tinggi berulang</i></li> <li><i>2 batuk berpanjangan selepas demam</i></li> <li><i>3. Kanak-kanak lebih mudah terdedah</i></li> <li><i>4. Dewasa biasanya berasa tidak selesa, sakit kepala dan berkaitan dengan pernafasan</i></li> <li><i>5: sangat senang berjangkit</i></li> </ol>
	<p><i>[PETUA ANAK PANAS DALAM ATAU DEMAM]</i></p> <p><i>Bila anak demam memang ibu-ibu tak dapat tidur. Lagi anak anak ni payah nak minum ubat.</i></p> <p><i>InsyaAllah cuba beri anak minum TEH BUNGA sekerap mungkin..</i></p> <p><i>Khasiat teh bunga ni menurunkan suhu badan dengan cepat..mudah nak dapatkan ada di jual di pasarraya berhampiran..</i></p> <p><i>Dpt yg ori lagi baik, rendam dgn air panas dan letak gula batu sikit. Minum bila sejuk, jgn letak ais. InshaAllah</i></p> <p><i>Tak salah kita ikhtihar</i></p> <p><i>.</i></p> <p><i>P/s : Berminat viralkan jualan anda? PM admin.tq</i></p>
Humour/ Satire	<i>Saya jumpa doktor gigi 2 kali setahun</i>

	<p><i>Kali ini Sakit gigi.. tak tau la.. kena cabut ke .. cam ne ni .</i></p> <p><i>Takut? Tak adalah. Saya bersunat pon usia 38thn. Setahun sebelum saya syahadah.</i></p> <p><i>Senyum selalu</i></p> <p><i>Selalu bersangka baik</i></p> <p><i>InsyAllah hati tenang</i></p>
	<p><i>Saya kalau orang saya tak kenali mengadu nasib pasal rumahtangga, saya akan syorkan rujuk pada kaunselor bertauliah di masjid agama.</i></p> <p><i>Saya tak layak bagi nasihat, kerana saya bukan pakar dan tiada tauliah. Saya hanya seorang artis biasa.</i></p> <p><i>Kalau ada masalah kewangan boleh pergi Baitulmal.</i></p> <p><i>Sakit gigi jumpa doktor gigi bukan jumpa tok mudim</i></p> <p><i>Senyum selalu</i></p> <p><i>Selalu bersangka baik</i></p> <p><i>InsyAllah hati tenang.</i></p>

#### **4.6 Discussion**

The findings from the study have shown interesting outcomes in terms of understanding the attributes of viral Malay language postings on Facebook. In addressing the first objective, the results show that the main content attributes of viral postings in Malay language are largely related to family-related advices, ranging from marriage to family wellbeing. This somehow does not fit findings from previous studies (Chu, 2011; Mills, 2012) as they find postings in the form of gossips were more “viral”. However, it should be noted that the gossiping in public

(via Facebook platform) may not be a socially acceptable norm among the Malay community. Hence, this is perhaps why it is not widely found in the corpus of the study. In addition, this finding could be related to the preference and sentiment of Malay audience who are still very much upholding the family values (Aziyah Abu Bakar, 2015). Postings shared by friends about family matters tend to be re-shared and could reach large number of people in a short time. There is evidence in the viral postings that seem to suggest closeness and meaningful as the main contributor of virality and not merely due to popularity of the creator such as celebrities. As found by Borges-Tiago et al. (2019) in which regardless of one's persona in the online realm, the possibility for a person to engage in viral communication is higher when the content is deemed meaningful to them. Thus, in the case of this study, the target audience (Malaysians) were still very much into topics related to family.

In addressing the second objective of the study, the results show that viral posts contain a lot of words in the categories of personal pronouns and nouns related to family. This is rather expected since the main theme of most of the viral posts is family. However, it is not uncommon for viral posts to be written in personal voice. For example, Camarero et al. (2018) in their study on 240 Facebook pages showed how postings written using more personal pronouns and from the viewpoint of the author are more likely to be viral than others. The high usage of adjectives was also noted as it indicates the emotional tone that the writer is trying to present (Borges-Tiago et al., 2019). The deeper the emotional tone, the higher the tendency for the post to be shared.

In terms of writing styles, the findings show arguments/debate and narrative/anecdote styles are the most popular. This is in contrast with what Reyes et al. (2016) found out in their study, in which humour/satire tend to have more readerships and can go viral quickly. This is perhaps due to the Malay authors' intention of getting attention by using strong arguments and also offer background stories (which is widely liked by the Malay readers).

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **SUMMARY**

#### **5.1 Summary**

The qualitative study involving viral postings in the Malay language was conducted to address the following objectives:

- i. to categorize Malay language postings on Facebook that are viral in terms of their topics
- ii. to identify the linguistic attributes of those viral postings in terms of vocabulary frequency and writing style.

From the initial 100 viral postings with a corpus size close to 10,000 words, they were categorised and filtered to the main content and linguistic attributes. The use of AntConc and LIWC software has assisted the process of identifying these pertinent attributes. The findings from the study suggest that postings related to family topics tend to be shared more and are more likely to be viral than content covering other topics (apart from entertainment).

