# Thematic Choice in Selected Malaysian Malay Women's Short Stories: A Representation of Malaysian Malay Female Identity from a Systemic Functional Perspective

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# Thematic Choice in Selected Malaysian Malay Women's Short Stories: A Representation of Malaysian Malay Female Identity from a Systemic Functional Perspective

# BY

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#### **ABSTRACT**

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Using a systemic functional analysis of three selected stories written by three

different Malay women writers, namely Che Husna Azhari, Dina Zaman and Karina Bahrin, the study explores a representation of the Malay women's identity from two contrasting settings, two kampongs in the East coast of Malaysia, Kelantan and Terengganu respectively and an urban Kuala Lumpur cosmopolitan. The study interprets the social cultural identity of Malay women within a linguistic context based on an analysis of thematic choice from the Hallidayan notion of grammar, more specifically, the System of Theme and Rheme and the resources of the System of Transitivity. In Mariah, a perfect Muslim world was construed by Che Husna Azhari because of Cik Yam's submission and Mariah's giving way to the Imam to become a subordinate role in the story. In And She Became an Angel (Dina Zaman), suggesting a subordinated female identity in a Malay kampong context, Mandak transposes a victimized role, a barren woman who bravely sought for a life transformation to become the heroin of the story, a western look angel. As in A Subtle Degree of Restraint (Karina Bahrin), Elena and Badariah, two representations of urban Malay women living in Kuala Lumpur,

experienced a subtle deprivation of liberty in the contrasting life condition of either marriage or barrenness. They were the representation of two different types of new highbred Malaysian Malay women bestowed by a rapid globalized cosmopolitan Kuala Lumpur.

Consolidated with the notion of feminist study and Critical Discourse Analysis in the discussion of Malaysian Malay women's identity, this study also proves that Hallidayan framework is a resourceful analytical tool in the exploration of text as a piece of social semiotic from the angles of Field, Mode and Tenor. The study also reveals that in the eyes of Malay women writers, Malay women have evolved from a silenced representation in the pioneering decades of the Malaysian Literature to a visible and vocal delegation who stood out with their own unique expression of life experiences from the clausal base analysis.

**Key words**: Identity, Malay women, Systemic Functional Linguistics, Thematic choice, Transitivity resources.

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9 Can Do All Things Through Christ Who Strengthens Me -- Philippians 4:13

### APPROVAL SHEET

This thesis entitled "Thematic Choice in Selected Malaysian Malay Women's Short Stories: Malaysian Malay Female Identity from a Systemic Functional Perspective" was prepared by TAN SWEE MEE and submitted as partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Social Sciences at Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman.

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SUBMISSION OF FINAL YEAR PROJECT /DISSERTATION/THESIS

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# **DECLARATION**

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it has not	been p	reviou	ısly	or con	cu	rrently	sub	mitte	ed for ar	y othe	r degre	e at
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#### **CHAPTER ONE**

#### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Introduction

Malaysian Literature in English (henceforth MLE) functions as a stage where all types of social, political and religious issues could be displayed as the authors of MLE portray the real essence of life in the country called Malaysia. The evidences are apparent as writers of MLE could have come from different races; be it writers from the ethnic Malays who dominate Malaysia's largest ethnic population, the Chinese, the Indian, the indigenous groups from Sabah and Sarawak, Eurasians, or the Peranakan minority groups. The profiles of these writers pen a diverse social and cultural backgrounds which serve as a growth media or an antigen of all sensitive issues related to gender, religions and languages in the nation building of this young country. Each of the writer's origin plays his/her unique part in the melting pot of ethnicity, weaving and embroiling a tapestry of cultures which belongs to Malaysia in its very own way reflecting the slogan "Malaysia, truly Asia". Nevertheless, dominating the biggest group of population in this tanah air, the number of Malaysian Malay women writers in MLE is just a handful (Nor Faridah & Quayum, 2001). Despite its small number in the population of MLE writers, their voices should not be muted as they are a representation of Malay women, the largest group of women in this multi-racial and cultural setting. Their literary works on issues of self, gender, religious and socialeconomical explorations have never left its marks in the evolution of MLE.

### 1.2 Background of the study

Research on Malaysian Malay women in the MLE could never go beyond explorations of Islamic discourses, gender issues, and identity quests in the literary works that were produced by Malay women writers under a multiracial background and in a fast-progressing globalised setting. To begin with, a chronological report of Malay women writers in the history of Malaysian literature could be traced back to the development of education for Malay women since British colonial period of time whereby the policy the British colonial government implemented (Ungku Maimunah, 1986). In the pioneering decades, fewer Malay women were given the opportunity to pursue formal education and if any, the record showed that they were forced to give up half way as it was time for them to get married by their parents' order although they were in their teen aged (Rayuan Sukma as cited in Ungku Maimunah, 1986). Therefore, the landscape of Malaysian literature was dominated by male writers inevitably. The portrayal of Malay women was subsequently rare and unknown. They could only be seen from the lane of their male counterparts and did not play any critical roles in Malaysian literature and also MLE.

The scenario was further supported from a study conducted by Metger (1991). In his research on the continuation and change of the novels written by a renowned novelist, Shanon Ahmad, the setting of the novels mostly took places in Malay kampongs in the 1960s to the 1970s, and the heroes were always "doers, active" as life was an unending process that male had to be present and control while female were rarely present or if any, they would simply move around without any specific purposes or were willingly dominated by their male counterparts in the story settings. An extreme

contrast between male and female in the eyes of Shanon Ahmad once again is evidently correspondent with Ungku Maimunah's comments that Malay women played a trivial role in the overall setting of the story, and the subjects of women literary work in the 60s or 70s were mainly related to domestic concerns, matters of family, love, and household chores or the so-called women's chatter with a didactic purpose to teach women becoming more civilised (1986).

With the same note, in traditional Malay literature, Malay women was further labelled as weak creatures who could not survive on their own and needed help from their male counterparts. Such the portrayal of Malay women was rooted by the male dominant scenario of the traditional Malay literature and eventually their voices were muted since they were not given opportunities to express or defense themselves (Rahimah & Shiful Bahri, 2014). The scene persisted for about two decades, the first magazine on women *Wanita* was published in 1969 with the hope to have writings on Malay women, for Malay women, and by Malay women. However, with this good intention, *Wanita* sometimes still needed male writers to fill up the gap of writing story when female writers could not sustain the story column (Ungku Maimunah, 1986) in the monthly publication of *Wanita*. In hindsight of the early development of Malay female writing in Malaysian literature, Aishah Ghani's Ibu Melayu Mengelilingi Dunia (Siti Nuraishah, 2020) definitely is a milestone debuting a significant breakthrough of the identity of Malay women and women writers in the land called Malaysia.

The interpretation of Malay women from the perspective of Malay women writers evolutionally came to a cutting edge when Nor Faridah (2001) claims that Malaysian literature both in Malay and English shifted into a new page in the 1980s and 1990s whereby the themes and description of Malay women in Malay women

writers' fictions advanced to a broader and bolder sphere (Ibid). Malay women and Malay women writers was unveiled through a few writing competitions. Among them, Che Husna Azhari, Elinna Majid, and Dina Zaman stood out representing contemporary Malay women writers in the MLE. Nazima (2008) asserted that Dina Zaman received more ethical comments from the mainstream and local scholars because of her controversial themes and language use in her prose fictions. Dina Zaman is indeed a daring Malay woman writer who fearlessly challenges tabooed topics in the Malay society, depicting marginalised Malay women characters and critical social issues related to women (Ibid).

The knowledge of Malaysia Malay women hardly can become complete without the literary exploration of Malaysia literature in Malay or English although women writers is scarce in the literary setting. Furthermore, the stereotyping impression of women's themes in fictional works also impeded the exposition of Malaysia Malay women to the world. Syazliyati (2007) expounds that the portraits of Malay women in fictional works would be more accurately unveiled if compared with statistical data collected from the political or social-economical surveys they involve in different sectors.

Among the issues of Malay women writers concerned, the quest of identity for Malaysia Malay women had started from Aishah Ghani's Ibu Melayu Mengelilingi Dunia (Siti Nuraishah, 2020), which is an exploration to the Western world in her narrative of travel before the Independence Day of Malaya. The expedition was extended to its heroine, Dina Zaman's excursions of finding God in different places and religions (Koshy, 2018). Aishah Ghani took a physical travel in those days when

women were rarely given an opportunity to travel domestically and abroad while Dina Zaman initiated a spiritual exploration on possible availability of religions in the land called Malaysia where psyche and pagan rituals are still taboo in a country with highly Islamised presence.

The two journeys significantly tower the evolution of Malay women in the MLE although the details are yet to be acknowledged from scholarly research. The evolutional journey indicates that Malaysian Malay women's identity in terms of women with self and women with the outer world has been evident in transforming meaningful social-cultural changes in a chronological sequence and had brought hope to the future of unpredictable possibility. In the shade of these two outstanding representations of Malaysia Malay women writers from the past to the present, a quest of Malaysian Malay women's identity is still undertaking a journey which is unknown to many.

It again is proven when a research has claimed that Malaysian Malay women writers were "woefully under-researched" and "knowledge about them is limited" (Muslim et. al., p. 2). The same study also contended that these Malay women writers were consciously aware of their identity in characterising and thematising their stories (Ibid). The elusive tie between the identity of Malay women and Malay women writers' apprehension in constructing their characters in the stories has foregrounded predicaments that should be investigated neither from traditional literary criticism, but a linguistic perspective, empirically letting the texts tell the stories.

On the whole, the study is framed largely within the context of MLE, but with a linguistic instrument, namely Systemic Functional Linguistics (henceforth SFL). It is a scrutiny of Malay women's issues that construes the perception of Malaysian Malay women's identity in the MLE by employing SFL as an analytical tool in probing selected short stories written by Malay women writers. SFL was founded by M. A. K. Halliday in the 1960s and he had described the text as, a system network where meanings were made through an ongoing selection of language (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004). Language, is thus, viewed as "a resource for making meaning" which "resides in systemic patterns of choice" (Ibid, p.23). SFL, therefore, is a linguistic approach investigating language functions of text as a piece of social semiotics.

The study is therefore set in a country where people enjoy a better level of living standards compared to its counterparts in South East Asia after the process of modernisation that took place long ago, Malaysian women, majority of who are Malay women, are still ranked relatively backward in a global survey ("The global gender gap report 2018"). Ironically, Malaysians who have been embracing peace and goodness over generations, the portrayal of Malay women in Malaysia specifically remains unknown and unexplored. This is certainly proven to be true as a finding from a study conducted in 2008 stated:

The present study found that after nearly 50 years of independence, Malay women still closely adhere to their traditional cultural values where they are expected to be strong as a mother, while remaining effeminate and subservient as a wife. The results also showed that rural women endorsed these latter values more than urban women. (Abdullah, Noor, & Wok, 2008)

The finding above evidently has not changed much in the present time as demonstrated in the findings from the Global Gender Gap Index 2018 where men remain dominant in many aspects of social and political fronts (World Economic Forum, 2018). In the survey, Malaysia was listed as one of the first ranking countries that offered better opportunities in higher education for women across the globe. However, in terms of the general index which covered economic adaptability, education, physical condition and involvement in politics of the Malaysian women ("The global gender gap report 2018"), Malaysia only ranked 101 across 149 countries. This implied the possibility that Malaysian women have not entirely moved from their traditional, cultural roles and values.

Other than findings provided by organisations, local newspapers have never stopped the burning questions on issues related to women, such as PAS (Malaysian Islamic Party) slamming the government for funding Sisters in Islam (SIS) and claiming that SIS's actions in providing assistance to Malay Muslim women's needs is a deviant move (Koh, 2019). Syariah law passes convenience for Muslim husbands to divorce their wives over the WhatsApp social media application (Tan, 2019) which clearly shows that women's consent is not important and certainly contradicts the National Registration Department's (2020) conditions for divorce, as there should be mutual agreement from both husband and wife when petitioning for divorce. Also, the rise in domestic violence and economic imbalances in Malay households should be taken into account (Rashidah et al., 2013). Based on these evidences, the contradictions shown between the ranking received and the issues highlighted would be more significant if a close investigation could be done through the social semiotics perspectives on women's identity in the short stories written by female Malay authors in Malaysia is carried out.

#### 1.3 Statement of the Problem

Studies on women's issues could form the fundamental research for all categories of social sciences, namely, psychology, sociology, anthropology, gender, sexuality, and ethnicity (Hauskeller, Sturdy, & Tutton, 2013; Golubovic, 2011; Cerulo, 1997; Frable, 1997; Erickson, 1968, 1951). The study would include social and cultural explorations between the woman's self within physical and mental or spiritual being, self and family, self and society, self and nation, self and nature or mother earth, self and the globe (Ibid). These studies were attempts to portray women's being as an important part of the society and the universal values it carried. Likewise, topics on women in the literary studies of MLE have been robustly discussed in the areas of gender studies (Jerome, 2013; Ruzy, 2011), anthropological studies (Wazir, 1992), feminist studies (Foong, 2019; Teh, 2003), discourse analysis (Jerome & Ting, 2015; Nor Faridah, 2015; Quayum, 2007) and so forth.

Nevertheless, research on MLE is not commonly found from an investigation of the lexico-grammar in the literary works, from a linguistic perspective, specifically employing Systemic Functional notion of linguistics to investigate each clause in the text grammatically. Studies on literature often focus on identity (see Jerome et al., 2016; Hamid, 2015; Hamid, 2012; Syazliyati, 2007) but specifically through a linguistic perspective is greatly limited and even if present, do not necessarily touch on MLE (see Majeed & Nabersina, 2019; Holden, 2009; Subramaniam, 2003). A similar research on Dina Zaman's characters through an integration of Halliday's Social Semiotic Theory of Language (1978) and Roger Fowler's Critical Linguistic Theory (1979) was conducted by Nazimah (2008) sketching the representation of Malay women's

characters in Dina Zaman's short stories; however, the focal point of the study was on the deconstruction of the Malay female characters in the short stories using Hallidayan notion of Transitivity which is segmental and in stylist analysis.

Defining one's identity could always be derived from one's social and cultural backgrounds such as one's birth place, family condition, spoken language, religion, race, socio-economic status, community, and the political and social environments (Jerome et al., 2016; Syazliyati, 2007). This social context inevitably brings very important impacts to the interpretation of the individual's identity. Moreover, MLE as a platform of identity creation (Jerome et al., 2015), when the writers framing the identity of being a 'woman' in their stories, they were aware and conscious of the characterisation from a broader context (Muslim et al., 2012). The quest of identity could be a process of exploration from the overt to the hidden of a woman's self which could be a strategy applied by the writers. For example, in Dina Zaman's short stories, a natural way of identification oneself to the society he/she resides is expressed through pidgin languages of Malaysia or Bazaar Malay in the conversation of the protagonists. The application of pidgin languages is therefore descriptive in the portrayal of the characters' Malay identity (Nor Faridah & Quayum, 2012).

In a study of the changing roles of Malay women in the novels written by a veteran female writer, Khadijah Hashim, the researchers compared the traditional and contemporary roles of the Malay women and concluded that women, regardless of their experiences from different social backgrounds of the West or East, they are all under the same roof of patriarchal societies, the content of their struggles from the past to the present is not a fight of feminist but of humanist (Yahya & Bujong, 2007).

Defining the reality of the literary works written by Malaysian women writers, the protagonists in the short stories extended from an urban professional woman to an aged prostitute, the voices uttered by these women writers whistled the alienation and marginalization of women in the reality in (Ruzy, Noraini, Raihanah, & Imran, 2011). Despite being given a great progress in the educational and professional sectors, Malaysian women, regardless their origins, are succumbed to the patriarchal society they dwell (Ibid). From a more extensive sphere, Malaysian women were illustrated as the following:

In general, the conception of the ideal Malaysian woman is stereotypical: she has to dress in a certain way, be able to cook, prepare and nurture children and take very good care of her immediate and extended family. Apart from that, the Malaysian woman must be able to possess and adhere to her religious beliefs and preserve her purity, piety, submissiveness and femininity within the religious and cultural contexts in which she has been brought up.

(Ling & Abdullah, 2018)

Women writers or women's literary works are specified as the topic of discussion for Malaysian women's identity as the portrayal of women has always been the same, where they embark on the journey in search of their identity, inclusive of the groups that they feel they belong to, and their personal characteristics (Hamid, 2015) even though there could be many other instances out there (Ling & Abdullah, 2017; Hamid, 2015). This is because Malaysian women's writing in English has been taken as part of the literary scene that stays afloat in Malaysian literature (Ruzy et al., 2011). In addition, as Elaine Showalter stated, "female writing moves in the direction of all-inclusive" and their writings significantly represent "a broad society' which includes the daily lives and values that form "a literature of their own" (Showalter, p. 400, 1998). Therefore, a representation of their writing is very much relevant in the discussion of Malaysian Malay women's identity.

Malay women writers such as Adibah Amin, Che Husna Azhari, and Dina Zaman have long been a part of MLE (Mazni et al., 2012). However, they are considered a marginalised group in the Malaysian literary setting (Muslim et al., 2011). Therefore, their positions as Malaysian writers in English literature is worth scrutinising because it would reveal a certain degree of truth in the narrative of nation building, as it is an inherently and common thought that MLE often revolves around nation building (Holden, 2009). In addition, the study would also provide a reflection of gender equality in the Muslim world and universal values of humanity that are worth reading. Although the representation of these Malay women's writers in society could be side-lined from the viewing arena of MLE, their voice and existence in the country and the maledominant Muslim world is inseparable from the development of a nation and must be recognized and heard (Noritah, 2014; Syazliyati, 2007). Accordingly, the contents in the literature involving women are often a reflection of the reality people live in, they should not be silenced nor remain subjugated by society (Syazliyati, 2007).

Empirically, the concern of this study falls on Malay women and their many views of the society they reside in from the selected literary works. The Malay women in literature have always been side-lined: the kitchen is always the place where women should be and are constantly suffering from the oppression and suppression from the men (Halimah, 2015; Hamid, 2015). The narrative themes of these Malay women writers range from the exploration of women's rights in a male-dominant Muslim world, the complexity of Malay Muslim women's identity quest in a multi-cultural society, views of biological experience as Muslim women, and so forth. It must be noted that the representation of Malay women's writers in the Malaysian society is greatly side-lined. This is because MLE has been marginalised by the mainstream of Malaysian

Literature when the Government debuted Malay Literature as the only literature that falls within the national status and works written in other languages, inclusive of English, are categorized as sectional literature (Noritah, 2014; Ruzy, 2011; Quayum, 2008; Syazliyati, 2007), accentuated by the change of language policy after a sudden swift in the political landscape.

MLE has inevitably been drowned to its pit hole for several decades. The status of MLE remains as a marginalized group although a gradual recovery took place after a group of women writers who started mushrooming through a few renowned writing competitions in the early 1990s (Ruzy, 2011; Holden, 2009; Quayum, 2008). Subsequently, Malay women's writers as a small group of writers in the MLE are inevitably undermined and their voices are "woefully under-researched" (Muslim et al., 2011, p132). In light of this social-political background and to ascribe part of the mosaics to the humanity studies of Malaysia, the present study is an investigation of Malay women writers' concerns, more specifically women's issues in the bosom of these Malay women writers from selected short stories, written and published in the 1990s to the beginning of the new millennium when globalization is rapidly taking place.

### 1.4 Objectives of the Study

The role of context and text has drawn diverse scholars' concerns for discussions in language and society (Yin & Wang, 2010), language and cultures (Steels, 2011), and language and politics (Hart, 2005). The origin of these phenomena is from the efforts made by language philosophers and social theorists, such as Michael Halliday (1975,

1978), Mikhail Bakhtin (1981), and Norman Fairclough (1989; 2010) in the 1960s and early 1970s. Owing to the fast development of their studies, the 1970s was often dubbed as the decade where "the transformation of linguistics theories and method in the social science" took place (Rogers et al., 2005, p 365). After the transitional development took place, contributed by these linguistics theorists and social theorists, linguistics studies aligned with other fields in social and political studies have shifted to a more interactive and critical sphere (ibid.). The interdisciplinary study of sciences in language and society, or language and humanity eventually have ventured across discourse analysis (Wodak, 2013), media discourse (O'keeffe et al., 2011), pragmatics (Furko, 2017), and the current study of multimodality (Pirini, 2017; Norris, 2016). The present study is an attempt in that direction. Within a specific genre, selected short stories from Malaysian Malay women writers, the social and cultural meanings of Malaysian Malay women's identity and concerns construed would enhance the understanding of humanity, from the text to the context.

It is thus an explicit exploration of female identity and women topics from the thematic choices and structure found in the selected short stories, an investigation of texts and context in searching the interpretation of social cultural meanings through a specific genre, short stories, from a linguistic perspective.

Therefore, the objectives of this study are:

- RO1: To explore the thematic choice in selected short stories written by Malaysian Malay women writers.
- RO2: To interpret thematic choice in the selected short stories by employing the textual metafunction and experiential metafunction from a Systemic Functional perspective.

RO3: To analyse themes that are prevalent in the realization of Malay women identity in the selected short stories.

### 1.5 Research Questions

In order to fulfil the research objectives as mentioned above, the researcher attempted to answer the following Grand Tour Question:

How would Thematic Choice construe Malaysian Malay women's identity in the selected short stories?

Specifically, in order to explore how Thematic Choice would construe Malaysian Malay women's identity from a Systemic Functional perspective, the following sub questions were therefore set as below:

RQ1: What are types of thematic choice found in the selected short stories. written by Malaysia Malay women writers?

RQ2: How do these thematic choices realize the interpretation of Malay women's identity in the selected short stories?

RQ3: What prevalent themes construe the representation of Malay women's identity in the selected short stories?

### 1.6 Significance of the Study

Malaysia is said to be a society with an amazing setting and have all the ingredients to create great novels because of the rich tapestry that exists in her people from all cultures, castes and creeds (Ampikaipakan, 2007). The diversity of ethnic groups in Malaysia, along with the representation of their respective culture, religion, and culinary wonders, with the creation of various slogans and mottos have created citizens who are proud of

the country (Gill et al., 2012; Evers, Yusoff, & Shamsul, 2010; Abdul, 2002). With the unique social cultural setting in Malaysia as the environmental context, a close and careful observation in the literary texts collected would be of great significance for a better understanding of humanity.

Despite literary analysis of MLE is still in its 'infancy stage' (Teh, 2003), a growing number of research on different topics such as multicultural challenges among Malaysian writers in English (Raihanah, 2009), gender roles in Liew Puay Tin's play (Phillip, 2010) and Muslim feminism (Nor Faridah, 2007) have emerged in literary studies. However, a consolidation of linguistics and literary analysis is still uncommon. In view of this, the researcher had initiated an exploration of this combination in the hopes that this study would enhance the understanding of MLE from different angles, particularly the Systemic Functional Linguistics approach.

This is a research that scrutinized female literary works which did not apply theories of feminism or other literary theories but solely analysed from a linguistic perspective, Systemic Functional Linguistics approach. In short, it is an attempt at exploring Malay women's identity from what the Malay women writers have written in their literary works. More specifically, this study is purposely restricted to the investigation of thematic choices that foregrounded messages in the clauses of the Malaysian Malay women's writing. It is a novel attempt of bridging literature to linguistics in literary criticism. In addition to the pool of SFL in probing Malaysian literary text, the current study would shed light on the literary studies of MLE with a refreshing ingredient. By having a close investigation of types and distribution of thematic choice in the text, it is hoped that the findings would contribute to the

interpretation of Malaysian Malay women's identity that were construed by Malay women writers that encompasses the cultural and social contexts in which they resided.

On the other hand, this study also aimed at suggesting a new sphere of reading for MLE when traditionally, stories and literary criticisms usually follow the conventions of New Criticism, Structuralism or Post-structuralism, i.e.; analysing plots, themes, climax or using literary theories such as Post-colonialism (Quayum, 2001), Islamic framework (Nor Faridah, 2000), or Feminist studies (Foong, 2019; Teh, 2003) while dealing with MLE. The significance of reading literary works by investigating the clausal level of text would provide a unique approach for readers, language teachers and academicians to chew words and sentences in the short stories and discover the meanings that the text proposed and explicate the writers' concern.

In addition, this study also attempted to prove the Hallidayan notions of text as a theory that could be applied to the interpretation of the society the text inhabits in. Overall, it is not unusual that Hallidayan notions of text have been testified and justified in various genres of other texts, such as research journals, business communication texts, newspaper or sports commentaries, political aspects, and also literary works (Almurashi, 2016; Patpong, 2009; McCabe & Heilman, 2007). However, in the MLE context, deriving the theoretical framework from SFL is very rare and remains unexplored. SFL as a tool probing Malaysian Malay women's identity would leverage the arena of literary studies in MLE and further shed light on humanity in the discourse analysis.

#### 1.7. Definition of terms

Section 1.6 defines specific terms that were applied in the present study with the purpose to signpost professional terms and the meanings which would occur throughout the entire report.

### 1.7.1. Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL)

Systemic-Functional Linguistics (SFL) is a language theory centred around the functions of language by analysing the syntactic structure of language. It centres on what language does, and how it does it. The analysis comprises more structural approaches to look at social context and how language acts upon the constraint of this social context (Hassan et al. 2005; Martin & Rose, 2003; Thompson 1984; Halliday, 1964).

#### 1.7.2. Textual Metafunction

The Textual metafunction plays the role as "an enabling metafunction" that makes ideational and interpersonal meanings "become whole" (Matthiessen, 1995, p. 20). It is a linguistic system network that looks into the theme-rheme structure of the clause (Halliday, 1970c, p. 360).