In terms of linguistic attributes, the study has revealed the focus on the use of personal pronouns and adjectives in the writing of the post. On the other hand, the writing styles of the viral postings were mainly in the form of argument/debate and anecdotes/narratives. As a whole, these findings were rather unique to Malay language postings as previous studies on viral postings in other languages have shown different attributes. For example, viral postings in English tend to focus more on gossiping styles (Chu, 2011; Mills, 2012).

## 5.2 Implications of the Study

The findings from this study have provided important insights on the nature of virality in Malay language postings. There are some important implications to be considered apart from what Hansen et al. (2011) have illustrated in their theory of viral content particularly from the linguistics point of view. Firstly, the findings from this study have shown that cultural influence of the content may affect the virality of the posting. In this sense, the topics related to family seems to be closely related to the Malay community, hence in this study most of the identified viral postings are related to family. Secondly, meaningfulness of the post is related to the emotional tone that the author has created. The findings from this study showed that when the emotions are injected through debating or anecdotal styles, the content produce seems to be shared more frequently by the Facebook users. Hence, these findings add on to the current understanding of what constitutes “virality” in the social media content.

In addition, the findings from the study could contribute to the area of digital social marketing by helping content writers to gather important features of viral content. This would help them to produce content that is likely to reach out to larger audience. The findings have revealed the kind of content that are more likely to be viral and content creators should take note of these features especially in terms of choice of topic and use of personal pronouns and adjectives related to emotions.

Apart from that, the findings of the study could be used to formulate a computational system that would be able to capture viral postings easier. The current applications were largely focusing on basic linguistics features. A more holistic computational system could be developed by taking into considered the attributes that have been identified in this study.



### **5.3 Directions for Future Research**

This study was conducted by focusing on Facebook postings and the platform is largely known as more sociable than other social media platforms. This is because the postings made can be easily shared or tagged to close friends and family and making the postings to be viral easier as compared to other platforms such as LinkedIn, Twitter or Instagram. Hence, future research could focus on a comparative study of viral postings across different platforms.

The constructs covered in this study were also limited to content and linguistic attributes that were largely rather general. For example, the themes chosen for content attributes could be expanded to cover greater range of postings. As for linguistic attributes, more features could be included apart from the frequency of words and writing styles used in this study. Other suitable features would be tone, diction as well as figurative languages. These additional features would provide a more comprehensive understanding of which element is the most dominant in making a social media posting viral than the general attributes covered in this study.

### **5.4 Conclusion**

This study has offered a glimpse on the attributes of Malay language postings that cause them to be viral. It seems safe to suggest that the Malay audience prefer postings that are closely related to them (personal and family), which tend to cause them to keep sharing those content. Even gossips about celebrities are not as viral as postings related to family issues. The findings from this study can surely guide content creators to be aware of the Malay audience's preference in creating more suitable content that can be highly "viral".

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## APPENDICES

### Sample of Viral Posting

...

Sahabat2 B40...

Dengan bantuan 1600 ini, kita akan menjadi kaya...!!! Kedudukan kewangan kita akan setaraf dgn founder2 produk...!!!

Org kaya pun jeles bila kerajaan bagi 1600 kat kita...

1600 ni, dia guna bayar gaji bibik dia ja...1600 ni, dia guna beli selipar dia ja...1600 ni, dia bleh belanja dlm masa kurang setengah jam...

Tapi bila kerajaan khususkan bantuan kewangan sebyk 1600 kepada golongan B40, maka katanya "the poor will become richer..."



Dah lama tak mencarut, tp mls nak mencarut plak...

U might be good in what u do, especially business, but do you really have senses?

Bila Allah s.w.t bagi kekayaan kpd kita, itu adalah satu ujian yg berat utk kita sebenarnya...if u felt lucky to have a life like that, then u r wrong...kekayaan akan membutuhkan hati dan membuatkan diri semakin hanyut sekiranya digunakan bukan pd tempat yg sepatutnya...

Be thankful for what u have and stop arguing or too concerned on what B40 received...don't compared your life with our shoes coz we wore selipar jepun, and u wore Crocs...

Nota kaki : Dah mcm kita mintak duit dia pulakkkk...deyy, please compare apple to apple la, why u want to compare apple with longan...

  2K

205 comments 319 shares



[PETUA ANAK PANAS DALAM ATAU DEMAM]

Bila anak demam memang ibu-ibu tak dapat tidur. Lagi anak anak ni payah nak minum ubat.

InshaAllah cuba beri anak minum TEH BUNGA sekerap mungkin..

Khasiat teh bunga ni menurunkan suhu badan dengan cepat..mudah nak dapatkan ada di jual di pasarraya berhampiran..

Dpt yg ori lagi baik, rendam dgn air panas dan letak gula batu sikit. Minum bila sejuk, jgn letak ais. InshaAllah

Tak salah kita ikhtihar

 1.8K

613 comments 2.5K shares