#### 1.7.3. The System of Theme and Rheme

Theme and Rheme presents the pattern of Thematization of the text. It is a systematic configuration of the clausal constituents affiliated to the Textual Metafunction. Theme is also defined as the "psychological subject" of the clause by Halliday (2004) and it is

always in the first position as "the point of departure" that serves to the body in an English clause (Halliday, 1994, p. 37). Rheme is the rest of the clause after "the point of departure" or the predicate of the clause that does not belong to the "psychological subject".

### 1.7.4. Experiential Metafunction

The Experiential metafunction matters the human experience which expresses the pattern of experience labelled as 'content' function of language. It includes the expression of the process and phenomena of outer world or the external and inner reality of the speaker. It is a linguistic system network that labels different process types to construe meanings of the content (Halliday, 1974b p 95; 1968a p 209).

### 1.7.5. The System of Transitivity

It is a system presenting the key analytical components of the Experiential Metafunction. A systematic network categorised with linguistic metaphors such as expression of processes or participants that construe meaning potential from the relation of linguistic forms, meanings and their functions (Halliday, 1970b, 148).

#### 1.7.6. Malaysian Literature in English (MLE)

A branch of Malaysian Literature in which its roots can be traced back to the 1940s and the writers commonly produce literary works in English, which these writers are also called as Anglophone writers (Quayam, 2001).

### 1.8 Research Methodology

This study used a qualitative research method whereby the findings of the thematic choice in the selected short stories are tabulated to provide a more comprehensive discussion in the later chapters. It used purposive sampling where the researcher first screened for short stories written by selected Malaysian Malay women writers whose works were published from 1990 onwards. Then, three short stories were chosen according to their publicity and accessibility. The chosen short stories were numbered for a closer investigation. Subsequently, each clause in the short stories were labelled and divided to the respective boundaries, which were Theme and Rheme. The analysis was taken on a clausal level of thematic choices in three stages. In the first stage, all the clauses in each story were labelled and numbered in a Microsoft excel file. Then, applying the System of Theme and Rheme, the structure of each clause was examined and tabulated according to the types of thematic choice. After that, the thematic choice found in the texts were sorted out and calculated. The results were then tabled to show the overall distribution or the ranking of prominent types of theme that would signify experiential meanings. In the second stage, thematic choice aligned with different types of participants were categorised accordingly to see the domination of the protagonists of the story. Lastly, by employing the System of Transitivity, an extensive examination which highlighted the types of participants and processes that would explain different levels of experiential meanings in the social context. Lastly, discussions on the findings with reference to the research objectives were carried out to determine if the research questions established were successfully answered. The three-stage analysis was deployed to interpret Malaysian Malay women's identity from the distribution of Thematic choice that showed the positional importance of the protagonists in the short stories and the experiential meanings from the roles of the Participants and the Processes that the protagonists entailed.

Other than identifying the thematic choice from the selected literary works, Malay women's identity was further validated from different viewpoints by examining the authors' backgrounds and experiences from various types of documentations, such as interviews from video clips or literary criticisms commented by other MLE scholars.

## 1.9 Scope and Limitation of the Study

The study of social issues could be endless and evolving, but the method of studying them could be varied (Akanle, O., Ademuson, A.O., & Shittu, O.S., 2020). This study was a qualitative research employing SFL as an instrument for text analysis of the literary works written by three Malaysian Malay women. The analysis of the selected three short stories was commissioned to explore the meaning of Malaysian Malay women's identity. The boundary was therefore set within the clauses in the three selected short stories that construe Malaysian Malay women's identity. It was an investigation of the lexico-grammar of the text, in the present study, framed within the Hallidayan notion of language and applying its conventional linguistic metaphors that were proposed by Halliday and his followers in the analysis of text. The interpretation of Malaysian Malay women's identity thus is bounded to the findings derived from the Systemic Functional perspective of text, specifically the textual and transitivity explanation of text that disclosed Malaysian Malay women's social contacts, challenges and issues of humanity surrounded these women.

Therefore, the analysis was not only limited to the female protagonist of the short stories but also their male counterparts that would juxtapose the true identity of these female heroines in the short stories. Both the clauses dominated by the male protagonists and the social settings of these female were also investigated. It was essential to look into these two entities as the voices of Malaysian Malay females were seldom heard. Similarly, the clauses led by the female protagonists in the selected three short stories were lesser than their male counterparts. Hence, the interpretation of Malaysian women's identity could be derived from the knowledge of their male counterparts and the setting that these women resided.

It is appropriate to investigate social issues and humanistic values through a qualitative approach. Taking SFL as an analytical tool, the interpretive approach became empirical as the findings were acquired through the clausal analysis whereby the meaning of Malaysia Malay women's identity was constructed through the configuration of the lexico grammar interwoven in the text. However, there is limitation of the interpretation since the analysis was manually conducted and the short stories selected were also confined to a certain limitation of the MLE. For instance, the manual analysis might have incurred human errors as the procedure of the analysis was tedious and taxing, transcribing all the clauses in the short stories into Excel files and determining the nature of each constituent of the clause. The human errors could be less significant as the overall transcription of data was on the conventional track and a second coder was applied to minimise the deviation of the analysis.

The analysis concentrated only on construing the textual and experiential meanings of the selected short stories through the system of Theme and Rheme and the

resources of Transitivity within the Hallidayan framework. Therefore, the interpretation of Malaysian Malay women's identity was restricted to the exploration of the two types of metafunction within SFL. An analysis of the thematic progression which connected one clause to another or the previous theme to the latter one can complement how the departure point of each clause is related (Halliday, 1994). In addition, an extended study of the interpresonal meanings of the clauses would enhance the interpretation of Malaysia Malay women's identity since the three types of metafunction proposed by Halliday provide a three dimensional analysis of meanings of the text. Subsequently, this would also contribute to the semantic representation of experiences that enables the construction of meanings in the real world.

The interpretation of Malaysian Malay women's identity in the MLE context was also limited because of the unavoidable reality. The Malay women authors of different genres that were collected in *Colonial to Global: Malaysian Women's Writing in English 1940s-1990s* were just a handful. The selection of women writers was consequently confined to the number of these Malay women writers. The short stories selected were inevitably ranging from the limited number of debuted Malay women writers. Their representation is thus more important than the length of the short stories although the third selected short story, *A Subtle Degree of Restraint* is relatively shorter than the other two. However, since the interpretation of meanings is clausal based and a conversion of percentage of the clauses would minimize the discrepancy in the findings of the selected short stories.

#### 1.10 Structure of the Thesis

This thesis serves to provide an investigation of the thematic choice and structure in selected short stories written by Malaysian women Malay writers with the purpose of scrutinizing Malaysian Malay women's identity performed in the clausal analysis of the texts. In order to present the analysis and arguments of the findings, this thesis is organized as follows:

Chapter One provides the introduction of the research area which is intensively defined in the Systemic Functional domain analysing Malaysian short stories written by Malaysian Malay women writers. The statement problem is thus conveyed after the scope of study is positioned. Subsequently, a brief description of the theoretical framework is clarified in Chapter One.

As for Chapter Two, an overview of research related to the theoretical framework detailing the historical background of SFL, notions of social semiotics and the identity of Malaysia Malay women in the MLE are substantially discussed from literary studies found in a Malaysian setting. It is followed by a broader scrutiny of other research which has employed Hallidayan conceptual framework in the analysis.

The theoretical foundation is detailed as the analytical tool followed by the research design with samples of analysis in Chapter Three.

In Chapter Four, after findings of analysis are tabulated, and demonstrated in relevant graphic organizers, data interpretation and discussion will be presented.

Chapter Five entails the conclusion of the research which includes summary of research, potential applications, research limitations, and potential future research.

# 1.11 Chapter Summary

As the introduction to the study, this chapter has presented an overview to the research SFL as the main tool for the analysis of three selected short stories written by Malaysian Malay women writers. It has described the background of the research area, the phenomenon being investigated, and the research objectives and the corresponding research questions that the researcher wished to answer. The significance of the study, technical terms, and methodology are informed accordingly as well. The next chapter provides a review of relevant literature to the research and the past research conducted related to the study. It mainly includes these three main categories: Reviews on SFL theory, MLE issues in general and in specific. The evolution of MLE and its relation with women writers and women's identity and the possible connection of MLE with SFL are presented in describing the study's theoretical framework.

#### **CHAPTER TWO**

#### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 2.1 Introduction

The review of literature is mainly organized into three sections. The first section is a review of MLE which includes a brief history of the evolution of MLE, from the post-colonized period in the beginning of the independence of Malaysia, a drastic change of the MLE setting in 1969 when the Malaysian government implemented a new language policy (Chin, 2007; Quayum, 2003; Ee 1988). Subsequently, a revival in the MLE took place in the 1990s (Chin, 2007; Nor Faridah & Quayum, 2001). The emerging trends of MLE (Holden, 2009; Quayum, 2003) were identified after the revival of MLE.

In the second section, various themes on MLE, specifically discussions around Malaysian Malay women from an Islamic perspective were explored. As the research covered socio-cultural issues such as polygamy and gender equality, a few themes identified from different studies were reviewed too. It mainly focused on Islamic theory of polygamy, modesty, barrenness and so on so forth (Elliot, 2018; Alamgir, 2014; Rhamakrishnan, Sadatmoosavi & Mohammad, 2013; Nor Faridah, 2000). A review on these topics served as a portrayal of Malaysian Malay women because the social cultural issues that happened around them also defined them.

The third section of literature review looks at the combination of the Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA here after) and SFL as research instruments in analysing different types of literary texts (Cordeiro, 2018; Alvador, 2014; Butt, 2004). The review is initiated from the development of sociolinguistics in 1970s, CDA and debates of applying SFL in CDA and research of applying SFL in CDA. The highlights are surrounded with probing current social issues from a combination of discourse analysis and language functions in the domain of language and society. It is followed with a review of SFL as the theoretical framework of the analysis. This section includes a brief history of the development of SFL, research of different genres applying SFL as analytical tools. The literature review aims to frame the current study by setting the boundaries of the linguistic domain in the present study.

### 2.2 Overview of Malaysian Literature in English

History is the continuation of time from the past to the present; whereby, postcolonial literature in Malaysia is a succession from the British colonial ruling in Malaya since the 19<sup>th</sup> century up to 1957, the year when Malaya declared its independence and as such, Malaysian literature in English emerges since the 1960s (Holden, 2009). Quayum (2003) believes that the tradition of writing literary works in English could be dated as far back to the establishment of the Department of English in University Malaya in 1949, the university where literary works in English began to grow. Despite the different claims, with this unique historical background, Malaysian writers in English were forced to shift from their familiar experiences of colonialism to the inevitable end of political-social changes after the independence.

Given the fact that Malaysia has a history with the English language as a result of colonization, it is undeniable that works written in English began to emerge around that time but unlike countries like Canada and India, literary works written in English have been marginalized by nationalism and political tactics and strategies, both consciously and unconsciously rather than institutionalized (Holden, 2009). Despite the marginalization of MLE, literary works are still being produced and published by the writers (Holden, 2009). The stage of MLE has never been muted despite its various drawbacks and pitfalls. Instead, it has kept evolving from one stage to another, from its downturn to its revival.

## 2.2.1 Generations in Malaysian Literature in English (MLE)

In MLE, Chin (2007) has grouped the Malaysian English writers into three generations: The pioneers, the post-independence writers, and the new generation writers. They will be presented in the following sections.

# 2.2.1.1 The Pioneers

The pioneers are debuted as the first generation of post-colonial, Malaysian writers in English. The writers in this generation include Lee Kok Liang, Ee Tiang Hong, Wong Phui Nam, and Lloyd Fernando (Quayum, 2003). Amongst these writers, some of them had chosen to take on the challenges and respond positively to the transformation of nation building, while others inclined to fleeing from the country and have since replanted themselves in alienated lands. Despite all of these happenings that occurred to them, their writings have themes and backgrounds that initially touched on the

conflicts dwelt in the British colonial era, later the Japanese occupation. It has then gradually set various forms of traditional voices which are unique to Malaysia, making the texts as mosaics, and contouring a Malaysian outlook or identity in Malaysian literature.

# 2.2.1.2 The Post-Independence Writers

The post-independence writers are labelled as the second generation of writers who emerged after Malaysia's attainment of independence in 1957. Prominent writers such as Shirley Geok-Lin Lim, K. S. Maniam, Kee Thuan Chye, and Muhammad Haji Salleh have contributed to the MLE between the 1960s and 1980s (Quayum, 2003). The writers in this group have gone through drastic socio-political changes that have impacted their writings. Despite experiencing the joys of witnessing the birth of a new nation in their beloved, own motherland, the shift of political scenes, implementation of the new language policy, and the racial riots that occurred in 1969 have since found to be a fatal blow and forced some of these writers to be exiled to other countries. Some writers, such as Shirley Lim had migrated to the U.S.; Muhammad Haji Salleh had given up writing from English to the Malay language. These second generation of writers, as a result of all these incidents, became a group of writers who had lost the language of their ideology, aesthetics, and creativity when the English language was side-lined not only in the education system but also in mainstream governance of the country.

#### 2.2.1.3 The New Generation

Inherited from the legacy of post-colonialism, contemporary MLE writers belonged to a younger generation of writers who were born between the 1960s and 1970s (Quayum, 2003) and began to appear around the end of the 1980s when Malaysia had started experiencing its robust growth, economically and politically. These writers have also shown connection to the material reality and complexities of the multicultural milieu in their everyday lives, indicating that they were directly involved with the local and current socio-political ambience (Chin, 2006). Amongst the writers who are classified in the new generation pool are Shi-li Kow, Rani Manikam, Bernice Chauly, Lee Kok Liang, Karim Raslan, Che Husna Azhari, and Dina Zaman; some of them brought up as expatriates in English countries such as the United Kingdom or U.S. while others had received their early education from the colonial type of English schools run by missionaries in Malaysia.

Other than their educational background, their writings that addressed issues of conflict on plurality in a multicultural society and bridged the old and young have helped to analyse the national discourse and current social political issues in Malaysia while comparing to those diasporic Malaysian writers who are crowned as "substance and in spirit" (Chin, 2007, p.263). Even though the writers' life experiences have helped contextualize the historical and current social-political complexity and reality (ibid), these experiences in their homeland have eventually subsided as they have dwelled in different boundaries geographically and socio-politically. Regardless, having the success in writing, the new generation of writers subsequently had started to publish their own writings.

Another characteristic that can be identified in the new generation of writers is that they do not lament the past of English writing in Malaysia like those pioneering writers. Instead, they are much more forward looking – they tend to publish their creative writings in magazines, blogspots or self-sponsored publications. Given this new labelling, the new generation of writers have presented Malaysia beautifully as the embroidery of various ethnicities and cultures, which are the elements of the Malaysian life, which are presented naturally to the audience. One such example is the literary work written by a Malay Muslim woman, Rumaizah Abu Bakar, who has integrated various local aspects into the work such as the mooncake, Oolong tea, names such as Chen and Mimi in her work *Chestnut Chocolate Mooncake* (Rumaizah, 2006). Another woman writer of Chinese origin, Shih-li Kow named her main protagonist Mrs. Narayanan in *Dividing Walls* and Cik Zahirah in *The Courting of Cik Zahirah* (Kow, 2008).

#### 2.2.2 Changes affecting Malaysian Literature in English (MLE)

The various economy-socio-political changes in Malaysia has had an impact on the status of MLE. The watershed from colonial to postcolonial literature occurred in the year after the racial riots in 1969 when the Government integrated a drastic change in language policy. These social-political changes further castrated the literary landscape of English literature and had caused various Malaysian writers in English to embark on a quest in search for identity (Quayum, 2003). Among them were Ee Tiang Hong, Lloyd Fernando, Muhammad Haji Salleh, K. S. Maniam, Shirley Geok-Lin Lim. A prominent example among the said writers was Ee Tiang Hong, who sees himself taking a self-exile stand to liberate himself from the second colonialism (Chin, 2006; Ee, 1988),

denying himself to be moulded in another new contour of literary landscaping in Malaysia.

Other than Ee Tiang Hong as mentioned, this group of Malaysian writers have taken different actions while facing the stiff challenges of the social political change. Nevertheless, they continued labouring with different fruitions in the landscape of MLE. Another prominent figure is Shirley Geok-Lin Lim, who has migrated to the United States to pursue academic achievements and securing her status as a writer, poet, social activist, and a scholar. As a prolific Malaysian writer, she has since continued writing poems, short stories, and novels which are connected to Malaysia and Singapore, Australia and America. However, the sentiments of her writing with a strong attachment to the homeland (Lim, 1994) indicated that she could never detach herself from Malaysia even when she insists that she is a trans-nationalist and an international writer (Kirpal Singh, 1999).

Amongst the MLE writers discussed, many has since acceded the 1990s as the revival and transformational period of English literature in Malaysia (Chin, 2007; Nor Faridah & Quayum, 2001). Including the late 80s, new writings in English boomed after a few corporate-sponsored writing competitions were organized by New Strait Times (NST) and Shell or New Strait Times and Esso. The fast globalization and emergence of the Internet have also resulted in the Malaysian government to recognize the importance of the English language once again, both politically and socio-economically as it has been crowned with international status as a lingua franca. The policy makers thus have introduced a few Acts that officially renounced the English language as the country's second language. In addition, English literature teaching is then implemented as part of

the English language teaching in secondary school level. Further to this, the Malaysian University English Test (MUET) is introduced to be the criterion for university graduation.

Corporate-sponsored competitions such as the NST-Shell Short Story Competition 1989 and 1992, NST-Esso Playwriting Competition in 1993, and the NST-Shell Poetry Competition I and II in 1993 and 1995 have successfully shaped a new contour of the English literature in Malaysia. These competitions as mentioned, occurred in the late 80s and 90s. The new generation of English writers aforementioned and many more that began to spring up, were identified through these competitions and their new publications, making their return a limelight to the public (Chin, 2007).

Other than the competitions hosted, the mushrooming of new publishers such as Silverfish Books, Skoob Books, and Rhino Books had helped contribute to the booming of new English literature in Malaysia. Taking Silverfish Books as an example, the publisher has succeeded in another milestone for the production of literary works where the publishers have helped revive and sustain the short story writing tradition. The richness of multiculturalism and multi-ethnicity has certainly made the writing process complicated as there were many identities a characters to assume in the literary works (Jerome, Ruzy, & Ting, 2016).

#### 2.2.3 Emerging Trends of Malaysian Literature in English (MLE)

One such trend that has been occurring over the years, as Holden (2009) claims, is the act of having MLE literary works to be "published outside of Malaysia" since the 1990s

(p.56). Notable examples as claimed by Holden (2009) are such as *The Harmony Silk Factory* by Tash Aw in 2005 and *The Gift of Rain* by Tan Twan Eng in 2008. Even within Malaysia, local publishers such as Silverfish and Maya Press have been continuously making efforts to raise the publication of these successful works by the writers but are met with devastating results as the quality of the sales of these works did not match the sales revenues.

While works of MLE did receive audiences from the international contexts, the success of these works did not receive enough or the deserved attention from these audiences nor having any influential impact on them (Holden, 2009). Holden (2009) has expressed disappointment as there are only a few significant and prominent journals that have looked into the works of MLE, such as *The Journal of Commonwealth Literature* and *The Journal of Postcolonial Writing*; Mohammad Quayum's *Asiatic*, an online journal that has been making efforts in providing scholarship for MLE, which, has also faced with disappointment, what's more with the scholars from the international audience who neglected the richness of the Malaysian context within these works as they are often looking and analysing works of MLE through a postcolonial perspectives. Clearly, there is a trend where international audiences have shown attention on MLE but at an undeserving manner, even with the help of local contributions.

Interestingly, despite lesser attention from the international context, Quayum (2003) has stated that some of the works in MLE have actually become an inspirational tool for young generations to embark in the journey of writing. To his claim, he justifies by citing Lloyd Fernando, who was a professor at University of Malaya teaching English and simultaneously had produced articles on literary criticisms in both local and

international contexts, which not only has become an inspirational tool for the younger generations but also helped in continuing the tradition of writing in MLE.

Another significant trend is that MLE is gaining its deserving recognition and fame albeit a little slow. To justify this claim, Quayum (2003) has provided a few examples: Shirley Lim with the very first collection of poetry, *Crossing the Peninsula and Other Poems*, has won the Commonwealth Writers' Prize in 1980 along with a two-time fame for winning the American Book Award in 1990 and 1997; K. S. Maniam who was awarded by the Indian Sahitya Academy and the Raja Rao award in 2000; and writers like Wong Phui Nam, Ee Tiang Hong, Lee Kok Liang, and Kee Thuan Chye who were highly regarded and received considerable attention across ASEAN countries and at the international level, though they have not received any awards yet.

Thus it can be seen that there are a total of four trends identified that are occurring in the MLE, which involve successful publications in both local and international contexts, receive attention from scholars across the globe albeit not a considerable amount, treat MLE as an inspirational tool to produce writers from the young generation, and gain fame and recognition from all across the globe.

### 2.2.4 Identity explored in Malaysian Literature in English (MLE)

Before exploring the Malaysian Malay women's identities in MLE, shaping a national identity is still in process as there are still disputes going on in Malaysia. It is undoubtable that priority should be given to humanistic perspectives rather than disagreement towards different upbringings or religious differences. The social issue

which is the attempt to implement the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD) has received a blow to the people, which clearly showed that Malaysians have failed to uphold the core values of humanity (Boo, 2018). Apparently, shaping national identity is still a difficult task even after years of obtaining independence, and to add on to the complexity of identity, the identification of self by Malaysians is the result of influence by identities such as ethnicity, religions, and the affiliation of the regions they are in (Jerome, Ruzy, & Ting, 2016). To provide one such example of the complex identity that Malaysians identify themselves with, an individual first addresses him or herself as "a Muslim, then a Malay and then a Malaysian, and the extent to which ethnoreligious identity has impacted strongly the country's social and political structures," (Jerome, Ruzy, & Ting, 2016, p.37).

Even in literature, identity is still widely discussed by scholars since it is often applied in literary works by Malay and non-Malay writers (Jerome, Ruzy, & Ting, 2016; Jerome, Ting, & Ruzy, 2016). Although this aspect is widely discussed in MLE, it is found that scholars have the tendency to explore only specific identities through the employment of specific theoretical frameworks and theories which completely discarded in accounting the writers' own experiences when producing the literary work (Jerome, Ting, & Ruzy, 2016). In the study on the diverse identities assumed by characters in literary works by Jerome and his colleagues (2016), a literature review on past studies pertaining to literary works produced by Malaysian writers show that the identities are often related to alternative sexuality, male and female relationships, women's body, and multiple identities that characters have to assume in their literary works. These identities are a reflection of the actual society people live in.

When further delving into multiple identities in literature, the term assumes that identities such as "organisational membership, profession, gender, ethnicity, religion, nationality, and family role(s)" which these identities greatly transcend across time and space in all forms of literature, regardless of the English language or the Malay language, resulting in a clear reflection of the identities assumed by the Malaysian society (Jerome, Ruzy, & Ting, 2016). As seen in the example discussed earlier on identifying oneself as a Malaysian, it is a very complex identification process since it involves identifying oneself as a Malay and further identifying oneself with other identities related to the person, which applies to the space and time they are in.

## 2.2.5 Emergence of Women Writers

From the competitions and publishers mentioned, Chin and Abdul Manaf & Quayum, (2007; 2001) claimed that women writers in MLE who wrote different genres of short stories began to emerge, with writings that claimed a bountiful harvest that significantly cultured the landscaping of MLE. Amongst the female writers were Chua Guat Eng, Che Husna Azhari, and Dina Zaman. Some of the popular works that emerged from these female writers were Che Husna Azhari's *Melor in Perspective* (1993) and *The Rambutan Orchard* (1993), and Dina Zaman's *Night and Day* (1997). The access granted through competitions and publishers have granted the female writers the opportunity to publish their works, rendering them easy and convenient for readers from all walks of life to read. In addition to publishing their works for the people, some of them like Chuah Guat Eng, Marrie Gerrina Louis, and Shirley Lim are notable writers that have gained fame for being accomplished writers (Quayum, 2003). Nor Faridah (2000) however, reported that one of the earliest women writers before the above

mentioned writers was Hedwig-Aroozoo Anuar, a Johor Bahru-child who had since become a Singaporean. Still, Nor Faridah (2000) regards her as a woman writer in MLE.

Limiting the aspect of literary works to novel writing, Quayum (2003) claims that there are some female writers who had become the pioneers as novelists in Malaysia albeit being Malay language writers. Two of these female novelists are Rafiah Yusuf and Karamiah Haji Saadon who were published in the 1940s. Shifting his focus to women writers in English language, notable works that were published by these writers in the 1990s are such as *Echoes of Silence* (1994) by Chuah Guat Eng and *The Road to Chandible* (1994) by Marrie Gerrina Louis. The publishing company that has helped Louis in publishing *The Road to Chandible* in 1994, Heinemann, has again published her work titled *Junos* (1995), her second novel. Like Lloyd Fernando, the publishing of these works by Chuah Guat Eng and Marrie Gerrina Louis were hoped to be an inspiration to produce young writers to embark on the journey of writing in the future and face the challenges it posed (Quayum, 2003).

### 2.2.6 Thematic Focus of Malay Women Writers in Malaysia

In a discussion citing women writers making contributions to literary works, Showalter and Nor Faridah (2000) stated that women have gone past a long history of evolution and have since been able to produce their own literary works. The works of Malay women writers, as Nor Faridah (2000) places it, have experienced evolution through three stages namely feminine, feminist, and female. Nor Faridah (2000) believes that the writers evolved from feminine to feminists and finally females. She has defined the three evolutional stages accordingly: Feminine refers to imitating the dominant

tradition, which is often regarded as the tradition practiced by the males when producing literary works; feminist refers to the protests and advocates made by the writers on minority rights and values, which they must show a certain level of maturity; female refers to the writers who embark on the journey of self-discovery as they produce literary works. As Malay women writers continue to evolve, Nor Faridah (2000) believes that they will eventually make a discovery of themselves or find themselves as the centre of producing works. Clearly, they have since transcended their works from imitating the male writers' works to producing works that echoed their own voices and identities in it, reflected in the themes of their works.

Other than searching their identities through literary works, Nor Faridah (2000) stated that the works surround *fitrah*, which can be interpreted as the natural self that is given by the God. She justifies this claim by stating that the themes in the works often showed congruence with the Islamic principles, such as the works that highlight the traditions and womanhood practiced in the way of Islam. It thus shows that other than the identity quest as a theme in the literary works produced by the writers, practices and traditions in the way of Islam is written to portray the characters in those works.

Furthermore, Nor Faridah (2000) along with Ramakrishnan and his colleagues (2019) highlighted that these women writers, both Malay and non-Malay, tended to highlight various issues related to women in their literary works in the aspect of MLE and Malay literature. Nor Faridah (2000) stated that issues of polygamy, rights in husband selection, and female body were themes often found in the literary works, citing examples from works such as Che Husna Azhari's *Mariah*, Celine Pereira's *The Viewing Party*, and Lin's *Victim*. Despite the Qur'an providing guidelines and

regulations in the stated issues along with the teachings and practices of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW), Nor Faridah (2000) emphasized that because of these issues, the West and Islamic states have treated them as a serious matter that needs to be solved.

Ramakrishnan, Ruzy, and Noraini (2019) on the other hand have claimed that the MLE writers highlighted the theme of domestic violence in their literary works. Their study revealed that issues of abusive behaviours, domestic violence, and sexual harassment have been neglected when themes of social-cultural conflicts in nation building were overwhelming in the mainstream by most of the prominent MLE male writers. The researchers believed that the intention of these women writers who highlighted such issues come with the aim of generating a representation and visualization of how women are actually perceived by society, calling the need for attention on how women are treated. Moreover, the observation also implies that domestic violence happens to female characters because they dare to confront their traditional gender roles but inevitably, they compromise themselves to the social-cultural forces but not to their male counterparts. However, the sample collected in the discussion of this study was limited to Indian and Chinese characters. Thus, it could be presumed that issues of domestic violence seem not that commonly emphasized in the literary works written by Muslim female writers. When applying an Islamic theory, gender inequality or domestic violence either mentally or physically could be justified as gender differences in the pilgrimage to a higher level of spirituality.

From the works of Nor Faridah (2000) and Ramakrishnan and his colleagues (2019), multiple themes portraying women in literary works written by Malay and non-Malay women writers share common aspects. They have highlighted many issues pertaining

to women, identity quests, traditions and practices of womanhood pertaining to Islamic principles, and crimes and delinquencies in the literary works. These works have shown how women are represented in the actual society people live in, allowing a visualization of the women's experiences in real life through literature, and gaining attention to treat these aspects seriously.

The portrayal of Malay women could have been affected by Malay women writers' understanding and experiences of lives that they inherited from birth. As such, the role of tenor from the Hallidayan notion have inevitably interfered the characterization and thematization of the stories and it was revealed in the following past research. On scrutinizing the representation of Malay Muslim women in a rapid changing world from fictional works written by three selected Malay women writers, namely Che Husna Azhari, Dina Zaman and Ellina Abdul Majid, the researchers claimed that Malay women writers were alert on characterizing the identity of Malay women's characters in their stories. When depicting different challenges that the female characters face, these Malay women writers have never forgotten their identity as Muslim writers although they might have different levels of exposure to the Western cultures (Muslim, et al., 2012). The findings were confirmed by another researcher who asserted that Malay writers in MLE have to apply tactful approaches when expressing social issues that they are concerned about (Ng, 2011).

This group of Malay Anglophone writers had experienced a subtle restraint of being Malay because they are inseparably tied with the yoke of religion and have been enjoying privileges they have in the exposure of Western education. In addition, facing the challenges in a rapid process of globalization and modernization, on the negotiation

of themes such as sexuality, polygamy and patriarchy, Malay Anglophone writers express themselves by voicing their concerns through English writing instead of writing in their mother tongue. Furthermore, upon the universal values of humanity, they either deploy irony or humour in their writing (Che Husna Azhari, 1993) or set the background of their writing in a supernatural realm (Dina Zaman, 2012). These creative approaches help them wittily dissolve the criticisms they encounter from the oppressing forces within their community.

#### 2.3 A Portrayal of Malaysian Malay Women

Section 2.2.1 is a general description of Malaysian Malay women who greatly abide themselves in the social-cultural values of a Muslim community they reside. These social-cultural values justified whom they are from the past research in the MLE, news headlines, and also an international report mentioned in Section 1.1 (p.4-5). The portrayal is thus engaged in presenting the moral values, social commitments, and religious teachings they are exposed to, literally, the traditional Malay cultures and also the Islamic background that these women belong to.

#### 2.3.1 Virtue Values of Muslim Women

In literature, virtue is seen as a form of education capable of apprehending audience that other people do exist than just the character of him or herself (Elliot, 2018). Elliot (2018) in his chapter on virtue and theories of virtue further explains virtue in terms of literature as creating an understanding of the various situations that humans live with, leading to the understanding of the ethics in living. Looking at the term virtue from an

Islamic perspective, virtue is seen as a rich aspect that people must practice, in particularly modesty (Sadatmoosavi & Mohammad, 2013).

Modesty, or *Haya* from the Islamic perspective refers to a fundamental practice in life that is prominent in the Islamic society and further helps people suffering from transgression (Sadatmoosavi & Mohammad, 2013). In a society, Sadatmoosavi and Mohammad (2013) have provided a very detailed explanation of modesty as a virtue in the Islamic religion: Every religion has its own definition of virtue, and modesty is the virtue in Islam; Islam advocates that everyone is responsible on their own faiths, deeds, and the practices of the others; when people follow the practice of modesty in life, it brings many benefits such as keeping themselves as individuals who are spiritually healthy and pure, strengthening the foundations laid in a family, and enabling themselves to be refrained from *harams* and lusts that corrupt the soul.

Narrowing down to the context of women in the Islamic religion, a Muslim woman must show submission to God, be treated as a symbol in the practices pertaining to Islam, and bear the Islamic cultural and traditional values (Alamgir, 2014; Sadatmoosavi & Mohammad, 2013). Simply put, literary works of Muslim women are often drawn from the principles of Islam such as "the Holy Qur'an, Prophetic Hadith, and Sunnah, as well as related to scholarly writings by Muslim writers" (Jerome, Ruzy, & Ting, 2016). Sadatmoosavi and Mohammad (2013) have, too, provided a thorough discussion of modesty for women: Women have to practice modesty as well, as modesty also involves the restrains placed between the relationships of men and women. In Islam, men and women have to dress modestly and to avoid unnecessary sexual desires by covering their *aurat* or the intimate parts of women appropriately; self-

control and self-esteem are important factors that help in restraining sexual desires. These factors further help avoiding men and women from committing sexual crimes and sins that violate Islamic principles. When women practice modesty, the relationship between them and their husbands can further be strengthened, thus uniting themselves with their husbands and ultimately resulting in a stable marriage.

## 2.3.2 Submissive versus Independent

In terms of being submissive, with the name of God, Muslim women are to show submission to God (Tan & Teh, 2014). Other than being submissive to God, through Islamic revivalism in Malaysia, the *dakwah* movement or better known as the movement that opposes Western counterparts on economy, politics, and social supremacy have been advocating on the claim that "good Muslim women should educate others about Islam, be involved in child-rearing, and create positive social consciousness (Alharafesheh, 2016; Alamgir, 2014). The following statements are the claims of the *dakwah* movement:

- 1. Women are a source of support to men,
- 2. Women do not have the same political rights as men, that they may only lead female organizations,
- 3. Women's careers are limited to being clerks, teachers, nurses, and doctors,
- 4. Women's role is to educate the new Muslim generation,
- 5. Women must cover their hair and wear long, loose clothes, and
- 6. Women should not use so-called Western products such as cosmetics.

By showing their acknowledgement to the *dakwah* movement, it helps the Muslim women to shape their identities as a Muslim, subsequently showing their commitments

towards being a Moslem (Alamgir, 2014). From these statements, it has clearly shown that the women's actions are greatly restricted if they are to follow the statements based on the *dakwah* movement. For a Muslim woman to be considered as an "ideal" woman, she must thus be "subservient and submissive" (Alamgir, 2014, p.873).

Some Muslim women, in particularly the modern and progressive ones tend to see these as a form of injustice and mistreatment towards them (Alharafesheh, 2016; Alamgir, 2014), resulting in them to go against the statements in the *dakwah* movement (Alamgir, 2014). SIS is one such group that aims "to promote an awareness of the true principles of Islamic equality, justice, freedom, and dignity within a democratic state" (Alamgir, 2014, p.873). Though receiving criticisms from many Islamic practitioners, claiming the organization is a result of corruption from the Western influence, SIS continues to go against the oppression that they are facing, firmly believing that they should not be submissive nor subservient to the men (Alamgir, 2014), implying clearly that Muslim women can be independent as well as men.

#### 2.3.3 Diligent and Household Chores

Gender inequality has always been debated across many countries (Zuraini, Tan, & Noor, 2018). In a society where the Malay community practices patriarchal practice, women are continued to be viewed as holding the responsibilities of completing household chores other than their duties as child-bearer even though there is an emerging of trend where men have begun to be involved in household chores as well (Zuraini, Tan, & Noor, 2018; Alharafesheh, 2016; Kan & Laurie, 2016; Samani, 2016). Along with the responsibilities of completing household chores, the women are found

to be juggling between household chores and their career in the workplace, indicating that the traditional positions of women are still being applied to women even though they are working along with men at the workplace which ultimately results in difficulty for women to be able to commit to their jobs at their workplace (Zuraini, Tan, & Noor, 2018).

Typically, household chores such as "cooking, cleaning and washing, and ironing" are chores that women have to do most of the time; even if women are employed in the workforce, household chores still needed to be done as they have to ensure that the home and family are looked after (Kan & Laurie, 2016). Such scenes are also seen occurring in MLE as well. Taking Dina Zaman's works on highlighting the issues faced by women, one of the issues is that women are being treated as housemaids and along with other issues, are often neglected by the Malaysian society (Muslim et al., 2012; Nazima, 2008).

#### 2.3.4 Barrenness

In describing infertility (Ofosu-Budu & Hanninen, 2020), mostly women bore more responsibility from the society they dwelled in. Some societies even blamed that these women were cursed and bewitched or had a disgraceful lifestyle. Relating barrenness or infertility to the Islamic context, it has pointed out there are two significant benefits by studying this matter: (1) create an understanding of the phenomenon as women have been experiencing this regardless of time and space, and (2) understand this experience of infertility through the influence of histories from the Middle East and Islam (Verskin, 2020). According to the *Hadith*, an infertile woman is not qualified to be a wife and

men have to be "Beware of the barren woman, for [one married to] her is like a man ensconced at the top of a well, who waters his land daily, but whose land does not bloom, is not absorbed"<sup>2</sup>. The issue of bareness was barely explored in many past researches in the MLE as it is also seldom mentioned in the Islamic laws (Ibid, p.1).

In the Islamic context, infertility is not penalized; however, one could imagine the anxiety and mental distortion that a Muslim woman would traverse once she is labelled as a barren woman in her Muslim community. In addition, if the wife is found to be barren, the husband may practice polygamy which is further discussed accordingly in the next sections, allowing the husband and involving the husband in a marriage to have the other wife to bear a child (Alamgir, 2014).

<sup>2</sup> Note: "Beware of the barren woman, for [one married to] her is like a man ensconced at the top of a well, who waters his land daily, but whose land does not bloom, is not absorbed"<sup>2</sup>-- verses could be read in Ibn Ḥabīb, Kitāb adab al-nisā' al-mawsūm bi-kitāb al-ghāya wa'l-nihāya, 152–3.

### 2.3.5 Polygamy

Before discussing the term polygamy, it is important to understand the definition of the word marriage in the Islamic context. From the Muslim jurists' definition, marriage or *nikah* can be understood as obtaining sexual benefits between a man and a woman through a contract with no forms of contraceptives appearing between the two (Khan & Zahoor, 2015). Through marriage, the hostility between the two people can be reduced and transformed into a friendship that brings people closer to one another,

ultimately having a relationship which allows affection, comfort, goodness, and kindness to be present between the husband and wife (Khan & Zahoor, 2015).

Polygamy in an Islamic explanation means that a man, under a specific condition, is allowed to marrying the most of four women in a marital relationship (Al-Islam org). It is practiced not only in Islam but also other religions and found in history too: in Judaism and Christianity; the French kings, Jews, and Arabs too have practice it in their societies (Khan & Zahoor, 2015). In fact, Alamgir (2014) has claimed that polygamy is never the invention of Islam as believed by the people, it is rather a practice that began in Africa as a tradition even before Islam came to advent. Contrary to other contexts that allow men to marry many women, Islam however has strict regulations to polygamy: Men can only have up to four wives and any more than that, the husband has to decide who are the four wives that he shall keep and the others must be divorced, where, it is even a declaration from the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) Himself as seen in his quote "Marry women of your choice, two or three or four...", clearly indicating that the number '4' is the limit of how many wives a husband could have in a polygamous marriage (Khan & Zahoor, 2015).

In fact, Prophet Muhammad (SAW) also further stated that "if ye fear that ye shall not be able to deal justify (with them), then only one..." which simply means that if the husband has no capability in handling four wives nor showing the ability to manage the marriage successfully, one would be sufficient (Alamgir, 2014; Khan & Zahoor, 2015). It should also be understood that, practicing polygamy in marriage-related matters should never be treated as an excuse for divorce, all wives should be treated equally with no compromises occurring during the marriage (Alamgir, 2014). When polygamy

is practiced appropriately by both men and women, the marriage will be deemed beneficial to them throughout, simultaneously enabling women from posterity and keeping them as individuals that possess high moral values (Alamgir, 2014). To date, complying the above stated quotes from the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) himself, Muslim societies especially in the Middle-East are still practicing polygamy. Clearly, the condition for polygamy is stated in the Islamic context and not to be simply practiced in conducting a marriage.

Narrowing polygamy into the Malaysian context, polygamy has since been practiced ever since the pre-colonial Malay society and many are still practicing it to date (Alharafesheh, 2016; Abdullah, Abdullah, & Ferdousi, 2015; Alamgir, 2014). In fact, the elites and wealthy ones from the Indian and Chinese communities are also practicing polygamy even though many believe that polygamy is part of the Shariah (Abdullah, Abdullah, & Ferdousi, 2015). Since the Prophet himself had stated that there are conditions to practice polygamy in marriage, the Shariah law in the Malaysian context also permits polygamy to be practiced but has since outlined five conditions that are necessary and must at least be fulfilled prior to practicing polygamy. They are:

- 1. The proposed marriage is just and necessary,
- 2. The applicant has the financial means to support his existing and future wives,
- 3. The consent of the existing wife or wives,
- 4. The applicant's ability to accord equal treatments to his wives as required by the Islamic law, and
- 5. That the proposed marriage does not cause *darar syarie* to the existing wife or wives.

The *darar syarie* as stated in the 5<sup>th</sup> condition refers to the harms that are stated by the *Shariah* law (Abdullah, Abdullah, & Ferdousi, 2015).

Despite the conditions and long history of polygamy, protests from Muslim feminists and women are made as they viewed polygamy as a form of gender inequality, a practice from the implemented patriarchal gender system, and not suitable to the modern age (Abdullah, Abdullah, & Ferdousi, 2015; Alamgir, 2014; Offenhauer, 2005). They protested that polygamy treats women to be subordinates to men, receiving the oppression and resulting in the patriarchal culture as the one to be blamed for resulting men wanting to practice polygamy, to a certain extent even calls for restricting or banning such practices in today's society (Alamgir, 2014).

Polygamy as a practice has had a great influence over Malaysian Malay women's lives, in which their cultures, customs, faiths, politics, as an issue is also highlighted in literary works (Abdullah, Abdullah, and Ferdousi, 2015). This also could be seen in Nor Faridah's (2000) discussion of themes that appear in Malay women writers' works, which being the literary work titled *Mariah*. On the other hand, Abdullah, Abdullah, and Ferdous (2015) have provided other examples of literature in other languages that have been published in Malaysia that highlight polygamy as a theme and issue, such as *Hikayat Terung Pipit* and *Hikayat Malim Deman*.

#### 2.3.6 Impact of Globalization upon Malay Muslim Women

Globalization is a term that is extremely difficult to define yet to put it simply, it is a form of phenomenon that encompasses several factors resulting in changes to a country, such as the occurrence of "migration, trade, welfare, military alliances, conquest, exploration, colonization, and technological advancement" (Habib, 2015; Usman, Syeda, & Mubashir, 2014, p.612) and with the help of telecommunications, social media, and the Internet, the spread of globalization is made faster than ever (Sarpparje, 2017).

Sarpparje (2017) has highlighted how globalization has had an impact on literature and literary studies. She stated that literary works produced by writers are platforms to voice out and interpret the changes that occur in the realm of globalization. Literary works that are produced in the era of globalization involves highlighting various themes like cultural concepts, political, and social aspects that are occurring because of globalization (Habib, 2015; Sarpparje, 2017).

Other than literature, globalization also has had an impact on the Malay Muslim women as well. Hassim (2014) specifically looks at the issue of hijab in the Malaysian society. Despite the efforts to heighten the understanding of Islamic modesty, a form of virtue which is also mentioned by Alamgir (2014), Sadatmoosavi and Mohammad (2013) earlier, the emergence of Islamophobia after the tragedy of 9/11 has stirred negative emotions of the world towards Islam. The wearing of hijab, being a part of an Islamic practice for the Muslim women has been labelled as a form of "religion-ethnic discrimination" (p.428): The West has made hijab shaped into a variety of themes and merchandises, resulting a blurry line between "protecting Muslim women from the male gaze and increasing her opacity for public display" (p.428); hijab is also an issue in Malaysia, as hijab has become a form of self-expression where it involves the use of media to promote hijab as a form of beauty and fashion.

One such issue of wearing hijab in Malaysia is that there is a debate whether there is a need for involvement of the authority in controlling this matter. One such example is that the Muslims who are traditionalists, conservatives, and who practice patriarchy have demanded that the influence from the West has completely corrupted the hijab. The same group of people is the one that asserted Malay Muslims, in particularly female singers are facing moral decadence. Most notably, Sisters in Islam (SIS) under the leadership of Zainah Anwar slammed PAS for being an extremist organization that desires to manipulate the Muslim ideology. SIS in 2006 had asserted that wearing the hijab is a "sovereign choice of the individual, not any external human authority under any pretext" (p.430) and members in SIS also uphold modernistic human rights movements in global Islamic debates that are occurring in terms of female empowerment. Globalization then, has made the Malay Muslim women to be modern: They have set their own boundaries while continuing to practice Islamic principles.

Globalization has had an impact on the Malay Muslim community as well in terms of TV fictions produced in Malaysia (Mohd, Ruzy, & Raihanah, 2017). The concept of modernity has been brought into TV fictions, greatly influencing the youths in Malaysia and the Malay Muslim community, involving the youths to search and construct their cultural identities, creating a desire to live harmoniously with others, practicing religious principles, and ultimately practicing repentance (Mohd, Ruzy, & Raihanah, 2017). In the TV fictions produced, the Muslim women are often depicted in such a way that they will return to practicing Islam after their experiences with popular cultures or after being involved in nasty experiences with other men and women. From the examples, issues of hijab and influence of TV fictions are aspects that have brought

about impact to the Malay Muslim women in Malaysia. Controversies sparked as there are different perspectives on how the hijab should be worn, and how the Muslim women tend to return to Islamic practices after their experiences with the world.

Based on all the aspects discussed, modesty has been a virtue upheld by all Muslims in Malaysia, regardless of men or women. For Muslim women in Malaysia, showing submission to God is as necessary as submitting to men. Not only they are required to complete household chores, they are also required to bear children and if they are unable to do so, their husband could opt to practice polygamy which is to have another wife to bear the child, as long as the conditions placed by the *Shariah* law are met. In an era where the spread of globalization becomes even faster through technology, the portrayal of Muslim women has become a debate to some people: the traditional ones and the progressive ones, such as SIS in Malaysia, who now view that patriarchal practices have become an oppression for women and has since initiated actions to help Muslim women to be free and encourage female empowerment. As highlighted by many scholars, literature is a reflection of the society where people live in, and certainly, these aspects discussed may also appear in the literary works in Malaysia.

## 2.4. Discourse Analysis and Literature Studies

Discourse analysis and literature studies are inseparable ever since the era that language philosophers met social theorist in the 1960s and early 1970s (Fairclough, 1989; Bakhtin, 1982; Halliday, 1975,1978). Issues on society, cultures, and politics have become the highlights of discourse analysis from different genres of literature. This section mainly reviews the application of discourse analysis in literature studies.

# 2.4.1 Overview of Discourse Analysis

The word "discourse" can be understood as a speech or writing written seriously on a particular subject or definite context (Drid, 2010). Based on this definition, discourse can be further understood as using language in a naturally occurring manner, simultaneously meaningful and carries the message completely to the audience; units of the language such as conversations, paragraphs, published literatures, web-based materials, and interviews are all classified as discourse since these are completed performances conveyed to the audience (Drid, 2010; Hodges, Kuper, & Reeves, 2008).

Simply put, discourse analysis is the analysis of how a language is used in human communication in which it usually has two types of trends when applied: (1) formally or structurally exploring the language in particularly the internal structural relationships that occur to one another, such as clauses, morphemes, and sentences, and (2) looking at language as a functional manner (Drid, 2010; Hodges, Kuper, & Reeves, 2008). Regardless of analysing the language in a formal or functional manner, discourse analysis is needed to help people understand to interpret messages received while interacting with others is not just a matter of drawing the interpretation from the use of grammar, rather it is to have other aspects along with the underlying rules of language other than just solely relying on grammar to make sense of the discourse itself (Drid, 2010; Hodges, Kuper, & Reeves, 2008).

Given the nature of discourse analysis which is to study language that occurs in human communication, Drid (2010) has provided a list of scholars who have applied discourse analysis into various fields of the language: Zallig Harris who looked into the links and

textual structures between texts and social situations in 1952; Dell Hymes who looked into how speech is used in social settings in the 1960s; Austin, Searle, and Grice who looked into the speech act theory and conversational maxims, which are a part of the social nature of speech; Halliday who uses a functional approach in understanding language in the 1970s; Sinclair and Coulthard look at classroom talk in the 1970s; William Labov who analysed oral storytelling as a form of a narrative discourse analysis. From the examples provided by Drid (2010), it clearly shows that discourse analysis has been used in various social situations, linguistics, and even in classrooms.

# 2.4.2 Applying Discourse Analysis into Literature

Critical discourse analysis (CDA) is a discourse analysis that looks into "how language as a cultural tool mediates relationships of power and privilege in social interactions, institutions, and bodies of knowledge" (Rogers et al., 2005, p.367). In analysing literature, CDA is often used to provide an understanding on the hidden layers that are found in a text, which are possibly the ideologies written and implied by the author him or herself (Lai, 2017; Davoodi, 2013). Stemming from the critical theory, CDA enables one to understand the various issues of power and justice, along with other aspects that are occurring in society such as "economy, race, class, gender, religion, education, and sexual orientation construct, reproduce, or transform social systems" (Rogers et al., 2005, p.368), leading to the reflection of ideology the society has and placing it as an underlying layer in literature.

## 2.4.3 Past Studies Employing Discourse Analysis on Literature

Claiming literary discourse analysis as a branch of discourse analysis, Maingueneau (2010) explored the emergence of literary discourse analysis as a new approach in analysing literary works as well as further looking into the relationship between linguistics and literature in terms of their evolution. According to the researcher (Maingueneau, 2010), there are two useful concepts that are suitable in using discourse analysis to analyse literary works, with self-constituting discourse and scenography respectively. Self-constituting discourse is heterogeneous in nature, when used in analysing literary texts, it helps to understand the practices of society which are reflected in the literary texts; scenography refers to how the world is shaped based on the presence of the speaker, addressee, place, moment, and the language itself being used, making the scene a relevant one to provide context. Other than these two concepts, Maingueneau (2010) further states that another approach that can be used along with discourse analysis approach to analysing literature is the hermeneutic approach, which is used when there are new interpretations derived from the literary works needed to be elaborated. Maingueneau (2010) ends with a note that the two approaches are needed as the main aim of using these two is to achieving the goal of conducting literary analysis.

Davoodi (2013) has used discourse analysis to probe on Stephen King's novel, titled *Rita Heyworth and Shawshank Redemption* (1982) through the use of CDA. Particularly, Davoodi (2013) aimed to use the CDA perspective in selecting literary texts that were appropriate for analysis purposes. This came to fruition as CDA was found to be applicable in literary texts when characters in the literary works were

portrayed as showing manipulative characteristics. Further findings through the use of CDA revealed that the novel highlighted social discriminations that were occurring in the society, especially with people who were in lower positions, as seen in the novel where the character Warden Norton deceives officials and prisoners using his status as someone who has higher social power and position, imposing himself through the delivery of manipulative ideas to the victims.

Lai (2017) used CDA to analyse Mo Yan's literary writings, specifically through the use of Fairclough's dialectical-relational approach on the Nobel Prize winner's works. Lai has aimed at understanding the wrong practices in the Chinese society, such as traditional ideology and gender inequality practices. Findings revealed that the sexist ideologies held by the society are the ones that have resulted in gender inequality, and that these ideologies are also realized in the lives of those who live in the rural areas. Examples are abandoning female babies, with the direct quotation from the novel itself: ...on my way home I saved a baby girl who was abandoned... I tried to find somebody to adopt the abandoned baby, but childless families said they only wanted baby boys not baby girls... (Abandoned Baby, 1986 as cited in Lai, 2017) The researcher has pointed out that it was Mo Yan's desire to use language as a tool for liberation to help the society understand gender inequality, and to better the society from these sexist ideologies.

From the three past studies reviewed, it shows that discourse analysis has been used in literature across the globe, highlighting various issues that need to be addressed by society such as the abandoning of female babies in the Chinese society and power relations from those who have higher positions. These literatures studied are the

published literary works and are used to analyse to uncover the interpretations that are found in the texts (Lai, 2017; Davoodi, 2013; Drid, 2010; Hodges, Kuper, & Reeves, 2008), and the corresponding authors for each literary work has voiced out their concerns on the ideologies the society have been practicing all these time (Lai, 2017; Davoodi, 2013).

#### 2.5 Theoretical Framework/Model

This section serves to provide a thorough discussion of the theories that are employed by the researcher in conducting her study. It begins with the discussion on the use of Systemic Functional Linguistics followed by the two secondary theories that are deemed relevant in conducting the study.

## 2.5.1 Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL)

The Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) was coined by M. A. K. Halliday in the 1960s who described the written text as a system of networks where meanings were made through an ongoing selection of language (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004). Language is thus viewed as "a resource for making meaning" which "resides in (a) systemic patterns of choice" (ibid, p.23).

In the journey of forming SFL, Halliday was influenced by Malinowski (1884-1942), Whorf (1897-1941), and Firth (189-1957), who are the three linguistic precursors and inspirational gurus who helped Halliday construct the systemic functional theory. Simply put, Halliday adapted their notions of language, studies of linguistics, and

analysis of grammar to construct his systemic theory, thus making him owing intellectual debts to the three linguistic precursors for what SFL is today and how language has been described and scrutinized from a Systemic Functional perspective. The three linguistic precursors are further discussed in this chapter to provide a history of the contributions that makes SFL not only a successful achievement for Halliday but also in today's context.

Malinowski was an anthropologist who studied language and in the study on culture, he concluded that language is functional and situational, which means that how meanings are interpreted is dependent on the language that the society uses. Such research from Malinowski has certainly enlightened Halliday to construct a language theory that scrutinizes socio-cultural functions of the language. During the formation of SFL, Halliday borrowed Malinowski's "context of situation" and "context of culture" as the primary conception of language (1923, 1935). In his introduction to functional grammar, he acknowledged that the grammar he has formed is used to describe and explain meaning-making resources in the text from the context, which could be educational, social, political and so forth (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004, p.4-5). He further agreed on Malinowski's notions of language that language is functional as meanings could be defined according to the functions where the language is used.

Despite Malinowski's notion of language has helped Halliday to initiate the construction of SFL, the findings from Malinowski's are still obscure to help to form a language theory. Whorf (1952, 1956), a linguist who professed as a grammarian has further helped to initiate SFL in terms of the functional descriptions of the language and endorsed Halliday to engage in a pursuit of functional grammar in a linguistic

sphere, inspecting the meanings from the grammatical structure of the language. As a grammarian, Whorf found that an overt category of grammatical structures was not sufficient in explaining the meanings he obtained and thus further adjusted his study to focus on morphological categories and deeper grammar of the language through the deep grammar and covert structures of the language. To describe a notional system in the language, instead of depending on the surface, an investigation of deep grammar and the overt structure of the language is essential (Halliday, 1970 as cited in Kress, 1981, p.10). Halliday has since credited Whorf in many of his interviews, along with the researcher herself in a personal encounter in Hong Kong City University. During the Symposium on Connecting Path: Lamb, Halliday & Hasan, 2010, Halliday shared on the significant roles he had played in contributing to SFL, viewing that language and culture are indeed functional.

Firth (1890 - 1960) was Halliday's supervisor in the university where he was doing his PhD. Halliday admitted that he was greatly influenced by Firth's notion of linguistics and the formation of SFL theory, which Halliday basically derived the theory from Firth's theoretical framework and thus giving the name systemic theory (Halliday, 1985/2003, p.186). In his work titled *Linguistics Analysis as a Study of Meaning* (Firth, 1968) stated that the meaning of every day's text is engaged not only in the sights or sounds of the symbol, which refers to the words or utterances, but also are embedded in the living process of the speaker's environment or society (Firth, 1968, p.13). For Firth, he presupposed that relationship between language and contextualized situations could be fragmented in a systematic way. His lifelong academic endeavour was on sorting the relationship between linguistic systems and structures that are associated with the elements of situation, environment, social, and cultural interpretations.

However, unlike Halliday, he did not manage to present a full set of models on his theory (Halliday, 1976 in Kress (ed.), 1981, p.10). Halliday, who had been claimed as a "neo-Firthian" adopted Firth's linguistic findings: A conception of linguistic systems as paradigmatic sets of choices and a systemic network that prescribes the relation where the configuration of constituents is paradigmatically associated to the realization of meanings in the organization of the constituents syntagmatically in the structures. In short, Halliday had proposed a linguistic system, under the supervision of Firth that demonstrated how paradigmatic choices of the constituent were configured and how these choices are realized in syntagmatic structures. The theory, thus, is systemic with the function to construe social and cultural situation where the language dwells.

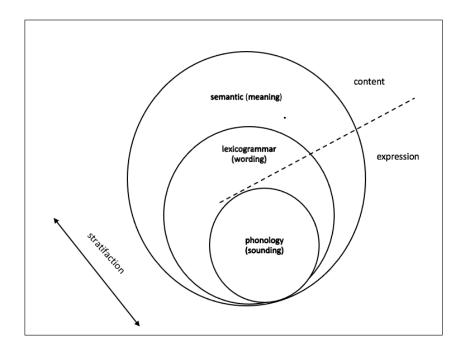
While employing SFL, to capture the perspective of the language, language stratification is needed prior to detailing the components of the SFL. A basic notion of language from the systemic functional perspective is that language is viewed as a stratified system (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004). There are three levels of strata in a language, namely the sound system (phonology), the writing system (orthography), and the wording system (grammar) (ibid.).

These three levels of strata are interlocking systems, interlocking from one to another to make meanings in a text. People may express themselves by choosing the mode of speech or writing and the meanings are created through the organization of sounds (phonology system) or choosing the lexical items and organizing clausal structures (lexicogrammar). In other words, SFL is a study of the process of how "wording" makes the "content" (semantics) of the text that construes experience of human beings. In addition, it also investigates the clauses (the wording system) in the text and interprets

the realization of the contextualized meanings, which realization is a process of meaning making from one level to another level in text, in the semiotic system. To simply put, meaning making of a text is a process of transforming the lexicogrammar to its semantic level. The content in the semantic level is a matter of discourse relating to the social context of the text which could be realized from the level of lexicogrammar and semantic (Martin, 2014). Figure 2 illustrates the tri-stratal system of language.

Figure 2.1

Language as a Tri-stratal System (Halliday & Matthiessen, 1999, 2006, p. 5)



# 2.5.2 Discourse Analysis and Systemic Functional Linguistics

Teun A. van Dijk, a prominent scholar of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), has written a lengthy chapter commenting on SFL as a theoretical approach for discourse analysis in his book *Discourse and Context* (2008). While he agreed that SFL has made

contributions as a linguistic theory for linguistic discourse analysis, he cautioned that SFL is a theory of "too much linguistic" ("lexico-syntactic") sentence grammar, limited social theory of language, and too much esoteric vocabulary (Dijk, 2008, p.29-30). He further debated that since the SFL theory is too linguistically based, its potential interpretation made of a text to reflect precisely in the social and cultural context is much questionable. Yet, when he defined CDA as an analytical research that "studies social power abuse, dominance, and inequality are enacted, reproduced, and resisted by text and talk in the social and political context" (Dijk, 2001, p.352), he admitted that CDA could not specify any linguistic approaches in discourse analysis but is aimed to merely provide a different "mode" or perspective" in the field of discourse analysis (ibid).

Despite the controversies mentioned, the disputes arisen among the linguists did not set barriers for the study of SFL in discourse analysis. SFL was continued in a research by Butt et al. (2004) titled "Grammar-The First Covert Operation of War". The findings concluded that various impacts on discourses in society because of a multitude of various registers after the tragic 9/11 event. They thus claimed it was "a physical, biological, social, and semiotic series of events". Another example in their study is to have SFL employed in interpreting two political speeches delivered by Bush's State of the Union address and Lieutenant Colonel Tim Collins' speech to the British troops on the eve of the invasion of Iraq after the 9/11 incident respectively. Using a multifunctional analysis, the researchers investigated the transitivity system and interpersonal system in the political speech texts. They had drawn patterns of the language in the two political speech texts from a systemic functional perspective and claimed that language serves to construe social and cultural meanings in its contexts.

Their findings revealed that the power of language that construes human experience in the global society and enacts social roles and relationship is present, and concluded that grammar has provoked the actions whom to be protected and whom to be targeted in the political speech texts. Grammar is in fact, acting as an agent proclaiming a war "within system in different orders" (ibid., p.268) and in different system in ideology.

Another research that employed all the elements of the SFL was carried out by J. R. Martin (1999), a prominent follower of Halliday from the Sydney's School of Linguistics. Analysing Nelson Mandela's book *Long Walk to Freedom* (1994), Martin focused on the analyses of transitivity, mood, theme, grammatical metaphor, lexical relation, and conjunctions on a single text and a 2-paged autobiography in the said work. He had also included an analysis of the images in terms of multimodality, a latest trend in discourse analysis. Findings in the textual level of meanings showed that Mandela himself was a theme and a prominent pattern in the work whilst the New referred to freedom. This was justified as it was found that Mandela got to know freedom from different situations of his life. Martin drew the development of the text from the patterns of themes as a point of departure that constructed the message and the patterns of New that provided the points of the message. By tracing this pattern, Mandela was the point of departure of the message while the remaining points were about Mandela's gradually formed conception of freedom from his early young age to his mature adult life.

From the two examples given above, it can be observed that SFL and CDA had different schools of followers, either one complementing or confronting the other as a matter of choice. However, debates about CDA or SFL approaches to viewing texts had not hindered researchers from finding the truth or viewing knowledge. What it affects most

is how readers and researchers justify knowledge or truth in the text with different sets of tool kits.

## 2.6.3 Field, Tenor, and Mode

The realization of meanings as claimed in SFL was influenced by three variables, Field, Tenor, and Mode (Eggins, 2004) which helped in providing an "extralinguistic meanings of a text" (Butt, Faley, Spinks, & Yallop, 2007, p.15) and determining how language functions- in creating interpretations to the social context being studied. Each variable functions differently in SFL: Field is used to explain the situation that is happening or context that is being talked by the society where the text resides (Thompson, 2004); Tenor explains the relationship between the writer or the speaker to the audience, informing the audience of the participants' respective nature, roles, and the status (Hasan & Halliday, 1985); Mode plays the role as a medium to show how language, whether in written form or spoken form, acts upon the interaction process (Thompson, 2004).

#### 2.6.4 Metafunctions

The notion of metafunctions is derived from Halliday's classification of how language is used to serve the functions embodied in it when applied to meet various human needs (Halliday, 1970). He sees metafunctions as "a simultaneous meaning potential of language" (p.174) and these meaning potentials could be derived from the independent networks that correspond to specific language functions with a general understanding of linguistic structures (ibid). He further shows that the internal organization of

language is functional in nature, where this organization can be organized into three different metafunctions: ideational, interpersonal, and textual metafunctions. These three metafunctions help to demonstrate the organization of systems along with the paradigmatic axis through the systems of theme, mood, and transitivity in the clause, providing a syntagmatic structure where it has a simultaneous layer of functional configurations as shown in the following (Banks, 2002):

(Theme ^ Rheme, Mood + Residue, Process + participants + circumstances in the clause)

### 2.5.5 Ideational or Experiential Metafunctions

Ideational metafunctions serve as the first metafunctions that represent human experiences, behaviours, and relationships (Tan & Teh, 2014). These aspects are further classified as experiential metafunctions to help in making sense of the experiences of the real world: people naming things, places, and time; telling how, when, and why things happen. This metafunctions is a representation of people's experiences and understanding of the world through experiential elements in the clause with terms like participants, process types, and circumstances (p. 29). With reference to the discussion, the ideational metafunctions is also referred to as the experiential metafunctions in many analyses using the SFL, as there is a logical link between the participants (people) and the experience that occurs during the process, which represents the context of the text comprehended by the layperson.

The Hallidayan framework further recognizes six process types in the transitivity system. Each process type goes with its own unique set of participants. For example,

the participant of a material process is labelled as an Actor, while the participant of a relational process type will be labelled as Carrier. On the other hand, Circumstances are not bound to any process types but are generalizable across different processes. They serve in enhancing, extending, elaborating or projecting the experiential processes of the participants. These mean that they do not exist on their own but as an expansion of something else (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004).

As such, the experiences of the world are realized as processes, or "goings on" (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004, p.170). These processes, technically termed figures (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004, p.175), comprise the process itself (expressed in language in the form of a verb group), the attendant participants (typically noun groups), and circumstances (typically adverb groups or prepositional phrases). The transitivity system then, endorses linguists to render a clause-based analysis by (1) classifying the different types of processes ranging from the dynamic and material to the mental and existential; (2) identifying the participants associated with these processes, and (3) describing the circumstances in which these processes have occurred.

### **2.5.6 Interpersonal Metafunctions**

The interpersonal metafunctions looks at how language acts upon and is constrained by the social context in which it functions, expressing the relationship between the speaker and the listener or the social role of the speaker in the experiential processes. When it is used to express a person's experience, it is also "enacting" the person's personal and social relationships (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004, p.30), which proposes "attitudes or behaviour" (Thompson, 2004, p.45) towards the listeners or the readers.

In this metafunctions, Halliday draws a language metaphor to explain the interaction of people, an expression of Mood in the clause that realizes the interpersonal meanings of the text. Thompson further clarified this interaction as the role-play in basic speech role (2004, p.47), which the role play, in exchange for the interaction between a speaker and a listener, is illustrated as a commercial activity. The speaker either gives information or offers commodities and service to the listener and vice versa, where the interaction between two parties convert the mood into a clause that can be expressed as Subject + Finite. Also, the interpersonal meaning of a clause is revealed either by the Mood Adjuncts or Modality Adjuncts. In other words, the interpretation of the interpersonal meaning can be investigated in two ways: 1) by Mood Adjuncts expressed in a role-play as giving information in Declarative Mood or offering commodities in Interrogative Mood presented in questions or exclamation, or 2) by Modality adjuncts that show the attitude of the speaker or writer.

#### 2.5.7 Textual Metafunction

The textual metafunctions is given a special status among the three metafunctions. Some systemic linguists consider the textual metafunctions as the first item among the three metafunctions for discussions (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004) while others would put this metafunctions as the last (Eggins, 2004; Thompson, 2004). Textual metafunctions plays the role as "an enabling metafunctions" that makes ideational and interpersonal meanings "become whole" (Matthiessen, 1995, p.20). The textual metafunctions is unique in such a way that it transforms the two levels of meanings, ideational and interpersonal meanings respectively, to become the information or

message of the text. It also explains how the speaker or the writer constructs texts, organizes information, and connects messages to relevant situations. Additionally, textual metafunction also studies the systemic flow of grammar in the text that creates cohesion and continuity, and enables the ideational and interpersonal meanings to be transmitted effectively.

With reference to the explanation of textual metafunction, Halliday concluded that language is used to produce a "text" rather than uttering a word or making a sentence. The word "text" can be defined as the basic unit of language whereby the cohesion and unity of meanings in the text is revealed to the context. A language activity is only significant when it enables the speaker or the writer to produce a "text" which is relevant to the context (Halliday, 1970, p.190). In a text, clauses must function as a message in which the coding systems have to be coherent with each other, organized mainly through grammar and vocabulary (Halliday, 1970, p.190).

For textual meanings to be constructed, the organization of a message can be done in three ways: "Repetition, conjunction, and thematization" (Thompson, 2004, p.141). Various cohesive resources that help construct textual meanings such as "reference, lexical repetition, ellipsis, and conjunctions" would also help in constructing the cohesion in the levels of intra-sentence and inter-sentence. These cohesive resources mentioned belong to the repetition ways in organizing messages to construct textual meanings where they act as signposts for the listeners to know what is going on, along with the aid of conjunctions that link the logical or temporal sequences together.

Other than constructing textual meanings, Halliday explains the other role of the textual metafunction which is to facilitate the "ideational and interpersonal meanings of the text" (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004, p.30). The organization of messages through the Theme and Rheme system is a negotiation between speakers and their audiences, writers, and readers (Eggins, 2004, p.3). The choice of theme as the first position in the clause construes different meanings, resulting in the message that could be encoded in many ways. The selection of how to foreground the message is therefore a strategy used by the speaker during the negotiation.

#### 2.5.8 Theme and Rheme

In the English language, a clause consists of a theme and rheme. Theme is defined as the "psychological subject" of the clause (Halliday, 2004; Tan & Teh, 2014) and it is always in the first position of an English clause, serving as "the point of departure" (Halliday, 1994, p.37; Tan & Teh, 2014). A similar explanation comes from Bloor and Bloor (Bloor, 2004), where they define the first position of the structure of the clause as the "Given" information and the remaining of the clause as the "New" information of the message (p.65).

Halliday, during the early stages of the theory formation and in his discussion of theme and the information in the English clause, he stresses that the thematic systems fall into three sub-sets, labelled as "information, thematization, and identification (Halliday, 1976, p.175). These sub networks are formed within the total network of systems and each is given a different labelling respectively, "give-new" for the system of information, "theme-rheme" for thematization, and "known-unknown" for

identification (p.175). Another focus of his discussion is the "succession of information units" in a text as a form of discourse organization (p.175). Thus, given-new of information in a clause is regarded as a discourse feature. He further clarified that although most 'givens' are in the clause initial, serving as themes in thematization, they are independent variables actually. The 'given' can be different as what indicate in the following examples:

- i) John did it
- ii) did John do it
- iii) who did it (Halliday, 1976, p.180)

In each case presented, the thematic element is selected differently. Hence, sometimes it is clearer to explain that the theme of each clause is what is being "talked about" (p.180), which is the point of departure of the message. This application is also true to the system of identification, the known-unknown system in the equative type as shown in the following illustration:

- Ø John broke the window
- Ø what John broke was the window
- Ø the one who broke the window was John (Halliday, 1976, in Kress (ed.),1981, p.182)

As such, Halliday concludes that what is being "talked about" is more appropriate to be defined as the "Theme" of the message.

To conclude, the textual metafunction has a special role among the three metafunctions. It cannot stand alone and is seemingly insignificant when it is identified as an independent feature. However, it is very essential to enable the ideational meaning and to boost the interpersonal meaning of a clause. With the role-play of the textual features,

a clause can turn into a message or be transformed into a text. In accordance, the present study investigates clausal thematization of the texts constructed by the writers and details the theme which the writers "talked about" and subsequently fixates the focal message of the clauses that construe the meaning of the text.

#### 2.6 Sub-theories

In accordance with the research design, this section mainly presents reviews on the subtheories such as the Critical Discourse Analysis and Feminist Studies which were applied as a consolidation of the main theoretical framework drawn on the Hallidayan notions of linguistics, SFL.

### 2.6.1 The Critical Discourse Analysis

CDA, as discussed earlier, involves the analysis of discourses critically on text about social and political aspects (Lai, 2017; Davoodi, 2013; Rogers et al., 2005). It involves understanding the various issues hidden as layers in the text such as dominance, injustice, inequality, and power (Dijk, 2001). In the production of texts, CDA is thus used to understand the various aspects that occur in the language such as the structures, strategies or any other properties relevant to the context involved, regardless of the texts, talks, verbal or communicative interactions and events that took place (Dijk, 2001).

Dijk (2001) has provided the principles of using CDA to analyse various discourses. The first principle involves the understanding of social issues through the use of sophisticated theories, which is to help address the complexity of the social issues occurring in society; CDA typically involves the analyst or researcher taking a sociopolitical stance, usually in the hopes to reveal the social and political injustices or inequalities that occur to help provide a critical understanding on the said issue. Other than revealing issues, the third principle is that researchers who practice CDA often take the extra mile to provide specific contributions to society or politics, in particular generating richer insights on the issues identified. Dijk (2001) emphasizes that CDA has major implications not only when used for academic purposes, but also to provide an insight on a certain issue in politics and social aspects to create an understanding as well as empowering people to move in the right track.

## 2.6.2 The Feminist Literary Criticism

America has a long history of feminism, even before the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, with a total of two waves that have occurred.

The first wave began in the 1840s and the second wave began in the 1960s (Gemberling, 2014; Madsen, 2000). In the first wave, the first Women's Rights Convention in 1848 was held in Seneca Falls. The convention aimed to protest against women who have been "denied a place at the international anti-slavery convention in London," along with the influence of Margaret Fuller, who is an influential figure on women's thoughts at that time (Madsen, 2000, p.2). The first wave also involved women striving for their rights in the politics, where their goal was to create opportunities through suffrage (Gemberling, 2014).

The second wave began when women started to feel the domestic oppression initiated by men along with male sexism practiced by society. The movements were heated along with the growth of self-consciousness as minority group in the U.S., the calls of antiwar and civil rights. The focus of these social movements gradually shifted to sexual discrimination in workplace and relevant issues in the public (Gemberling, 2014; Madsen, 2000). The second wave of feminism demanded for equal rights for women in the workplace, and magazines produced in that era had since shown women as successful individuals at work other than stereotyped as housewives to do household chores at homes (Gemberling, 2014). In Malaysia, issues of domestic violence have been raised as the feminist perspective views such violence as a result from how males and females are unequally treated in their cultures (Ramakrishnan, Ruzy, & Noraini, 2019).

Narrowing down feminism specifically to the Malaysian Muslim context, along with the women from other Islamic countries have since joined the frontline to confront the challenges and justifications of women in the religion such as the issues of women subordination and discrimination (Alamgir, Ahmed, & Hasni, 2014), many Muslim women believe that Islam is not a religion that encourages injustice and mistreatment compared to the idea that women need to be "ideal," submissive, and subservient. This is a result of the patriarchal practice that is still being practiced in today's society (Alamgir, Ahmed, & Hasni, 2014). One such issue is the *dakwah* movement and the polygamy issue in Malaysia, leading to the organization of SIS and despite all the criticisms received, they continue to strive for women's rights (Alamgir, 2014; Alamgir, Ahmed, & Hasni, 2014).

The feminist literary theory is one such product from the feminism theory, where this criticism aims to critique the language used in literature through the lens of feminist perspectives (Yadav & Yadav, 2018; Madsen, 2000). The three aims of this theory are: (1) Exposing "the workings of the ubiquitous patriarchal power structure, (2) promoting "the rediscovery of women's historical achievements" along with the literary history, and (3) establishing "a feminine perspective on critical, literary, political, scientific, philosophical theories of the cultural forces" that help shaping people's lives (Madsen, 2000, p.9). One such prominent figure in the 1970s that has used the feminist literary criticism is Kate Millet, where she criticizes texts created by male writers as texts that reveal the schemes created by men to oppress women. She heavily criticises such schemes with the aim to help raise the women's consciousness and building positive images to go against the oppression (Madsen, 2000).

There are a number of features when applying feminism as a literary theory: it involves gynocritics where there is an identification of how women are portrayed by the males' point of view, such as the stereotypes used on women. It investigates the roles of women in literary works, identifying their unrealistic roles created such as "selfless, sacrificing, complaint angels..." or the "villain and victimizer," creating women as a dual image personality with beauty or purity and monster, along with other harassments to women as house makers. It also points out how literature depicts women as human-animal, such as having the right for formal education and professional occupation deprived, which lead them to start engaging reading to help express themselves; it displays the negative emotions such as fear, terror, brittle, and bitterness, and the inferiority of women to men such as exploiters, torturers, cheats, angers, alienated and rebels (Yadav & Yadav, 2018). Thus, the feminism literary theory involves identifying various negative aspects

of women portrayed in literary works, highlighting these aspects to the public to bring a voice for women.

By putting all these three theories, with SFL, CDA, and feminist literary criticism together, a theoretical framework can be designed to help understand how the research is to be conducted. Using SFL as the main theory and CDA along with the feminist literary criticism together, SFL helps to provide an understanding and realizing the meaning of the text by analysing the lexical items, sounds produced, and clauses employed in the texts to contextualize the meaning, leading to the understanding the meaning of the text as stated. As this research serves to understand the thematic choices employed by Malay women writers and further understanding the issues faced by women in literary works through textual and experiential metafunctions, the themes can be identified by looking at how texts are constructed, organized, and connected to generate the messages that when further explored become the themes; the representations of the experiences, behaviours, and relationships in the texts when identified, also becomes the themes as they help making sense of the real world people live in.

The feminist literary criticism and CDA are used to compliment the findings from SFL to generate the answers on the thematic choices employed by the writers. This is because feminist literary criticism can help highlighting the social issues faced by women in literary works analysed. CDA further helps in creating justified reasons as which structures, strategies, or properties in the texts are relevant to the issue or themes needed to be explored. By merging these two with SFL, the themes can be generated

by looking at the way behaviours, experiences, and relationships in the texts are constructed, organized, and connected based on the structures or strategies employed.

#### 2.7 Review of Past Studies

This section serves to provide a review of relevant studies conducted through the use of SFL and past studies to highlight the similar contexts of research carried out in the MLE.

### 2.7.1 Research on Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL)

Halliday's SFL theory tends to view texts as a form of social semiotics and using this view as a stand, he insists that a theory of language must "be essentially consumer oriented" (1985a, p.7). SFL has been employed in various analyses, such as applying SFL in political discourse analysis (Thompson, 2010; Marshall & Bowcher, 2006; Butt, Lukin, & Matthiessan, 2004), ESL classroom application (Gebhard, 2010), literary text analysis (Melrose, 2006; Murphy, 2006), social discourse analysis (Harrison & Yong, 2005), and English for Specific Purposes (Yang & Allison, 2004).

Graber (2001) in his doctoral dissertation analysed the relationship of the text in the context from a Biblical scripture, "The Parable of the Sower." He analysed the parable from Matthew 3:1-23 and two parallel texts in the books of Mark and Luke which are the other two synoptic gospels in the New Testament. Taking these three versions of the same parable told by Jesus, he compared and discussed the text and context from the variables of the context, with field, tenor, and mode respectively. The investigation

of clauses of these texts from a systemic functional perspective reveals that the addresser who tells the story of Jesus' words and deeds by highlighting two different stances that occurred: The authority holds a higher position of social status and the addressees are relatively of lower degree in social status. Graber also found that language played a constituting role rather than an accompanying role in a social activity. In this instance, the responses of people to Jesus' parable are different: Addressees who succeeded due to the enabling actions of God and understanding Jesus' teachings in the parable and the failures were those who failed to understand the teachings and of their own self-disabling actions. Graber concluded that the Systemic Functional Grammar has made the study explicit in relating the variables of the context with the text from the realization of experiential, interpersonal, and textual meanings.

Nørgaard has presented a book titled "Systemic Functional Linguistics and Literary Theory: A Hallidayan Approach to Joyce / A Joycean Approach to Halliday" (2005) after three years of research in SFL (Murphy, 2006), which comes with the purpose of linking the Hallidayan approach to the traditional literary criticism on two of Joyce's works, "Two Gallants" and "Ulysses" respectively. It was an effort to cross the boundaries of language and literature. SFL has found to be "largely context-oriented" (p.14) unlike the formal linguistics which focuses on the syntax of the sentences and view them as isolated units which ignore the relationship between the text and context. She concludes that SFL is a powerful analytical tool that helps to interpret the experiential and interpersonal meanings in the works as well as reveals the relationship between the author and the readers.

A study by Melrose in 2006 looked at analysing the process types in the poem "My Last Duchess" written by Robert Browning. Through the use of the researcher's own model, the Melrose Model which was created in 1996 where it was used to analyse clauses or the "particle wave". The researcher analysed clauses of the text layering in wave patterns, along with the SFL theory and construed meanings of the text. From the occurrences of process types such as material, mental, behavioural, verbal, and relational process types, the findings interpreted how the Duke was connected to the Duchess and a discussion of the interpersonal elements in the clauses were made.

The process types derived from using SFL theory revealed the Duke's social status and the relationship between the Duke and the Duchess; interpersonal level of meanings were derived and examined through the Duke's monologue, where different occurrences of clauses were identified from the most occurrences to the least such as attitudinal marked items, negatives, interrogatives, and imperatives. It was thus obvious that the above sequential occurrences in the monologue indicated that the Duke himself was "a man full of anger and resentment, and not necessarily in control of himself' (p.133).

Other than Melrose (2006), Nørgaard (2005) and Graber (2001), there is a huge volume of research engaging SFL in different genres which is arranged chronologically according to the year of publication and a simple review of each research is provided. These studies include McCabe's (1999, 2001) studied on the theme and thematic patterns found in Spanish and English History texts; Forey (2002) looked at the aspect of Theme and its role in workplace texts. Apart from the above mentioned, Djonov (2005) analysed the organization of information in websites in his work titled *From* 

Hypermedia Design to Systemic Functional Hypermedia Discourse Analysis: A Systemic Functional Approach. In addition, Moore (2010) investigated structures of the information in written English: A Re-appraisal of the Systemic Functional Approach to Information Structure. Furthermore, Blanca's (2012) research looked into the attribution and thematization of patterns in the science popularization articles of the Guardian newspaper; and also, Lopez Bermudo (2015) applied the resource of transitivity on teaching English as a Second Language with the research entitled A Systemic Functional Approach looks into the learning of personal pronouns through the explicit teaching of transitivity by the students.

Other than the above mentioned, Fest's (2016) researched the news in context of regional and functional variation from a corpus-based analysis of newspaper domains across varieties of English; Amundrud (2017) analysed the classroom teacher-student consultation through a Systemic-multimodal perspective; Mirallas (2017) investigated the writing of abstracts and SRAs by EFL students with the analysis of productions and assessment of SFL genre pedagogy; Xu (2017) used the Appraisal framework in analysing the stance and voice in research articles across the Chinese and British cultures, which he found that only a few of them applied thematic choice in the system of themes and rhemes and the system of transitivity, proving experiential meanings of literary texts.

Observing from the past researches conducted using SFL, it can be seen that this theory has been applied in various text type analyses across different cultures and languages. Research employing SFL is therefore, widely found and localized in different languages such as Spanish, African, Indonesian, and the Japanese language. Clearly, Halliday,

even though has passed away in 2018, has left a significant legacy that can be shared from generations to generations all over the world in the study of texts.

#### 2.7.2 Research on Malaysian Literature in English (MLE)

This section serves to provide relevant past studies on MLE. A review of these studies is provided to offer an insight into the contemporary findings with regards to MLE in Malaysia.

Raihanah's (2009) study on how multiculturalism has challenged Malaysian writers in the English language especially in the choice of language when writing fictions and their representation of the society revealed that Malaysian writers have played their roles and made efforts and contributions to help in nation building. Their writings had revealed a sense of unity in diversity and provided a communal outlook of the society from a confronting and competing social background. Despite the challenges faced such as racial and national identity, the new generation of writers are nothing like the postcolonial writers who see these challenges as social pressures in political correctness as they emphasized that writing is a form of personal satisfaction, being the "most of oneself," and they have upheld nationalism.

Their writings, drawing the historical background and political evolution in Malaysia and though unable to be detached from communal representations in their story settings and persona crafting, have integrated universal themes that are true to all Malaysians regardless of their cultural and racial backgrounds. Raihana concluded that there is a total of three groups of Malaysian writers in an "authorial-defined" social reality. They

include (1) personal-oriented reality writers who highlight the universal truth of humanity such as an individual's struggles regardless of ethnicity and nationality; (2) Ethno-cultural or communal oriented writers who show concerns of the representation of a certain ethnicity; and (3) Nation-oriented reality writers who express the collective needs of the Malaysian society as a multiracial community.

Nazima used the tripartite linguistic levels of analyses with an integration of SFL in her studies of Dina Zaman's short stories. She then concluded that from the investigation of the word, the clause and the discourse, Dina Zaman indeed has deconstructed the representation of Malay female characters through the naming, the different processes in the SFL for the interpretation of the *Ani*, *The Kacang Puteh and Assam Lady*, and *The Fat Woman*.

Muslim et al. (2012) looked at three selected Malay Muslim writers' works, specifically Che Husna Azhari, Dina Zaman, and Ellina Abdul Majid's works and how these works represented women. By using an Islamic theoretical framework and the Islamic principles from the Qur'an, a qualitative approach was used to understand how women were represented in these works since they were under-represented and deserved more attention. Findings found that there were changes occurring in the Malaysian community, and these changes have posed challenges to the female writers, who they have depicted having heart-aching problems in their literary works. Regardless, they still embed Islamic values and practices in their works.

In Tan and Teh's (2014) study on Che Husna's *Mariah*, they have employed a Hallidayan framework, which is the systemic functional analysis specifically on the

system of Theme and Rheme. Findings revealed that rather than Mariah, a woman being the protagonist of the work, it is the pious and religious man called Imam who takes the lead as the protagonist in the work *Mariah*. Additionally, it showed that the presence of Mariah is significantly lesser than any other individual Participants using the textual metafunction and theme/rheme. However, Tan and Teh concluded that no gender is offended in Che Husna's work, and that the story has ended with a humorous note.

Jerome, Ruzy, and Ting (2016) sought to determine how Karim Raslan's *Heroes* have resulted in its respective readers to construct multiple literary identities. By recruiting two undergraduate students from a Malaysian public university, the researchers gathered at their views on the literary work by specifically examining how the characters have themselves portrayed and their identities constructed by the author along with the views of their own and the characters' identities in the process of reading the author's work. From the findings, it was found that the characters' identities in Raslan's work were constructed using various words and phrases. These words and phrases were actually the identities sought as a package typically used to describe Malaysians. The readers' views were that there were some other features that the author could use to further construct the characters' identities. The readers also understood the portrayal of these characters in Raslan's work but aimed to challenge the portrayal of these characters, justifying that they too as people in real life had different identities.

In a study on MLE conducted by Ramakrishnan et al. (2019) which they particularly looked at how domestic violence is highlighted in the selected literary works. The researchers further analysed the Malaysian writers' concerns of these issues which were written in literary works to inform their readers. By conceptualizing the various

concepts, within the Domestic Violence Act 1994, feminist perspective, and emotional abuses, the researchers explored these concepts to generate findings from the selected literary works and presented these findings as a conceptual paper. Citing the examples from the literary works, the researchers found that domestic violence were indeed present in all the literary works and this violence were not dealt seriously. The spark that has triggered domestic violence was due to patriarchal practices of the people and the victims of domestic violence. Instead of receiving the needed help, they were blamed for causing the domestic violence to occur. The researchers concluded that the writers did highlight the issue of domestic violence but were not sufficient to address the extent of seriousness of the said issue.

From the past researches conducted on MLE, it is clear that many Malaysian writers' concerns involved highlighting social issues, such as the way women are treated, multiple identities assumed by the characters that reflected Malaysian society, and the crafting employed by the writers in writing their literary works. These works created by the writers have a similarity, which is, to generate a representation of how Malaysians are represented through the works that have been produced and published.

### 2.8 Research Gap

Amongst the past studies reviewed, the description of the Malaysian society is reflected in the literary works pertaining to the context of MLE. Studies however, with only Tan and Teh (2014) and Muslim et al.'s (2012) study involved studying on Malay Muslim writers' works but none had specifically looked into the thematic choices employed by these writers in their literary works. This was echoed Nor Faridah's (2000) where she

claims that works in MLE analysed using Islamic interpretations are often ignored, along with the perceptions that the writings from these writers are imports from the West which has no contributions or portrayal of good Islamic practices.

The interpretation of Malay women in the past studies mainly were contributed by the perspective of conventional literary criticism such as feminist studies, Islamic theory, or socio-cultural studies. Scholars have voiced out that modesty is the virtue that Islam communities have to practice. The portrayal of such virtue is not identified in MLE so far, and the common issues highlighted in the community such as issues of polygamy, patriarchal practices that oppressed women, along with the portrayal of women such as child-bearers, household-chores doer, submissive group, and as a group only able to take certain occupations.

By using SFL along with CDA and feminist literary criticism, the concerns of Malaysian Malay women discussed can thus be determined if they are a part of the themes highlighted by the Malay women writers in their respective works, generating a deeper insight on the identity of Malaysia Malay women from the issues found around them. It would present a contemporary portrayal of Malay women representation that explores changes of Malay women under a rapid globalization. The textual analysis with findings quantified from the clausal organisation and grammatical structures could suggest a new approach in the realm of literary criticism.

# 2.9 Chapter Summary

This chapter has provided a review of literature, breaking down the chapter into three sections: (1) an overview of MLE where the history and generation of writers are included, (2) virtuous values practiced by Malay Muslim women and the portrayal of these women in Malaysia, and (3) the theories that will be employed, with the main theory being SFL and the two sub-theories which are CDA and feminist literary criticism. A review of past studies related to SFL and MLE are also provided, which does not only provide the extent of existing literature on these two concepts, but also provides a gap that emphasizes the need to conduct this study. The following chapter serves to provide the methodology adapted for conducting this research.

#### **CHAPTER THREE**

#### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the theoretical framework and research methodology applied by the researcher to answer the research questions of the study. The chapter begins by addressing the research design adapted in providing an overview of how the research was conducted. This involved discussing the research stance that was taken by the researcher in conducting her research, which was a qualitative approach and the methods that were employed: Thematic analysis using SFL as an analytical tool in analysing the selected short story texts. Before bridging the theory of SFL to the research design in conducting the text analysis, the SFL theory was revisited briefly and drawing upon its connections to conduct the research was done.

The procedures in gathering and analysing the data are further discussed as well in this chapter. A brief discussion of the selected works to be analysed and the authors of these selected works are made. The procedures in analysing the data are specified, in which the methods to analyse the works are listed.

## 3.2 Research Design

According to Creswell (2013, 2010), a qualitative research is initiated from a philosophical assumption to define the problem of the assumption and followed by adopting a theory as the research framework. By applying the framework in the research design, the research model adopted and adapted an integration of collecting and analysing the data as well as the observation in the natural setting. The researcher is therefore able to make inductive or deductive interpretations of the subject matter, drawing findings thematically and also presenting the reflexivity of the researcher during the research process. The research design for this thesis is parallel with the above suggested model (Creswell, 2010) because the data collection and examinations of data are parallel in sequence. Firstly, the data derived from the Systemic Functional framework in the investigation of text. Next, the findings were established from a consolidation from the MLE setting from various literature reviews on various MLE scholars' findings on Malay women's identity and the issues of Malay women found and discussed in their contexts.

The interpretation of Malaysian Malay women's identity is thus derived from the clausal analysis in the first place and subsequently from the understanding of Malay women's discourses and the investigation of the selected Malay women writers through direct and indirect encounters with the authors from a physical reading event (Robin Stienberg of National Critics Choice, 2014), interviews in book chapters and online video clips available (Shankarr, 2020; UPPREtv, 2018; Quayum, 2007, Nor Faridah, 1996). A qualitative research emphasizes not only the theoretical framework and procedure of the research, it also highlights the process and the reflexivity of the

researcher while scrutinising the social issues or phenomena. On the whole, the research design was designated to meet the research questions of the study as established and restated in this chapter as follows:

RQ1: What are the types of thematic choice found in the selected short stories written by Malaysia Malay women writers?

RQ2: How do these thematic choices enhance the understanding of Malay women identity to the selected short stories?

RQ3: What prevalent themes construe the representation of Malay women's identity in the selected short stories?

The present study falls on the realm of qualitative research which engages mixed methods in the interpretation of Malaysia Malay women's identity (Creswell, 2010; Hesse-Biber, 2010). In a research practice, the qualitative approach is the most privileged method in the exploration of various meanings, be it human meanings, sensitive meanings, or underlying meanings being studied in the society (Hesse-Biber, 2010; Merriam, 2009). It includes the method of textual analysis drawn on the theoretical framework of SFL, the principal notions of M.A.K. Halliday (1994), Halliday and Matthiessen (2004), Bloor and Bloor (2005), Eggins (2004), and Thompson (2004). Subsequently, the researcher also analysed literature and information gathered about the authors and the selected short stories in the MLE setting and through the process of reflexivity with evidences and justifications.

In the tradition of research practice, the qualitative approach is known as the most appropriate method in the exploration of various meanings of any types of texts (HesseBiber, 2010; Merriam, 2009). Given the same social context, different people possess different perceptions on the social reality they dwell in. The interpretation of social reality is inevitably limited to personal experiences and assumptions. Meanings, are thus varied according to different perspectives; similarly, the interpretation of the selected texts is of no exception although a linguistic theoretical framework is applied. The interpretation of the text then, could have been limited to the personal background, biases, and the intention of the coder.

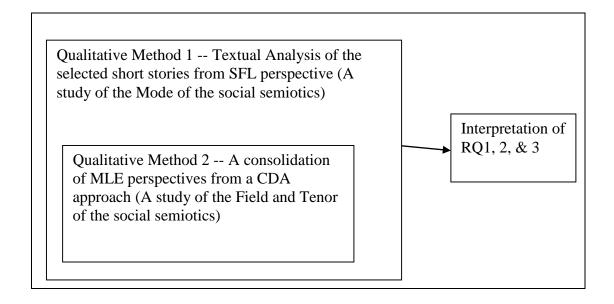
By deploying SFL, the investigation of human meanings in the selected text was restrained to a certain level as the analysis was restricted to the method within the theory and was counter checked by a professional expert of SFL. It included the method of textual analysis drawn on the theoretical framework of SFL, the principal notions of M. A. K. Halliday (1994), Halliday and Matthiessen (2004), Bloor and Bloor (2005), Eggins (2004), and Thompson (2004). After conducting textual analysis using SFL and drawing findings from the text analysis of the selected short story texts, the interpretation of the Malaysia Malay women's identity was consolidated from the knowledge in the MLE and the researcher's formal and informal experiences with the authors of the selected short stories.

This was an attempt to testify or triangulate the meanings of the selected texts in accordance to the theoretical framework suggesting that any piece of social semiotics should be investigated not only from the Mode (the story text), but also the Field (the MLE background) and the Tenor (the formal or informal communication with the authors). The exploration of meanings of Malaysian Malay women's identity was thus parallel and embedded in the research model to address the attempts in answering the

research questions. The methodology in probing the data in this study could be summed up in a simple diagram as shown in Figure 3.1.

Figure 3.1

Research Design for the Study



As shown in Figure 3.1, the study was framed within a qualitative investigation. The first stage of textual analysis aimed to detail the clausal thematization of the selected texts from a SFL perspective, probing selected short stories as the Mode of the social semiotics. The second qualitative method consolidated MLE perspective from a CDA approach looking into the Field and Tenor of the social semiotics. Consequently, the qualitative research model was designed to answer Research Question 1, 2 and 3.

Thus, from both sets of data obtained, through thematic choices identified (first set of data) and a consolidation derived from the natural setting of MLE from the CDA approach, these data are qualitative in nature but presented in various graphical forms.

The second method comes with the purpose to support or refute along with the

assessment on interpreting these findings which are used to provide a discussion of the findings in the later chapter.

Localizing the design, theory, and literature reviews of the MLE to the current research, by employing SFL as an analytical instrument, this researcher analysed the thematic choice and structure of the clauses in the selected short stories written by Malaysia Malay women writers. From the analysis of the system of Theme coined from SFL, the researcher interpreted the identity of Malaysian Malay women through the realization of the clauses in the text. The investigation did not limit the level that the selected texts were construed from a Systemic Functional perspective. Further to this, the triangulation of meanings of the texts and interpretation of women issues from the authors and the natural setting of MLE was conducted to further consolidate the findings from the text analysis. It aimed to examine the relations of text to its context the notion which Hallidayan scholars have been emphasizing since the proposition of the theory.

In this design in conducting the research, common methods in conducting the research such as the explanatory sequential methods and exploratory sequential methods were used, where the tabulated data was supported by a qualitative data or vice versa (Creswell, 2014). Creswell (2014) had come up with various validity strategies that researchers could employ when conducting a qualitative study. In this study, since the exploration of MLE is to support the primary form of data, the findings in this level of investigation could be treated as a form of triangulation. The interpretation of Malay women's representation and identity is validated not only from the linguistic content

semantics (the Mode), but also the MLE context (the Field) as the primary form of data and also the expresser of the text (the Tenor).

When using triangulation, it involves multiple methods or approaches to make findings more comprehensive and complete, simultaneously reporting the findings in a more confident manner (Chako, 2017; Heale & Forbes, 2013). Creswell (2014) stated that triangulation further helps in boosting the validity of the findings, in which the themes found in qualitative findings would be more coherent when various sources of data and perspectives of the participants are converged. Relating the explanation of triangulation in this study, since the researcher herself first analysed the thematic choices in the selected literary works, she further scrutinized the authors to determine if those thematic choices were reflected from the intention of the authors themselves, and initiated an exploration of themes found in the literary criticisms on Malaysian Malay women in the MLE and interview clips of the authors from the Internet, where all of these findings would further be validated. To simply put, after analysing the selected literary works by employing the SFL framework, an exploration of authors from various formal or informal communications such as attending a sharing session given by the author, and interviews of the authors, has further helped the researcher to determine if these thematic choices identified were indeed a reflection of the authors' concerns of thematic choices, which would greatly enhance the accuracy of these findings during the reporting of findings in the next chapter.

# 3.3. Bridging the Theory to the Approaches

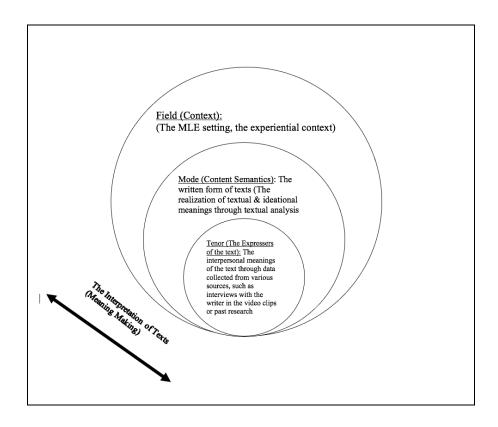
This section is signposting the SFL theory to the approaches that the researcher employed in the present study. A revisiting of the theory is appropriate in landscaping the theoretical framework to the procedures of data selection and data analysis in the research.

# 3.3.1 Revisiting the Theory

SFL is an analytical tool applied to the realization of text to its context. In this study, the researcher looked into the system of register where the three variables were concerned. The field is the MLE context where the overt reality of the texts dwelled in. Tenor refers to an explanation of the formal or informal communication between the writer and the MLE experts, such as the video clips on the interviews of the writers, the past researches related to the writers. The mode was the written form of the texts, referring to the short stories that were selected for the purposes of this research. The dynamics of text analysis thus could be illustrated by Figure 3.2.

Figure 3.2

The SFL Representations of Functional Meanings in the Textual Analysis.



Viewing from the Hallidayan perspective, meaning making and extra meanings of a text are determined by the variables in which the text resides, the field, the tenor, and the mode. The metafunctions of SFL provides grammatical metaphors in the description of language in the text to its functions which includes the Hallidayan terms of meanings that the text construes.

To guide the analysis, the SFL framework was drawn on the basic notions from M.A.K. Halliday (1994), Halliday and Matthiessen (2004), Bloor and Bloor (2005), Eggins (2004) and Thompson (2004). The Theme-Rheme system forms one part of SFL, which centres on the notion of language function. According to Halliday, language is "a resource for making meaning" which "resides in systemic patterns of choice" (Halliday

& Matthiessen, 2004, p.23). A text is a system network in which there is an "ongoing selection of language to make meanings" (Ibid) and the process of making meanings is very much decided by the writer or the speaker who organizes the structure of the sentences and the utterances.

### 3.3.2 Textual Functional Analysis

In the English language, a clause consists of a Theme and a Rheme. Theme is also defined as the "psychological subject" of the clause by Halliday (2004) and it always occurs in the first position as "the point of departure" that serves to the body in an English clause (Halliday, 1994, 37). Bloor and Bloor define the first position of the structure of a clause as "the "Given" information" (Bloor, 2004, 65) and the remaining of the clause as the "New" information of the message. In line with the framework, "the point of departure" or "Given" is the clause initial that foregrounds the message while the following is the "New" information of the message. What the listeners or readers have already known is the "Given" and followed by the "New" information that is expected after the speakers or writers foreground the "Given" or the "point of departure". The following examples are derived from one of the clauses in *And She Became an Angel* that demonstrate how **Theme**/Rheme in a message is organized into different interpretations of meanings as shown in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1

Theme/Rheme in English--Examples derived from 'And She Became an Angel'

	Theme / Rheme	Types of Theme
i	Mandak/ climbs to the top of a shed on another night.	Unmarked Topical Theme
ii	On another night, Mandak/ climbs to the top of a shed	Marked Topical Theme
iii	<b>Surprisingly</b> /, Mandak climbs to the top of a shed on another night.	Interpersonal Theme
iv	<b>So/</b> Mandak climbs to the top of a shed on another night.	Textual Theme

For (i), a clause forms a message when the point of departure "Mandak" is taken as the topic of the message. It is thus called Topical Theme but an Unmarked one since there is no distinctive feature before the subject of the clause and it is a typical subject-verb clause. However, not all the clause initials start by having typical subjects in the messages. Sometimes, experiential elements such as time or place could be found as themes in the messages and the focus of the message is thus shifted to the experiential representation and acts as the temporal information. (ii) is one of the instances and is labelled as a Marked Topical Theme. In other words, the positioning of Theme in the organization of text is the options made by the speakers or the writers. For interpersonal function, a thematic choice could be a personal judgment like "surprisingly" in (iii) while Textual Theme "So" in (iv) serves as one of the textual elements that is interwoven across the messages in the text and attain cohesion of the text.

# 3.3.3 Experiential Functional Analysis

In general, experiential meanings can be realized through the representation of the participants (the different roles of the doer), the processes (the actions of the doer), and the environment (the contextual reality). The experiential metafunction is also known as the system of transitivity. In a layman's term, it is the interpretation of the content, who, what, and where, which are the representational meaning of what the clause is about (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004). The description of the transitivity system could be summarized in the examples derived from one of the selected short stories in the Table 3.2.

Table 3.2

Transitivity System in English--Examples adapted from 'A Subtle Degree of Restraint'

No.	Process (meaning)	Participants	Examples
1.	Material (doing, happening)	Actor, Goal (plus others)	Elena left the cash on the table.  (Pt:Actor + Pr:Material + Pt:Goal + Circ:spatial)
2.	Mental (seeing, feeling, thinking, wanting)	Senser, Phenomenon	Elena loves red roses. (Pt:Senser + Pr:Mental + Pt:Phenomenon)
3.	Relational (being, having; identifying or attributing)	Carrier, Attribute; Token, Value	Elena is an unhappy married woman. (Pt:Token + Pr:Relational-Identifying + Pt:Value)  Elena is unhappy. (Pt:Carrier + Pr:Relational-Attribute + Pt:Attribute)
4.	Behavioral (psychological behavior)	Behaver, Behavior	Elena laughed hilariously. (Pt:Behaver + Pr:Behavioral + Circ:Manner)
5.	Verbal (saying, indicating)	Sayer, Verbiage	Elena <b>expressed</b> her concern. (Pt:Sayer + Pr:Verbal + Pt:Verbiage)
6.	Existential (existing, being)	Existent	All these years there was an unhappy woman. (Circ: Time + Pr: Existential + Pt: Existent)

In this research, the investigation was only restricted to defining the boundary of Theme and Rheme in a clause by conducting two kinds of analysis: Thematic Choice and Thematic Structure of the clause. Thematic Choice and Thematic Structure were used to realize the Textual metafunction where the organization of message and information construed experiential, logical, and interpersonal meanings in the text.

# 3.4 Piloting the Study

Prior to conducting the study, the researcher herself has conducted a pilot study to determine if the research instruments that will be used in a larger are appropriately administered, constructed, and flawless (Blatch-Jones et al., 2018). The result of the pilot study has been published in Procedia, in the Journal of Social and Behavioral Sciences (vol. 134, 2014), the paper being presented at an international conference held in Kota Kinabalu, Sabah. A pilot study on *Mariah* was conducted and presented in the conference with the purpose of collecting feedback from linguistics scholars who participated at the conference. Another attempt was done in 2016, where the researcher presented the findings of *And She Became an Angel* and *A Subtle Degree of Restraint* at the 43<sup>rd</sup> International Systemic Functional Congress 2016 in Bandung, Indonesia. Subsequently, the extended abstract was published in the conference proceedings.

### 3.5 Data Selection Procedures

This section discusses the selection and description of the data followed by the procedures of this research pertaining to the qualitative method.

In this study, three short stories from three Malaysian Malay women writers were selected as the data for textual analysis. The selection of these women writers was based on their years of the publication, the significant representation of these women writers, the accessibility of their works, the settings of the stories and the common themes found in the short stories.

The formation of the Malaysian Malay women's identity can never be separated from its colonial legacy and post-colonial reality as reflected in the short stories written by the writers who were born in between the 1940s and 1990s. This was a period when the Malaysians were experiencing conflicts rooted from their colonial past to the real issues brought out by social changes. Thus, the selection of writers was purposive in two folds. First, these Malay women writers who were aged in their 50s and 60s, grew up into their matured selves like Malaysia, the homeland they dwelled in, experienced stages of the human life span, from childhood to puberty, and adulthood. Malaysia also went through a few critical political and social changes throughout nation building, from a newly independent country to a relatively more matured country of 64 years. Shaded in this background, the writers' experiences of life in a fast-changing social setting were not only derived from their history or language textbooks, but also their personal life experiences, thoughts and feelings from their surroundings, their families, the concurrent systems of national education and also the exposure to mass media.

Second, the writers could be taken as the most prominent ones although Malaysian Malay women writers are only a handful in the MLE. They are recognized because of their publications, fame or reputation in the industry, here in the MLE atmosphere. In other words, the accessibility to these short stories and the popularity of the writers had

been taken into consideration for data collection. In doing so, short stories that could be accessed through the Internet such as online bookshops, university modules; university libraries or books sold by retailers such as MPH or Popular. They are thus sorted out according to the representation of their social backgrounds viewing from the year of publication and lastly the representation of the writers in MLE.

Next, the coverage of the short stories is supposed to be taken from a Malay women group with different backgrounds as this may well reflect the real context in which the texts reside. In view of this, the first story took place in a Kelantanese kampong, the second a Terengganu village, and the third, cosmopolitan Kuala Lumpur. The setting of the three selected short stories significantly reflected the composition of Malay society as the first two states have been under the ruling of the Malaysian Islamic Party (PAS), a religious based political party for decades and those states are therefore taken as a stronghold of Islamic and Malay culture. In contrast, the third story, taking place in Kuala Lumpur, appropriately represented a transition in Malay women experiences from the rural to the urban, into an international cosmopolitan.

The representation of the Malay Muslim society in *Mariah* and *And She Became an Angel* is significant because settings in the East Coast states of Malaysia, Kelantan and Terengganu, the front fort of Islamic and Malay culture. The portrayal of Malaysian Malay women would be unveiled to a higher level from its bountiful richness within this social-cultural setting. While the third short story, happening in Kuala Lumpur, the capital of Malaysia, is a cosmopolitan and an international city baptized with rapid social-cultural changes due to vigorous globalization. As a result, Muslim women in

Kuala Lumpur would probably experience life differently from their counterparts in the east coast states of Malaysia.

As the length of the short stories vary, this would affect the number of clauses to be coded, especially for clauses in *A Subtle Degree of Restraint*. However, this would not change the findings drawn from the investigation of this study as the distribution of types of thematic choice and the domination of protagonist in the short stories were determined by their percentage of occurrences and not only the number of thematic choices. Last but not least, the three stories share common themes concerning Malay Muslim women. The protagonists in the three short stories, had undergone different levels and forms of social oppressions and gender inequality. One of which is that the three female protagonists in the short stories, Cik Yam, Mandak and Elena, were all barren, facing unspeakable suffering in their communities. Table 3.3 summarizes the details of the selection.

**Table 3.3**Specification of the Selection of Short Stories

No.	Titles of the short stories	Names of the writers	Years of Birth of the writers	Length of the stories	Ç						
1.	Mariah	Che Husna Azhari	1955	527 clauses							
2.	And She Became an Angel	Dina Zaman	1969	510 clauses	Terengganu	Mandak the barren					
3.	A Subtle Degree of Restraint	Karina Bahrin	1969	254 clauses	Kuala Lumpur	Elena the barren at present					

### 3.5.1 About the Writers

This section serves to provide a discussion of the three prominent Malay women writers, who are Che Husna Azhari, Dina Zaman, and Karina Bahrin respectively.

### 3.5.1.1 Che Husna Azhari (1955 -)

As the Professor and the Director in Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, holding positions in the Faculty of Engineering and Built Environment and the Center for Corporate Planning and Communications, Che Husna Azhari who earned her A-Levels in Oxford College in 1975 had since obtained her first degree and PhD at Brunel University, West London in England between 1976 and 1985 (Malak, 2009; Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM), 2008).

Earning two awards through the Fund Generating Award in 1995 and the Excellent Service Award in 2003, Che Husna Azhari is also acknowledged by the people as the famous "Kelantan Writer" who hails from Melor, Kelantan in Malaysia (Baharum, 2012; UKM, 2008). Her creative writings, other than her amazing achievements in England, are greatly written due to the influence of her background. As an individual native to Kelantan and having a Malay Muslim identity, her creative writings are a reflection of the characters, language, and setting from the region.

Among her popular works are her collections of fictions, most notable collections being *Melor in Perspective* (1993) and the recently published *An English Sojourn* (2008). Compiled within these collections, some of the prominent works written by her include

Mariah, Of Bunga Telur and Bally Shoes, and Pak De Samad's Cinema (Hanita & Mohammad, 2019; Malak, 2009; UKM, 2008; Nor Faridah, 2000). Through these works, Che Husna Azhari had presented various issues related to consciousness, identities, and politics blended with the tales retrieved and further constructed and invented them with joy using her own style of writing (Baharum, 2012; Malak, 2009). Baharum (2012) further notes how interesting Che Husna Azhari's works are as she has presented the uniqueness of Kelantanese society to the rest of Malaysia, informing the socio-political and cultural differences to the people, rendering them different from the other Malays. In fact, some local universities have used Che Husna's Pak De Samad's Cinema for ethnic literature studies and secondary schools have had the students read her Of Bunga Telur and Bally Shoes (UKM, 2008).

### 3.5.1.2 Dina Zaman (1969 -)

Dina Zaman is a Malay Muslim writer who is well-respected by the people (Bahar & Hashim, 2018; Jerome, 2013; Bradley, 2012; Abidin, 2004) and a social-conscience person who is holding multiple occupations such as a blogger, editor, and journalist (Bradley, 2012) whose works have been appearing in prominent publications in Malaysia such as *Malaysiakini*, *The Malaysian Insider*, and *The New Straits Times* (Jerome, 2013). Abdillah (2008) further claims that Dina Zaman is a literary figure who is still "young" whose voices is considered emerging in the MLE scene.

Despite being a Malaysian, Dina Zaman had been living abroad until she was 11, spending most of her childhood and early education between Japan and Russia (Abidin, 2004). She then enrolled in tertiary education in Mass Communication at the Western

Michigan University (Abidin, 2004) and received her Master degree of Creative Writing in the University of Lancaster (Gerakbudaya). Ever since embarking into the journey of writing, she has written multiple works as seen in the list provided by Abdillah (2008):

- 1. The King of the Sea (2012),
- 2. Ani (1997),
- 3. Grandfather Story Number One (1997),
- 4. Her Son is Her Lover (1997),
- 5. Night and Day (1997),
- 6. The Passenger (1997),
- 7. Two Men (1997).
- 8. The Fat Woman (1996),
- 9. The Kacang Puteh and Assam Lady (1996), and
- 10. Philippa (1994).

Amongst the works, *The King of the Sea* is a collection of short stories that was published in 2012 and her journal writing published in the journal SARE: Southeast Asian Review of English under the Malaysian Association for Commonwealth Literature and Language Studies in 2004 (Abdillah, 2008). Other prominent works are *The Pen is Mightier than the Sword, I Am Muslim, Travels in Faith, Sex Within Islam, Soul Searching*, and *Portraits*, where she highlighted how Malaysian Malay Muslims live their lives along with those who are not from the mainstream society (Bahar & Hashim, 2018; Jerome, 2013; Bradley, 2012; Abdillah, 2008). Yet, her works while being acknowledged, are often overseen and even when research is conducted on her works, it is usually two or three short stories taken from the entire collection itself

(Abdillah, 2008; Abidin, 2004). Her most recent publication is *Holy Men, Holy Women:* A Journey into Faiths of Malaysians and other Essays (Dina Zaman, 2017). It is a new attempt for a Muslim to explore different systems of faith in the Peninsular as well as Sabah and Sarawak. However, as a Malaysian Malay Muslim who has been stereotyped and restricted to involve their activities in other religions by the constitution, she took extra effort to approach those holy men and women of different faiths, witnessing mysterious rituals of traditional religions (Jayatilaka, 2018).

### 3.5.1.3 Karina Bahrin (1969 -)

Like Che Husna Azhari and Dina Zaman, Karina Bahrin is also a Malay Muslim writer in Malaysia, authoring one prominent book, *A Subtle Degree of Restraint* published by MPH Publishing Group (Tan, 2014; Hwang, 2012). She is a blogger who wrote "I am a Muslim too" (2013), an article from her personal blog which has been withdrawn. Karina was the head of Public Relations for Bursa Malaysia and her experience of leading PR and communication agencies in Kuala Lumpur provided her muse of writing in her urban tales such as *A Woman in Five Pieces*, collected in KL Noir and the short story for the present study, *A Subtle Degree of Restraint*. Her current role as a boutique hotel owner in Pulau Langkawi began from the claim "I want a life where I had more control over my time and my life" (Ariffin, 2021). With this, she has transformed herself from a high-flyer in corporate communications and public relations to an award-winning Airbnb owner, retreating from Subang to Pulau Langkawi. Her 20 years of corporate life in the cosmopolitan of Kuala Lumpur had definitely qualified her in writing stories setting in a fast globalized cosmopolitan. *A Subtle Degree of Restraint* 

is a short story of hers, published with the same name *A Subtle Degree of Restraint* for which she is the chief editor of a collection of short stories all set in Kuala Lumpur.

### 3.5.2 About the Stories

The synopsises of the selected short stories presented in this section provide a glimpse of the stories taking place in two remote kampongs in the east coast of Malaysia and one in the cosmopolitan of Kuala Lumpur.

### 3.5.2.1 *Mariah*

Mariah is a work written by Che Husna Azhari that involves the protagonist Mariah and other characters such as an unnamed man addressed as the Imam and his wife, Cik Yam (Hanita & Mohammad, 2019; Nor Faridah, 2000). In a concise summary provided by Nor Faridah (2000), the synopsis talks about how Che Husna depicts a divorced, an East Coast Malay woman, Mariah, living in a remote village and despite living in her forties, she does not seem to age as she has a look that is twentyish and she is a business woman who sells various types of rice to earn a living. Che Husna further describes how Mariah has received a lot of attention from the men who tend to flood Mariah's stall on the pretext of buying her food to see her instead of buying the food made by her. Conflict begins when the Imam has sexual fantasies about Mariah despite having an almost perfect wife, Cik Yam, who unfortunately could not conceive after many years of marriage. The Imam plans tactfully and performs an emotional confession to the wife. Cik Yam, the wife who initially wails and protests against the Imam's proposal to marry Mariah as the second wife, eventually has to give in to her husband's desire, believing that he would treat her just as equal to how he will treat Mariah.

## 3.5.2.2 And She Became an Angel

Translated into the Indonesian language by Dewi Anggraeni and published in October 2002, And She Became an Angel portrays Mandak, a typical village woman and the barren wife of Ipeng, who is seen victimized in the story (Bradley, 2012; Tan, 2014). Mandak is also portrayed as a woman assuming the identity as the subordinate of the men in a remote kampong in Terengganu. She is by no means a plain woman folk whose only daily task is cooking meals for a simple husband, Ipeng. The tension of life begins when she suddenly wants to become a western feathered-like angel, the one thing in life that she desires to fulfil. She therefore starts plucking feathers from the chicken they rear in the house yard for the mission of makes two feathered wings of an angel. Her peculiar behaviours and her wish becomes a challenge for Ipeng, a typical plain kampong folk and a traditional Malay Muslim man. While knowing Mandak is venturing around the neighbourhood in the two feathered wings, he decides to retain her in a chicken coop. To resolve the conflict between Mandak's wild thoughts and the traditional Malay society, keeping Mandak in the chicken coop is the final resolution the husband enforces on the wife. The story ends when Mandak flees from the chicken coop flying in order to rescue the kampong folks from a kampong fire in a windy night. She sacrifices herself in the fire and tragically, Mandak's wish or the one thing of her life to become an angel eventually becomes fruitful (Tan, 2014).

### 3.5.2.3 A Subtle Degree of Restraint

A Subtle Degree of Restraint is a collection of short stories compiled by Karina Bahrin (Hwang, 2012). The well-executed stories in this collection are mostly relatable to the

audience as they, to a certain extent understand the characters, cultures, and events that occur in the short stories along with the blend and mixture of these distinctive cultures with globalization creating surprising and interesting elements that appeal to the audience (Hwang, 2012). Elena, a new highbred of Malay woman in the cosmopolitan Kuala Lumpur, the capital of Malaysia, is indeed an unhappy woman who protrudes unnamed stress and emotions that she suffers into things around her in the gathering with her high school girlfriend in a Japanese restaurant at a hotel in Kuala Lumpur. She bursts out and furiously walks away from the restaurant after knowing her friend, Badariah, an overweight Malay woman, who enjoys good food, love and sex, is pregnant without a legal marriage.

Within these short stories, the portrayal of Malay women could be observed, such as Mandak, Elena, and Badariah where issues of the society are highlighted: The women's barrenness, marriage, and their representation to the society (Tan, 2014). Hwang (2012) has provided some of the other short stories in Karina Bahrin's *A Subtle Degree of Restraint* as well, which are *The Prize* and *Teatime in Bangsar*.

### 3.6. Data Analysis Procedures

This study eployed a qualitative research whereby the findings of the thematic choice in the selected short stories were tabulated to provide a more comprehensive discussion of the study. It used purposive sampling where the researcher first screened for short stories written by selected Malaysian Malay women writers who had fulfilled the criteria mentioned in Section 3.4 according to their publicity, accessibility, authors' background and popularity, settings of the stories and the shared common themes of

the stories. The chosen short stories were then numbered as Text 1, Text 2 and Text 3 for a closer investigation. Subsequently, each clause in the short stories was labelled and categorized in their respective boundaries, which are Theme and Rheme in the first stage of analysis, domination of protagonists in the thematic choice, and types of Participants and Processes in a clausal level of analysis from the three stages accordingly.

The selected short stories were analysed by employing the conventions like what most of the SFL linguists did. Although the researcher could not access SFL experts in the institution where she pursued her doctorate, she had managed to invite a second coder who was also one of the experts of SFL, writing a personal blog on SFL and also publishing a book on the boundary of Theme and Rheme. The second coder was indeed an unofficial supervisor from abroad who selflessly offered assistance to counter check the coding of texts. The name of the coder is not mentioned here due to ethical concerns, to ensure his or her confidentiality is protected.

In this study, the analysis of text was grounded in SFL theory, the system of Theme and Rheme as drawn on Halliday and Matthiessen (2004), Eggins (2004), Thompson (2004) and Bloor and Bloor (2004) from the discussion in Section 3.1. It is done in the following procedures:

- 1. Collecting short stories that meet the above mentioned criterion in Section 3.4.
- 2. Transcribing and coding raw data
- 3. Analyzing Thematic Choice & Structure of the data in selected short story texts accordingly
- 4. Tabulate findings of Thematic Choice & Structure in respective short stories

- 5. Compare and contrast the tabulated findings from the selected short stories
- 6. Categorize selected short stories according to the tabulated findings.
- 7. Examine and draw relationship of the findings among the selected short stories
- 8. Discuss and interpret the findings that construes experiential meanings of women identity from the findings
- 9. Discuss and interpret the findings that disclose textual organization of short story as a specific genre.

These procedures can also be classified into three consecutive stages accordingly:

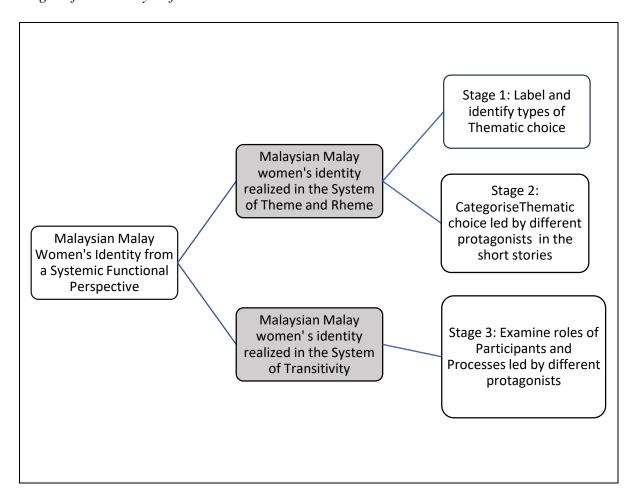
In the first stage, after labelling the short stories as Text 1, Text 2 and Text 3, all the clauses in each story were numbered in Microsoft excel files. Then, the structure of each clause in the System of Theme and Rheme was examined and tabulated according to the types of thematic choice in different mood types of the clause. After that, the thematic choice found in the texts were sorted out and calculated. The results were tabled to show the overall distribution and the ranking of prominent types of themes that would signify experiential meanings.

During the second stage, thematic choice aligned was with different protagonists as Participants were categorised accordingly. This was then followed by the third stage of analysis, where, an extensive examination which highlighted the types of Participants and Processes in the System of Transitivity would explain different levels of experiential meanings in the social context. Lastly, discussions on the findings with reference to the research objectives were provided to determine if the research questions established were successfully answered. The process of defining types of Thematic Choice and examining the types of Participants and Processes took a tedious step where

the researcher needed to read and re-read countless times and contemplated with the experts of SFL in another country for the finalization of the analysis.

The methodology is summarized in Figure 3.3:

Figure 3.3
Stages of Text Analysis for the Selected Short Stories



# 3.6.1 Basic Grammatical Concept of the Text Analysis

1. The definition of clausal based analysis: A clause is the basic unit of analysis. A clause could be identified as a dependent clause in the clause complex or an independent clause in the compound sentence. In the analysis, dependent clause was not analysed, the complex sentence was taken as one unit. A clause with a conjunctive adjunct was labelled as a new unit and its embedded Subject/Participant was recovered. Minor clauses such as, 'Oh, Mariah...', 'you know...', 'yes' were identified but not analysed. Meaning, Minor clauses were counted in the overall distribution of clausal investigation, but not taken in the investigation of meanings construed or domination of themes.

2. All clauses were labelled and classified into different mood types as the examples below:

Marked/Unmarked Topical Theme, Textual + Unmarked Topical Theme and Interpersonal + Unmarked Topical Theme, in the decorative mood, Wh interrogative mood, Yes/No interrogative mood, Exclusive imperative mood or Inclusive imperative mood, exclamative mood and lastly fronted  $\beta$  clauses. This could be seen in the findings that answered the first Research Question.

## 3.6.2 Stage 1 Procedures: Transcribing and Coding Data

After the three short stories had been sorted out accordingly, the researcher typed the selected short stories in MS Office Word files and copied and pasted them again on the MS Office Excel template for the calculation of types of thematic choice in the texts. The analysis was based on the clause level; it was therefore identified according to the

clause ranking tradition in which only a clause with a verb group would be taken as a unit. Thus, a sentence linked by a coordinating conjunction could be taken as two units. For example:

 That particular morning, though, most of the men were not eating their breakfast but instead their gaze was fixed on the main entrance to the square.

It is very obvious that there are two clauses linked by a coordinating conjunction "but instead", thus the sentence is divided into two since this is a clause-based analysis:

- That particular morning, though, most of the men were not eating their breakfast
- ...but instead their gaze was fixed on the main entrance to the square.

On the other hand, when a sentence is linked by using relative pronouns such as which, who, whose, whom, or where, it is not regarded as an independent clause in the clause ranking; therefore, it is taken as one unit in the clause-based analysis. For example:

• The hub of activity was now the market square where men congregate to have breakfast.

After identifying the clause ranking and keying in all the clauses of the text, the researcher then examined the types of thematic choice by marking them and labelling them one by one. Topical Themes were bolded and underlined after being labelled either as Marked or Unmarked, Textual Themes bolded and italicized while Interpersonal Themes bolded, and so on so forth. A sample of text analysis is shown in Figure 3.2., Samples of Text Analysis (1). The analysis of the short story text the moved

on towards the end where types of thematic choice would be summed up at the last row of each column.

### 3.6.3 Stage 2 Procedures: Grouping the Participants

The animate and inanimate Participants/Subjects of the clause were sorted into three main categories: The main protagonist, the second protagonist, the third protagonist (if any), the social-cultural elements of the clause as Participants/Subjects. The grouping of social-cultural elements includes the description of the environment and the natural setting of the short stories that led to social scenarios of the kampong, the cosmopolitan. The clauses led by these social-cultural elements have contributed to the social setting of the short stories which also represents the upbringings of the protagonists enhancing the explanation of women identity. These social-cultural elements include the thematic choices formed such as "the main trunk road", "the feather" and "the vase", that depicted the setting of the short story which led to the happenings, while "Cik Gu Nab" "the kampong folk" were the representations of the community; the "malaikats" or supernatural beings which belongs to the Islamic realm were the cultural elements, and "the mochi" was a symbol of globalization in the cosmopolitan. This group of clauses dynamically construe the social-cultural interactions between the protagonists and the communities in which they resided.

Although the analysis was commissioned to interpret the Malaysian Malay women's identity, the male protagonists in each short story were also investigated as they juxtaposed the roles of female protagonist that construed the meaning of women's identity. Prediction and inferences could be made by applying inductive reasoning from

the findings drawn from the male protagonists. That is, from a certain insightful observation of the male protagonists, the inferences could also intensify the interpretation of Malay women's identity by researching their male counterparts. In addition, women's roles as the Participants of the clause were relatively lesser than the male protagonists, especially in Text 1 and Text 2.

The domination of Participants/Subject from the grouping in Stage 2 analysis was calculated to determine the ranking of these protagonists in the text. By doing so, the ranking also revealed the importance of each protagonist by the thematic choices they inherited. Consequently, the findings also redirected the study to the focus that answered Research Question 2: How do these Thematic choice enhance the understanding of Malay women identity to the selected short stories? A sample of analysis is shown in the following Table 3.4.

**Table 3.4**Stage 2 Analysis-- Groups of Participants as taken from 'A Subtle Degree of Restraint'

		Groups of Participants								
No.	Clauses	Elena as Topical Themes	Badariah as Topical Themes	Azman as Topical Themes	Social, Cultural & Natural Elements as Tonical Themes					
					e.g., dining chairs, the vase, the mochi.					
C233	Elena left the cash on the	1								
C234	and [she] walked towards	1								
C235	The florid, pinkish vessel				1					
C236	She reached out	1								
C237	and [she] pushed it with	1								

# 3.6.4 Stage 3 Procedures: Investigating the Transitivity meanings of clauses

The role of the protagonist and the processes entailed by the protagonists were scrutinized by applying the System of Transitivity. The characteristics of the Participant and the Process carried by the protagonists were examined and counted. The results of different types of Participants and Processes would realize the Experiential meanings carried by the protagonists and construe the interpretation of Malaysian Malay women's identity. To sum up, in this stage of text analysis, the Experiential meaning of a clause would be defined by the roles of the Participant and the Process aligned with the Participants, realizing of meanings of Malaysia Malay women's identity and subsequently further supported the answer of Research Question 2 meanwhile the findings of Stage 3 also presented various themes that were prevalent in the realization of Malay women's identity which was proposed by Research Question 3.

**Table 3. 5**Samples of Text Analysis in Stage 3

		Mandak				Ipeng							
C.		Actor Carrier Senser Be			Behaver	Sayer	Actor	Carrier	Senser	Behaver	Sayer		
No													
439	lpeng runs						1						
440	[Ipeng] pushes						1						
441	and [Ipeng] climbs						1						
	his way to the roof to												
	rescue his wife.												
442	Mandak cries.				1								

Table 3. 6 A Sample of Text Analysis in Different Stages of the Selected Text

		Decl	arative				Wh-	Int		Y/N	Int	Ex. I	mp.					ce by				Mar	ndak					Ipe	eng		
	Text 2: And She Became an Angel	Marked Topical	Interpersonal +Marked	Unmarked Topical	Textual Unmarked Topical	Interpersonal Unmarked	Topical Unmarked	Textual Unmarked	Interpersonal Unmarked	Topical Unmarked	Textual Unmarked	Topical Ex. Imp	Textual Ex. Imp	Exclamation	Fronted β	Minor Clause	Mandak	ngonist Buedl	Social Cultural Elements	Actor	Carrier	Senser	Behaver	Sayer	Existent	Actor	Carrier	Senser	Behaver	Sayer	Existent
C63	Mandak puts it on the floor			1													1			1											
C64	and [she] hurries toward the only mirror in the room.				1												1			1											
C65	She looks at her bewildered husband,			1													1					1									
C66	[she was] unsurprised by his presence.			1													1				1										
C67	"I'm going to become an angel,			1													1			1											
C68	and there are not enough feathers for me to make wings,"				1														1												
C69	lpeng's jaw drops			1														1								1					
C70	"What [is it]?"						1												1												
C71	He stares at his wife.			1														1										1			
C72	The next morning, Ipeng watches his wife, suddenly spry, chasing the hens and roosters in the compound,	1																1										1			
		Stage 1										Si	a	ge	2	2				St	a	ge	3	3							

# 3.6.5 Quantifying the Findings

The findings obtained from each literary text were counted and tabulated to show the distribution of types of thematic choice and structures for comparing and contrasting purposes. Drawn on the categorized findings, the researcher would be able to discuss Malaysian Malay women's identity in a Malaysian context from the experiential, textual, and interpersonal levels of meanings in the thematic choices that answered the research questions which were the types of thematic choice that was found in the selected short story texts and how thematic choice enhances the understanding of Malaysian Malay women's identity in the selected short stories.

The findings were structured according to the sequential order of the Research Questions. The text analysis in Stage1 is an overview of the Thematic choices found in the three short stories whereby the specifications of Thematic choices were tabulated to answer RQ1: What are types of thematic choice found in the selected short story texts? A compare-contrast of the findings among the three story texts and past research of SFL on different genres were highlighted then. The text analysis in Stage 2 and Stage 3 is designed to answer RQ 2: How do these thematic choices enhance the understanding of Malay women's identity to the selected short stories?

The findings from the second and the third stages were commissioned to explore the roles of women protagonists in the selected short stories and the values of their beings realized from the distribution of the Thematic choices they embodied and the experiential and ideational meanings they carried through the employment of the System of Transitivity in the Experiential metafunction from the Systemic Functional perspective. Upon discussing the findings with relevance to the first two research questions, the researcher re-examined the organization of the texts and findings in the selected short story texts, through drawing patterns and elements found in the texts to testify them in order to determine the extent of these findings would yield answer to the third research question. It is therefore a continuation of the findings from Stage 2 and 3 whereby each of the different themes realized were listed and presented to answer RQ 3: What prevalent themes construe the representation of Malay women's identity in the selected short stories?

# 3.7 Chapter Summary

This chapter has provided an overview of how the research would be conducted, specifying the researcher's stance in collecting and analysing the data through a mixed-mode approach. The theoretical framework of the study was revisited and the research design underpinning the mixed-mode approach was discussed in this chapter, in which will be involving identifying the thematic choices found in the selected literary works, interviewing the authors, and interviewing an MLE expert to triangulate and further validate the findings which will be presented in the next chapter. This chapter has also provided an outline of how the data was selected and analysed, including a brief description of the authors, the authors' works, and background of the authors and the MLE expert. The methods in which the pilot study was conducted were provided as well. The next chapter further discusses the initial findings from the pilot study conducted and the findings obtained from the actual research.

### **CHAPTER FOUR**

### FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

### 4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings pertaining to the Grand Tour Question: How would thematic choice construe Malaysian Malay women's identity in the three selected short stories written by the three Malay women writers, namely, Che Husna Azhari, Dina Zaman and Karina Bahrin. The findings that answered Research Question 1, Research Question 2 have been organized with the sequence of the short stories labelled as Text 1, Text 2, and Text 3 in sections 4.1, 4.2 and 4.3 respectively. An overview of the findings deriving from three selected short stories are presented in section 4.4. The overview includes a holistic discussion by comparing and contrasting findings of the three texts relevant to the scrutiny of Malay women's identity. Section 4.5 presents findings pertaining to Research Question 3 in which all the themes related to Malaysian Malay women's identity are listed and discussed with an integration of CDA and Feminist Studies from a Systemic Functional Perspective.

The organization of sections 4.1, 4.2 and 4.3 follows the sequence first from Text 1 *Mariah* written by Che Husna Azhari (1993); next Text 2 *And She Became an Angel* by Dina Zaman (2012), and lastly Text 3 *A Subtle Degree of Restraint* by Karina Bahrin (2011). The data from each section were tabulated first from the thematic choice investigated in the text analysis of Stage 1, presenting the distribution of different types

of Thematic Choice to show the nomination and the significance of the specific Thematic Choice in the story texts. The findings in Stage 1 analysis are delegated to answer Research Question 1 which also serves as a linguistic census of the text, landscaping the story from its lexico-grammar components. Subsequently, the data collected from the analyses of Stages 2 and 3 will be presented after the landscaping of text in Stage 1 is completed. The analysis in the second and third stages seeks to answer Research Question 2. It sketches the boundary by determining whom to be investigated in the short stories from the distribution of the thematic choice led by different protagonists in Stage 2. Then, a continuation in Stage 3 will be conducted by scrutinizing the System of Transitivity of the clauses painting the countenance of the Malay women from the configuration of the thematic choice led by the protagonists. Last but not least, by employing the Systemic Functional study of text as a fundamental approach, the portrayal of the identity of Malaysia Malay women will be consolidated from different perspectives retrieved from the MLE, fulfilling the Research Question 3 by presenting the prevalent themes found in the selected short stories.

## 4.2. An Overview of Thematic Choice in Text 1 -- Mariah

A clausal based analysis was conducted in order to answer RQ1: What are the types of thematic choice found in the selected short story texts? A total of 528 clauses were identified in Text 1, the selected short story, *Mariah*. To examine the types of Thematic Choice found in Text 1, all clauses, including embedded clauses in the short story were sorted accordingly into Marked/Unmarked Topical Theme, Textual + Unmarked Topical Theme and Interpersonal + Unmarked Topical Theme, in the decorative mood, Wh interrogative mood, Yes/No interrogative mood, Exclusive Imperative mood or

Inclusive Imperative mood, Exclamative mood and lastly Fronted  $\beta$  clauses. A total of 21 types of Themes were identified from the examination of Text 1, 'Mariah'.

For an accurate analysis of the different Participant types in the Thematic Choice, omitted elements in some of the clauses were recovered and bracketed, as shown in Table 4.1.

Text 1- Examples of Recovering Participants of the Clauses

**Table 4.1** 

C17	That particular gyrating seemed to mesmerize the	Unmarked Topical Theme
	men	
C18	and [that particular gyrating] glued them to their places.	Textual + Unmarked Topical Theme
C252	The Imam stopped in his tracks,	Unmarked Topical Theme
C253	then [he] took full flight.	Textual + Unmarked Topical Theme

For an overview of these themes, the specifications of Thematic Choice are listed in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2

Text 1- Specifications of Thematic Choice in 'Mariah'

No	Theme in Decorative	No of	Frequency of
		clauses	occurrences (%)
1	Unmarked Topical Theme	279	56.3
2	Textual + Unmarked Topical	96	18.1
3	Interpersonal + Unmarked Topical	16	3.2
4	Textual + Interpersonal + Unmarked Topical	3	0.6
5	Marked Topical	36	7.3
6	Textual + Marked Topical	9	1.8
7	Interpersonal + Marked Topical	1	0.2
8	Textual + Interpersonal + Marked Topical	3	0.6
9	Fronted β Clause	10	2.2
10	Textual + Fronted β Clause	2	0.3

11	Interpersonal + Fronted β Clause	1	0.3
12	Marked +Fronted β Clause	1	0.3
	Theme in Wh Interrogative		
13	Unmarked Topical	19	3.8
14	Textual + Unmarked Topical	2	0.4
	Theme in Yes/No Interrogative		
15	Unmarked Topical	5	1.0
16	Textual + Unmarked Topical	1	0.3
	Theme in Exclusive Imperative		
17	Unmarked Topical	5	1.0
18	Interpersonal + Unmarked Topical	2	0.4
	Theme in Inclusive Imperative		
19	Unmarked Topical	2	0.4
	Theme in Exclamative		
20	Unmarked Topical	3	0.6
	Total Themes	496	98.9
21	Minor Clauses	32	
	Total Clauses	528	

A total of 528 clauses were sorted from Text 1, but only 496 clauses were analysed. 33 minor clauses were not analysed as they were mostly interjections of the conversations, linguistic devices or phrases without proper verb groups. For example, "Oh Mariah..." is an interjection, "you know," is an informal expression, and so forth. Even though these minor clauses were not analysed; significantly, with 32 of them upon the overall 528 clauses in Text 1, these linguistic fragments played a substantial role in the overall clause distribution by 6.3%, dynamically serving as interpersonal elements in the fictional writing, specifically here in the studies of short stories as a creative genre.

As can be seen from Table 4.2, most of the clauses were realized as Unmarked Topical themes, with 279 clauses or 56.3% pointed out all other types of thematic choices. It was followed by Textual + Unmarked Topical, 96 clauses (18.1%); Marked Topical, 36 clauses (7.3%); Interpersonal + Unmarked Topical, 16 clauses (3.2%); Fronted  $\beta$  Clause, 14 clauses (3.1%); Unmarked Topical in Wh Interrogatives, 19 clauses (3.8%);

Exclamative, 3 clauses (0.6%) and some other types of themes which were lesser than 1% of the total distribution.

With reference to Table 4.2, it can be found that Unmarked Topical Themes took the largest portion in the distribution of Thematic Choices, followed by Textual + Unmarked Topical and Marked Topical. According to the Hallidayan approach, clauses in the organization of a text go in the ordering of Given ^ New, where Given is the Theme and New is the Rheme (Halliday and Matthiessen, 2004, p.93). In other words, Given ^ New or Them/Rheme are closely inter-related to one another. The boundary of Rheme could be always inferred as suggested in Inference-Boundary Model (Leong, 2004) by the Theme placed in the first position of the clause. The progression of Theme/Rheme may follow certain patterns but the boundary is acceptable to both the speaker/writer and the listener/reader. Themes precede Rhemes as clause initials or points of departure as Halliday says, "The Theme is what I, the speaker, choose to take as my point of departure (Halliday and Matthiessen, 2004, p.93).

Thus, in any text, Topical Themes, be it Marked or Unmarked, are the most prominent type of Thematic Choice. They represent the experiential sphere of the text, explicitly from the domination of Participants in the clauses. The Participants could come in the forms of Actors for Material Processes, Sensers for Mental Processes, and Behavers for Behavioral Processes and so on so forth. The Markedness which is optional is a representation of the environmental or temporal elements in the experiential meanings. As such, a Topical Theme either Marked or Unmarked is very experiential in the interpretation of human activities physically and mentally. As such, it has a dominant status to represent human's actions and behaviours. Similar to many past researches (Katrini, 2015 as cited in Erni, 2017; Arunsirot, 2013; Ma, 2003), Unmarked Topical

Themes occupied the largest portion of themes in any types of text because they render most of the content and messages in the text. To simply put, the analysis in Stage 1 initiated the investigation of Malay women's identity by landscaping clauses of the text before demonstrating how the identity of Malay women would be construed from the text, a contour of the text is necessarily investigated in order to determine the boundary of the investigation.

The second largest group of themes was Textual + Unmarked Topical Themes. The examples were found in C38 "but her husband had passed away soon after"; C43 "so we will never be able to confirm this allegation." and C54 "and her very dark, very black eyes appeared to glow". The conjunctive adjuncts "and" and "but" were widely found to be gluing the coherence and cohesion in the progression of information throughout the whole texts, enabling the messages to flow in a logical pattern. As the story was set in a Kelantanese kampong, clauses with Textual Unmarked Topical Themes headed by conjunctive adjuncts as Themes, the two commonly used conjunctions "and" and "but" in the progression of Themes had simultaneously proposed the dialogic flow of the story. The strategy of thematization applied by the writer in the story text thus had successfully advocated the narrator as if he or she was a member of the community. Reading stories through an SFL spectrum would allow the readers to carefully nibble on words in each and every single clause as the thematic choice of the story text is an approach in examining the text in its context.

The third popular category of Thematic Choice in the story text was Marked Topical Themes. The markedness of themes is a representation of experiential content which is very communicative (Grzegorek, 1984; as cited in Mardani & Sadeqi, 2019) and it is classified as long as the departure point of Theme did not follow the usual grammatical Subject + Verb constitution. Instead of using a grammatical Subject as the point of departure in the clause, Marked Topical Themes could be fronted by other information such as time, place or the Participant's attitude. For Halliday, the departure points other than Subject are labelled as Marked Topical Themes. According to Eggins (2004), the markedness of Thematic Choice could be a strategically applied by skilful writers as the foregrounding of the message that has been shifted from a typical (S + V) to an atypical one (Verb, Adjuncts such as Adverb, or Adjective). In general, Marked Topical Themes begin with spatial, temporal or attitudinal adjuncts of the clause. In lay man terms, Marked Topical themes provide relevant information of the content by detailing description of the overt and inner actions entailed by the protagonists in the text and enrich the explanation of the clauses. This type of themes was presented in various types of clauses in Text 1 Mariah, namely Simple Marked Topical, Textual Marked Topical, Interpersonal Marked Topical and also in Multiple Themes of Textual + Interpersonal + Marked Topical. The collected examples are shown in Table 4.3.

Text 1- Examples of Marked Topical Themes

**Table 4.3** 

	Theme	Rheme
C61	On the particular morning, the Imam	was with the men.
C217	muttered the Imam	in vexation
C200	but much to his surprise it	turned out to be
C229	At the thought of Mariah, the Imam	smiled dreamily to himself.

The clausal based analysis in this study has shown that a short story could have more types of Thematic Choices which are not commonly found in other types of genre, such as sports commentary (Ma, 2003), business correspondence texts (Forey, 2004), news report texts (Alvaro, 2014; Sim, 2007), and textbook texts (Dungan, 2020; Jones, 2008; McCabe, 1999). However, the findings of this study fall in the accordance of the traditional SFL research where Unmarked Topical themes occupied the largest portion of thematic choices in any types of texts (Katrini, 2015; as cited in Erni, 2017; Arunsirot, 2013; Ma, 2003).

Other types of Thematic Choice include Themes in Fronted  $\beta$  Clause, Themes in WH Interrogative, Themes in Yes/No Interrogative, Themes in Exclusive Imperative, Themes in Inclusive Imperative and last but not least, Themes in Exclamative. A variety of Thematic Choice has enunciated short stories as a particular genre of creative writing. Using different types of Thematic Choice, the thematization strategies employed by the writers eventually make reading a pleasurable activity.

On the whole, Topical Themes, either Marked or Unmarked could be interpreted experientially. Findings of types of Thematic Choices provides two-dimensional realization of meanings, firstly the analysis in this stage looked at the distribution of Thematic Choice and identified the nomination of these Thematic Choice in the overall text. Secondly, it initiated the investigation of those Thematic Choice to probe the experiential meaning of the text from the System of Transitivity. In addition, it is through the Transitivity resources of the clauses, the experiential meanings of the clauses were realized. In short, the configuration of different types of Thematic Choice postulated the experiential or ideological content of the story and linked the investigation of Stage 1 analysis to Stages 2 and 3 that answered Research Question 2.

#### 4.2.1 The Role of Mariah in Text 1-- Mariah

Findings pertaining to Research Question 2 was initiated by grouping the Participants embodied in the different types of Thematic Choice in the text analysis of Stage 2. Subsequently, a further examination of Processes preceded by these Thematic Choice was conducted in text analysis Stage 3. The double folded investigation was done to verify the interpretation of the identity of Malaysian Malay women in their social context from the examination of the system of Theme/Rheme to the resources realised in the system of Transitivity. To authenticate the verification, all the Marked/Unmarked Topical Themes were either accompanied by Textual or Interpersonal elements in the thematic position have been determined and categorized according to clauses initiated by different protagonists. In the grouping of these protagonists of the clauses, the researcher categorized different types of the Participants of Thematic Choice into their respective groups. They were the Participants entailed by the Imam, Cik Yam and Mariah; and social cultural elements which were also taken as a type of animated and inanimate protagonists comprised of the kampong folks, the trunk road, the nasi belauk, that construe the cultural and social setting of Text 1. Kampong folks or people with or without knowing their names, such as 'Cik Gu Nap (C99), the Sheikh (C274), 'Quarrelsome couples' (C74) were taken as social elements as they belonged to the same community, representing the Malay Muslim world and social forces. On the contrary, 'Many a nasi belauk breakfast' (C26), 'the problem' (C103) 'the kain lepas' (C121) were counted as social or cultural elements. As such, all the social cultural elements as participants were classified into the same category. Correspondingly, four groups of participants were identified and defined in the analysis by the Participants heading the Thematic Choices of the text.

The findings that were construed as Malaysian Malay women's identity in this study was restricted to the understanding of oneself, as a Malaysian Malay woman, in the environment socially or culturally around her. The conceptual understanding of this identity as Malaysian Malay women may be interpreted in various ways, but in this study, the interpretation was viewed from a Systemic Functional perspective, more specifically, the Marked and Unmarked Thematic choice that construed experiential meanings in Text 1, *Mariah*. Taking a closer look into *Mariah* as a representation of Malay women and an exploration of each Participant and the Processes carried by each clause in the text for the understanding of men and women in Text 1, *Mariah*, the findings tabulated in Table 4.4 surprisingly revealed who Mariah is.

Table 4.4

Text 1- Marked/Unmarked Topical Themes: Types of Participants and Domination

No	Marked /Unmarked Topical	No of Clauses	Percentage of
	Themes		Occurrences
1.	The Imam	163	32.9
2.	Cik Yam	81	16.7
3.	Mariah	70	14.1
4.	Social-cultural elements	182	36.3
	Total of clauses investigated	496	100

Viewing Text 1 form Table 4.4, the short story entitled *Mariah*, from a Systemic Functional perspective, the protagonist, "Mariah" can be assumed to be ranked as the most important Participant in the Thematic Choice taking up more Material Process as Actor in the System of Transitivity of the story. She could have been playing the roles as dynamic Actors, Carriers, Sensers or Behavers of the Processes in the text, occupying more clauses as the points of departure. However, the findings of this study were contrary to what should have been expected. From the domination of Topical Themes

in *Mariah*, the findings suggested that *Mariah* was not really a story that focussed on a woman called Mariah but a man, to be more precisely, a pious man, the Imam, a highly respected religious leader in the Malay community.

This finding implies the fact that Malay women, although given the name in leading the cause, and embodied with all the outstanding attributes in person (Mariah is beautiful and financially independent), signified nothing actually in the society she resided. Her voice was not heard and her personality was not clearly illustrated throughout the story. Mariah was entitled to be the most prominent protagonist of the story; however, her role was sabotaged by the Imam and the social cultural representation of the community. Malay women's portrayal through Mariah is rather pale and mysterious. A further investigation of whom Maria is will be presented in Section 4.1.5.

#### 4.2.2 The Representation of the Imam

Although the Imam's name was not revealed throughout the whole story, it took up 32.9% of the clauses and actively performed most of the doings as the Participants of the Processes; apparently, the Imam was leading the flow of the Thematic Choice in the clauses of Text 1. Despite having 181 clauses as the largest group of themes contributed by the group of social-cultural or natural elements in the story text, the Imam can still be considered as the main protagonist who dominated the most of the Thematic Choice in the thematic progression. This is because the group of social-cultural and natural elements were shared by a few parties, namely, men and women in the kampong, the Sheik, the Sheik's daughter, and the setting of the kampong scenes.

While investigating the Participant as the Imam and the Processes he is embodied with, one can conclude that the Imam is the prominent action doer, attribute carrier or token of value and mentalist sensing in the story. This specification is shown in Table 4.5.

Table 4.5

Text 1 - The Imam as the Participants of the Thematic Choice

No	Types of Participant	Types of	No of	Occurrences
		Process	Clauses	in %
1.	Actor/Goal	Material	74	45.4
2.	Carrier/Attribute; Token/Value	Relational	33	20.2
3.	Senser	Mental	31	19.0
4.	Sayer	Verbal	18	11.0
5.	Behaver	Behavioral	6	3.7
6.	Existent	Existential	1	0.6
	TOTAL		163	99.9

The experiential elements in the four major groups of Participant + Process possessed by the Imam, such as Actors in the Material processes (45.5%), Carriers or Tokens in the Relational processes (20.2%), Sensers in the Mental processes (19%) and Sayers in the Verbal processes have animatedly portrayed the Imam who performs most of the doing, carrying, sensing and saying. The processes are distributed into overt and physical actions (Material processes), conscious processing of cognition or affection (Mental Process), relational stating of attributes and values (Relational Process), and verbal expressions that reflect mental process (Verbal Process). The meanings realized through these various processes again served to underscore the Imam as the integral part of the story. The main events include how he meets his first love, a lady resembling Mariah, how his love of the first lady shutters, how he meets Mariah, how he seeks

approval of his first wife, Cik Yam and how he realizes his desire, taking Mariah into his house. Consequently, the readers know more about the Imam rather than Mariah or Cik Yam. The examples of clauses depicting the Imam are collected and shown in Table 4.6.

Table 4.6

Text 1-Examples of Participants and Processes led by the Imam

C67	The Imam <i>liked</i> his nasi belauk	Behaver + Behavioral
C178	The Imam went about his usual business	Actor + Material
C183	The Imam <i>looked at</i> his wife with obvious pride.	Senser + Mental
C223	The Imam <i>begged</i> to be excused,	Sayer + Verbal
C254	He ran trembling to his hut,	Actor + Material
C318	<u>sighed</u> the Imam	Sayer + Verbal
C334	After the afternoon prayer the Imam stayed long in prostration.	Actor + Material
C397	He <i>knelt</i> by the bed	Actor + Material
C402	The Imam kissed Cik Yam's knees	Actor + Material
C524	[he] took Mariah's hand in his own	Actor + Material

The investigation on the Imam was detailed from the domination of Thematic Choices, the roles of Participants and Process types he inherited because in Text 1, neither Mariah nor Cik Yam occupied a prominent portion of the clauses in Text 1. Instead, it was the Imam, the religious leader of the kampong and the social, cultural and natural elements which overwhelmingly controlled the flow of the Thematic Choices in Text 1. When the knowledge of Malay women was little known from the clauses interwoven in Text 1, a juxtaposition from their male counterparts could be derived through an inductive manner. In other words, the domination of the Imam in the analysis of Stage 2 and the roles of Participants and the Process types that the Imam possessed in Stage

3 analysis has imparted another perspective to interpret the identity of Malay women in the text.

## **4.2.3** The Representation of the Community

The Participant dominating the first place is the group of themes comprised of other social-cultural or natural elements, such as 'the main trunk road' (C2), 'Cik Gu Nab' (C93), 'They (women)' (C214), 'Pattani' (C290), 'Cik Gu Leh' (C392), so on and so forth. They are the clauses describing a scene shown in Table 4.7.

Text1- Examples of Social Cultural Elements as Themes

**Table 4.7** 

C1	It was seven in the morning on a typical day in the small village town of Molo.
C2	The main trunk road from Pasir Puteh to Kota Bharu was already choked with
	the bicycle traffic from school children
C3	[The school children were] winding their way to the three main schools in the village.
C4	The hub of activity was now the market square where men congregate to have breakfast.

In a short story, it is inevitable to have groups of clauses sketching the scene, the 'Where', 'When', and 'What'. Most of them are Relational or Existential processes, presenting a stative mood; here, the clauses "It was...", "The main trunk road from Pasir Puteh to Kota Bharu was...", and "the hub of activity was..." The Relational Process 'was' was used to frame the scene with the imagery construing the experiences and lifestyles of a typical Malay kampong inhabitants in Kelantan, as the Carriers of the setting of the story. Another category in this group of themes comprised of the kampong folks with or without names, the religious leader (The Sheikh), the Imam's

parents, and their God. Cik Gu Nab was heard a few times as Sayers of the clauses (C111, C131, C139, C159); however, she was insignificantly playing the role of a gossiper. The community in Text 1 was framed within the Relational processes which is the reminiscence of a Malay kampong in a remote time.

There are also examples of those kampong folks, for example, involving Cik Gu Nab's conversation with Cik Yam and some of the other kampong women, the Sheikh and other men in the kampong. The collection is shown in Table 4.8.

Text 1- Examples of Kampong Folks as Themes

**Table 4.8** 

C90	Cik Gu Nab made a small talk for a while
C220	but Cik Gu Leh was most persistent.
C233	His father [the Imam's father] had spent a few years there himself.
C296	The Sheikh begged him to stay to look after his mosque for him,
C365	But the men in the <i>kedai merpati</i> attributed that to extreme modesty.

These are the Actors, Carriers, and Sayers for some of the Marked/Unmarked Topical themes that fabricated the social forces in the story. They can be insignificant individually but powerful when they come together in forming the social context of the text.

#### 4.2.4 The Representation of women in Text 1 -- Mariah

When the Hallidayan theory deals with Textual Metafunction, Theme/Rheme occurs almost always a matter of choice of the speaker/writer as mentioned in Section 4.1. The occurrence of Mariah as Topical Themes in the text is the least among other individual

Participants (14.1%), the Imam (33.7%) and the Imam's wife, Cik Yam (16.7%). The role played by Mariah is overwhelmed by all other individual Participants in the clauses. The Imam is leading the flow of the story, accumulating 167 Topical Themes in the text.

Although the short story is entitled as *Mariah*, when closely examining the 69 clauses inherited by Mariah as the Topical Theme, the researcher found that the distribution of Processes realized as Material Processes in those clauses is insignificant. This is because the Processes that Mariah served as Actors, representing the doer of the overt action in the story, was quite trivial and irrelevant to the story named '*Mariah*'. Some of the examples collected are shown below in Table 4.9.

Table 4.9

Text 1- Examples of Mariah as Actors in the Themes

C19	Every morning at seven sharp she would walk past the market entrance into the
	village square
C42	Mariah would easily <b>pass</b> for a beauty in her late twenties
C45	and [Mariah] moved gracefully.
C47	No, [she did] not [move] gracefully
C48	but [she <b>moved</b> ] sensuously.
C357	She <b>treated</b> the Imam with reverence and courtesy, befitting his station and stature.
C358	She <b>served</b> him the choicest morsels on her best cutlery.
C476	She <b>continued</b> , serenely unaffected, with her nasi <i>belauk</i> selling until the very day
	she married the Imam.
C498	Mariah's wedding <b>surpassed</b> even her own expectations.
C500	She <b>took</b> out her savings from nasi <i>belauk</i> selling

One would not know much about Mariah as the Processes in the SFL view taken by the Participants of these Topical Themes seem rather insignificant. Other clauses taking Mariah as Topical Themes did not reveal much too. Another prominent type of Processes found in this study was Relational-Attribute Processes where Mariah as the Carrier in the Topical Theme was followed by a linking verb to be, was or had been, a description about her attributes and status. Next to this category was Mariah as Senser in the Mental Process type, in these clauses she felt, found, realized, noticed and so forth. Another type of Processes found in her was Verbal Process, with only four clauses in which she replied, sighed (two times), and said 'yes', ended the four clauses in a very precise way, without much verbiage. Relational and Mental Processes are rather passive and non-dynamic in nature.

Mariah, as analysed from the Topical themes in the 38 clauses (55.1%), showed that the portrait of a Malay woman was rather passive, vague and motionless. She can be seen, felt, but not much heard (sighs and says yes), or smelt, and was given a position as the main character viewing from the title of the short story, but ironically her personality was not explicitly disclosed to the readers. She seemed to be admired or envied by many since she was beautiful, independent, capable, attractive, sexy and rich; she possessed attributes which could be taken as a new and modern model of women in the kampong setting. However, the grammatical structure of the text interpreted it in the opposite way. She was not leading the largest portion in the Topical Theme domination; instead, the least when compared to her other two counterparts, the Imam and Cik Yam. She is not the main Actor in the story itself but merely a Carrier of certain attributes, a Senser for the mental activities, and her voices were not much heard too even when she sighed twice which was rendered meaningless. From a Systemic

Functional perspective, Mariah, a representation of Malay women in general, became trivial and unimportant in the male dominant world from a religious perspective. She is unequally treated even though she is pretty and independent financially. She chose to compromise herself to a higher ranking of social status by marrying the Imam, the Imam and the Imam's wife being the tower of virtue in their community.

Another female protagonist worth studying in 'Mariah', is the Imam's wife, Cik Yam. She has two titles in the story. At times, she was presented as the Imam's wife and a few times 'Cik Yam'. In Text 1 she was depicted as the perfect model of a Muslim wife in the kampong. Similar to Mariah, the domination of Thematic Choice for these two women was quite compatible. A compare-contrast of domination of Thematic Choice and types of processes are listed in the following Table 4.10.

Table 4.10

Text 1- A Comparison of Themes between Cik Yam and Mariah

No	Types of Process	Material	Relational	Mental	Verbal	Behavioral	
1.	Cik Yam	28	18	14	15	6	81
	Frequency of Occurrences	34.6%	22.2%	17.3%	18.5%	7.4%	100%
2.	Mariah	27	24	14	4	0	69
	Frequency of Occurrences	39.1%	34.8%	20.3%	5.8%	0%	100%

Both of these women did not actively pose Material Processes in Text 1, however, the analysis showed that they shared quite a similar amount of domination with 28 clauses and 27 clauses, performing the doing in Text 1. Taking in a closer examination, the findings revealed that Mariah was more passive and unanimated. Her voice was seldom

heard (four times or 5.8% in the overall processes) and her likes and dislikes were completely unknown since she scored a Zero in the Behavioral Processes. However, Cik Yam did not perform better either. The Material Processes Cik Yam possessed were insignificant because in the end she could not make any changes to her marriage. For example, the next morning, "Cik Yam said 'Yes' to the Imam's request,". After she had granted the Imam the permission to take a second wife by marrying Mariah, she had become "a model of virtue" (C462), "a paragon of virtue" (468), "a model wife" (492). The "despair and humiliation" (C 435), and the piteous weeping (C 438) were permanently padlocked in her and her husband's first bedroom. Relational Processes of these clauses has nailed Cik Yam into a stative condition, imprisoning a perfect Muslim woman in a remote kampong and era.

#### 4.2.5 How is *Mariah* represented in the Malay Society?

This section provides the findings pertaining to the analysis on the representation of women by comparing and contrasting them to the male characters, other women characters, and the social setting of the story. There are three main groups of Participants as Topical Themes in *Mariah*. The Imam (34.8%) and other kampong male and female folks who represented the Malay community, the society which seemed to be neutral as the social setting in between the male and the female groups, and the Malay female group represented by Cik Yam and her fans, the Kampong women such as Cik Gu Nab.

As mentioned in Section 4.1.2 (p.103), Mariah is actually a story about a Malay imam in a Malay society. The Imam is the real protagonist represented by the Topical Themes

either Marked or Unmarked and also his possessions as shown in the clauses starting with "the Imam's wife" (C65, C66, C72, C83, & C105) "his wife" (C63, C68), the Imam's misery (C244), "his heart" (C343, C376) and "his dream" (C527). In the early days, the "object" of his ardour is the Sheikh's daughter, his heart "ached with the pent-up longing" (C376) and he "vowed" (C263) to himself, "I shall make her mine" (C261). Fifteen years later, his sexy obsession was turned into Mariah, a beautiful widow in his village. Thus, at the end of the story, his dream is realized. No one in the kampong knows how Mariah resembled the Imam's long lost love, the Sheikh's daughter and how he could obtain Cik Yam's approval. The kampong folks "wondered what Quranic ayats the Imam blew on Cik Yam's face to subdue her", but they all agreed that Cik Yam is "a model of virtue" in this point, a perfect Muslim woman who could respond so generously and gracefully upon her husband's request for a second wife, sharing her love with Mariah, "a blousy woman who is untutored in religion and untutored in everything".

The Imam as the religious leader in the kampong, was already married to "a perfect model of wife", Cik Yam. Taking a second wife seemed not reasonable for him but it was acceptable in accordance to Islamic virtues, especially in marrying a widowed Mariah. Thus, as shown in the Topical Theme, he "believed it was fated, a part of a grand design by God to heal his heart" while he justifies "Didn't the Prophet himself say that three things are pleasing to him, prayers, women and perfume?" The struggle was then released and he "felt resolved to do what he had to do". A man in action, the Imam was the real Actor in the story, doer of all actions in the Topical Theme dominated on his behalf.

Cik Yam, a perfect wife and a model of virtue, was defeated when her husband asked for a second wife, where she felt that "Despair and humiliation all came". Her fans, the village teacher, Cik Gu Nab and others gossiped like most women did. They reported to Cik Yam about the Imam's visit to Mariah and wondered how Cik Yam "could have easily succumbed to the whole arrangement". Cik Yam and her group of fans who made noise and shared opinions made no impact to the issue, though they were positioned legally to ignite the quarrel between men and women in the story.

Mariah is a unique representation of what? when compared to the representation of the three other characters, the Imam, Cik Yam, the kampong folks in *Mariah*. She was detached from the others, selling her nasi *berlauk* in the open air, seen by everyone in the kampong, gossiped by other women, becoming an object of affection of the Imam. Under the guise of Godliness, she was sanctified by the Imam, as deserving a ranking equal to prayers, "*Didn't the Prophet himself say that three things are pleasing to him, prayers, women and perfume?*" The yes/no interrogative mood underscores it.

#### 4.2.6 Mariah from the Author's View

Textual Metafunction plays the role as the enabler of two metafunctions, the Experiential and the Interpersonal to construe messages of the text rather than to simply provide information about it. According to Halliday (1994, 2004), although Given/New and Theme/Rheme are closely related, they are not the same as "The Theme is what I, the speaker chooses to take as my point of departure. The Given is what you, the listener, already know about or have accessible to you (Halliday and Matthiessen, 2004, p.93).

Textual Metafunction, therefore, investigates how a text is organized and the organization of text is explicitly in the speakers' or the writers' intention. It is not arbitrary or a random occurrence.

The short story entitled *Mariah* could be renamed as "The Love Affair of a Malay Imam" or "The Imam's Long-Lost Love", or "A Perfect Wife's Woe" in a more serious manner. However, in a light-hearted way, Che Husna ended the story merrily, where no one was annoyed, neither the womenfolk nor the menfolk. The Given/New or Theme/Rheme flowed within the constraints of the context from the different personalities that existed in a Malay community in the rural kampong setting with shared values of the Muslim world. Che Husna's witty humour was further revealed from those minor clauses, "Oh Mariah..." interrogative and exclamative, "Oh Mariah, why do you have to look like her from your toes right up to your eyebrows!" mocking the pious man, the Imam's uncontrollable desires, a religious leader who seemingly defended the values of modesty in the Muslim world but failed to tame his own lust. Indeed, Che Husna, like the usual vibes she created in another short story, Of Bunga Telur and Bally Shoes, poked with fun at the male characters once again.

#### 4.3. Mapping the Distribution of Thematic Choice in And She Became an Angel

Similar to the procedures taken in the analysis of 'Mariah', all clauses, including embedded clauses were classified accordingly. Text 2 'And She Became an Angel' has 511 clauses identified in this study, including 35 minor clauses. As can be seen from Table 4.11, there are 14 types of Thematic Choices sorted into Marked Topical, Interpersonal + Marked Topical, Unmarked Topical Theme, Textual + Unmarked

Topical Theme, Interpersonal + Unmarked Topical Theme and lastly fronted β clauses in the decorative mood. No multiple themes were spotted throughout Text 2. There were themes in Wh-Interrogative and Yes/No Interrogative moods, themes in the Exclusive Imperative and Exclamative Imperative. However, no themes in Inclusive Imperative mood were found. The study also found that types of Thematic Choice also reflected the clausal structure of Text 2. It was simpler compared to Text 1, 'Mariah' which comprised of 21 types of Thematic Choice. To begin the exploration of Text 1, 'And She Became an Angel'. The specifications of thematic choices from the clauses is presented in Table 4.11.

Table 4.11

Text 2 - Specifications of Thematic Choice in 'And She Became an Angel'

No	Theme in Decorative	No of clauses	Frequency of occurrences (%)
1.	Unmarked Topical Theme	282	59.2
2.	Textual + Unmarked Topical	130	27.3
3.	Interpersonal + Unmarked Topical	3	0.6
4.	Marked Topical Theme	22	4.6
5.	Interpersonal + Marked	1	0.2
	Topical		
6.	Fronted β Clause	2	0.4
	Theme in Wh Interrogative		
7.	Unmarked Topical	15	3.2
8.	Textual + Unmarked Topical	5	1.1
9.	Interpersonal + Unmarked Topical	1	0.2
	Theme in Yes/No Interrogative		
10.	Unmarked Topical	9	1.9
11.	Textual + Unmarked Topical	2	0.4
	Theme in Exclusive		
12	Imperative  Imperative  Tarrical	2	0.4
12.	Unmarked Topical	2	0.4
13.	Unmarked Textual	1	0.2
	Theme in Exclamative		

14.	Unmarked Topical	1	0.2
	Total Themes	476	99.7%
15.	Minor Clauses	35	
	Total Clauses	511	

A total of 511 clauses were identified in Text 2 'And She Became an Angel'. The result showed that Topical Themes either Marked or Unmarked were very experiential and they had a dominant status in representing human actions and behaviours. All the Marked/Unmarked Topical Themes were either accompanied by Textual or Interpersonal elements in the thematic position that had been investigated and categorised. From the analysis, it was found that Unmarked Topical Themes were the most prominent themes found in the short story and the findings were parallel with the past research claiming that Unmarked Topical Themes dominated the most distribution of clauses in any types of text (Katrini, 2015 as cited in Erni, 2017; Arunsirot, 2013; Ma, 2003). Unmarked Topical Themes precede the subject matter of the clauses and enable the experiential interpretation of the text to be revealed (Matthiessen, 1995, p.20). The second prominent type of thematic choices are Textual + Unmarked Topical Themes. Textual themes enable a systemic flow from a clause to another and create cohesion and continuity in the text. In addition, the textual elements in the clause leading the clause without undermining the Unmarked Topical Themes in the message transposed.

The analysis revealed that most of the Marked Topical themes in Text 2 provided temporal or spatial information. The examples are shown in the following Table 4.12.

Table 4.12

Text 2- Examples of Marked Topical Themes

C1	One day, Mandak
C33	The once [they were] white feathers
C75	The next morning, Ipeng

C105	At dinner she complains
C156	One night, while the moon
C394	In the village, a fire starts.

Out of the 510 clauses, there was only one Interpersonal Marked Themes found and no Textual Marked Themes appeared in Text 2, which was:

C5: exactly like those in foreign books of devotion she had seen ...

Explicitly, the Marked Topical themes realizing the experiential meanings was proven again when the markedness of themes provided experiential information of the themes. The enabling role of Textual metafunction in transforming information into messages was enhanced by the temporal and spatial constituents of the clause. There were also circumstantial elements in the Marked themes providing extending functions in clauses like C10 "one she cannot ignore", C33 "The once [they were] white feather", and C138 "Something they have been doing for years". When examining all the Marked Topical themes in Text 2, 'And She Became an Angel', the pattern of Marked Topical themes was consistent in positing temporal, spatial, manner or accompaniment of the Topical themes. Out of the 22 Marked themes, there was only one foregrounded by an interpersonal element which showed the narrator's personal judgement with an adverbial adjunct 'exactly' in C5.

As can be seen from Table 4.11, most of the messages in the clauses were realized as Unmarked Topical themes, with 282 clauses or 59.2% accounting for Text 2 'And She Became an Angel', standing out from all other types of thematic choices in Text 2. The distribution of themes was arranged in the order like the following: Textual + Unmarked Topical, 130 clauses (27.3%); Marked Topical, 22 clauses (4.6%), Unmarked Topical

in Wh-Interrogative mood, 15 clauses (3.2%) and types of themes that occupied approximately 1% or with only several clauses in the whole Text 2.

On the whole, the clausal structure was presented with a regular pattern of Theme and Rheme. Clauses in the Decorative, Interrogative or Imperative moods were either formed in coordinating or subordinating clause structures beside the common main ones. Minor clauses were performed by interjections, calling of names, and answering 'yes' or 'no'. Unlike a wide variety of clausal structures found in Text 1'*Mariah*' that scaffolded a busy and dynamic community, the clausal patterns of Text 2 '*And She Became an Angel*' followed a more conventional one. Nevertheless, the pattern simultaneously foreshadowed the monotonous lifestyle found in a faraway Malay kampong in Terengganu, an insignificant place with ordinary kampong folks.

### 4.3.1 Ranking of Protagonists by the Distribution of Clauses

According to the Hallidayan framework, it is through the transitivity system that our experiences of the world are construed (Thompson, 2004). The representation of meanings is further interpreted through a close investigation of the participants and the experiential elements or the subsequent processes of the participants as actors, carriers, sensers, behavers or sayers. Combining the investigation of thematic choice and the experiential elements along with the thematic choices, this study enhances the understanding of the social-cultural level in the two texts from a double dimensional investigation.

In order to summarize the distribution of thematic choice in Text 2, the participants of the thematic choices were then categorized into three main groups from the stories: first, the female, then the male protagonist, and lastly the social-cultural elements such as e the kampong folks (C507 & C508), the surroundings such as 'the moon' (C156) and 'the roof' (C461) in Text 2. The examples taken from the analysis are shown in Table 4. 13.

Table 4.13

Text 2 - Groups of Participants as taken from 'And She Became an Angel'

		Groups o	f Participa	nts	
No.	as as Topical Themes Themes	as	as	Social, Cultural & Natural Elements as Topical Themes	
		e.g. Kampong folk	e.g. Feathers, angel		
C461	The roof gives way under Mandak.				1
C462	and she falls through the red and black abyss.	1			
C463	Ipeng screams.		1		
C464	His shouts wake the villagers from their stupor.		1		
C465	They, too, scream				1
C466	and [they] rush towards the store to save Mandak				1

In keeping with Halliday's notion, a text can never be separated from the context when it comes to the interpretation of meanings (Banks, 2002, p.3). Within the suggested framework, the ranking of the writers' concern from the dominant distribution of participants in thematic choice is another measure of meaning potential as a text is not merely a presentation of strings or clusters of words (Ibid, p.3). The second stage of

analysis followed the classification like this: clauses with Mandak as Marked/Unmarked themes were sorted into one group while Ipeng, her husband, took up clauses with Ipeng and also clauses including Ipeng and Mandak as Marked/Unmarked Topical themes. Others were grouped into social-cultural and natural elements as themes. Thus, the constitution of the Malay community depicted in Text 2 was simplified into three categories: Mandak, Ipeng, and the social-cultural/natural elements. The findings that showed a certain pattern of representation of meanings are shown in Table 4.14.

Text 2 - Marked/Unmarked Topical Themes: Types of Participants and Domination

**Table 4.14** 

No		No of Clauses	Percentage of Occurrences
1.	Mandak as Marked/Unmarked Topical Themes	193	40.9%
2.	Ipeng as Marked/Unmarked Topical Themes	154	33.5%
3.	Social-cultural & natural elements as Marked/ Unmarked Topical Themes	129	25.5%
	Total of clauses investigated	476	99.9%

In Text 2 'And She Became an Angel', it was obvious that Mandak dominated the largest distribution of Marked/Unmarked Topical Themes, with 193 clauses upon 476 investigated or 40.9% of Text 2 was about Mandak and her processes as acting, sensing, being and uttering. On the other hand, Ipeng, her husband, with 154 clauses or 33.5% of the clauses, also emerged as a seemingly important character Text 2.

The Experiential metafunction construes the meanings of text from the human's experiences, behaviours and relationships (Tan & Teh, 2014). Generally, within the metafunction, the realization of meanings was investigated through types of participants, process, markedness of themes presented with the temporal or spatial elements in the themes. Therefore, the interpretation of Text 2 could be sorted from the domination of the participants and also from the types of processes that were followed by the participants.

# 4.3.2 The Representation of Mandak in Text 2

Viewing the selected short stories from a Systemic Functional perspective, Marked and Unmarked Topical themes can be very experience-based as Marked Topical Themes are mostly representations of environmental features such as time, locations and manner, while Unmarked Topical Themes are made up by the participants of the stories as actors, carriers, sensers, behavers or sayers. Similarly, identity can be construed through the understanding of oneself and the environment around (Correa, 1983). To enhance the interpretation of women's identity in 'And She Became an Angel', the process types and the experiential elements that disclose the identity of these participants are presented in Table 4.15.

**Table 4.15**Text 2-Types of Processes dominated by Groups of Protagonists

± Groups of protagonists				
Types of Process (meaning)	Mandak		Ipeng	
	N. o. C.	%	N. o. C.	%
Material (Actor; Goal)	96	49.7	78	50.6
Mental (Senser, Phenomenon)	28	14.5	34	22.1
Relational (Carrier, Attribute; Token, Value)	32	16.6	10	6.5
Behavioral (Behaver, Behavior)	14	7.3	15	9.7
Verbal (Sayer, Verbiage)	23	11.9	16	10.4
Existential (Existent)	0	0	1	0.7
Total of processes	193	100	154	100

According to Eggins (2004), transitivity patterns represent the experiential world, encoding "meanings about the world, about experiences, about how we perceive and experience what is going on" (Ibid, p.249). The system construes the inner and outer experiences into different types of processes and participants. As shown in Table 4.15, when Mandak carried a material process, she was labelled as an Actor (49.7%), while she experienced a mental process (14.5%); she took up the role as a Senser in that particular moment of the story. Table 4.16 shows that Mandak experienced different types of Mental Processes as a Senser and her inner thoughts were illustrated from almost all angles when she "does not think", "looks", "feels", "want", "peeks", "sees", "hears", and "spies".

Text 2 - Examples of Mandak's Mental Processes as a Senser

**Table 4.16** 

C4	She does not <b>think</b> very deeply about anything either,
C65	She <b>looks</b> at her bewildered husband,
C139	She <b>feels</b> time is short
C169	"I simply want to become an angel."

C269	And [she] <b>peeks</b> through it.
C270	She sees her friend weeping
C271	And [she] hears her pleas to God
C288	One time, she <b>spied</b> on the home of the Imam and his family.

The role as Participants of Mandak demonstrated the quality of her personality in the story and manifested her identity as a Malay woman. As can be traced from Table 4.15, the characters of Mandak and Ipeng demonstrated different patterns of distribution in terms of types of processes. As for Mandak, the sequence of distribution followed like this: Material Process (49.7%), Relational (16.6%), Mental (14.5%), Verbal (11.9%), and lastly Behavioral (7.3%). The portrayal of Mandak was well proportioned and evenly illustrated from different angles. Readers could see her, feel her, hear her and anticipate in her doings. She was not only known by the actions taken once she determined to become an angel overtly, but also the Relational processes which showed the quality she carried, and the Mental and Verbal processes that were reflected insideout her determination to become an angel. From the domination in the ranking of group in Section 4.2.2 and the details of roles of Participants and Processes in Section 4.2.3, the portrayal of Malay women in a more colourful version was depicted through the Thematic Choices they entailed. Malay women could be seen, heard, felt and anticipated from different roles of Participants and Types of Processes the protagonist inherited. Relatively, the woman protagonist, Mandak, in Text 2 was more colourful and animated while Maria and Cik Yam in Text 1 were pale and vague in the portrayal of Malay women's identity.

### 4.3.3 Ipeng – The Head of the Family

Malay women's identity could be illustrated from the husband she had as a good husband while she made a good wife. The identity of Malay women could be realized from a close investigation of the husband in the story. Ipeng, the husband, remained as the male protagonist who had more essential processes that showed more dynamism portraying a more dominant role in an Islamic world as proven from a distribution of 50.6% over all the processes he stood for. The two main groups of processes followed by Ipeng the participant were Material processes and Mental processes. The processes were executed not only by performing actions but also by his mental and verbal processes presented in his monologues, what he sees, he hears and he thinks (22.1%) and through the dialogues he carries out with Mandak (10.4%). The Relational processes in Marked/Unmarked Topical themes he is leading were the least compared to Material, Mental, and Verbal processes. This also implies that readers would not know him much. His personality was unknown and the attributes he carried could have existed in a mysterious domain. The Mental and Verbal Processes he embodied have shown that he was more like a witness of the whole incident rather than the leader, the head of the family who could intervene his family crisis from a tragic ending.

A glimpse of the Mental and Verbal processes in Table 4.15 could well explain this. A closer investigation of the clauses was also instrumental in justifying who he was. Examples of the processes were collected in the following nuances: In C 40, "Ipeng, her husband of 37 years, **come**s home to a house", C48, "he **shuffles** towards the bedroom, C88, "he **goes** back to the bedroom", C194 "he [**has been**] **working** on a new surau". These processes show that Ipeng was an ordinary kampong inhabitant, just like

any other unknown figures in a Malay kampong. However, the actions he took once he knew about Mandak's night adventures pronounced him as the head of the family, a dominant Actor in Text 2 "And She Became an Angel". In C 340, "I am locking you up", C353 "he shoves her into the chicken coop", and C 357 "Until you stop being an angel", and C439-441 "Ipeng run, pushes and climbs his way to the roof to rescue his wife".

In the beginning, he performed gentle and soft acting, "shuffles", "goes", and "works". At times he "blinks" (C43, C55), "is reminded" (C50, C51), "sees" (C56, C246, C471, C494) "gapes" (C58, C210), "stared" (C74), "watches" (C75,) "cannot bear" (C91), "is mystified" (C92), "looks" (C106, C245, C470, C495), "muses" (C128), "belches" (C131), "thinks" (C132, C221, C234, C484, C488, C509), "realizes" (C159), peers through (C248), hears (C365, C406, C493), and "gasps" (C434). These Mental processes demonstrated Ipeng as a thinker rather than an action performer. Instead of being the head of the family who could take more Material processes powerfully intervening the happenings to his wife, Mandak, the Mental processes he was leading also showed that he was a witness but not an inter-mediator.

In Text 2, Ipeng the head of the family was relatively weak if he was compared to his wife, Mandak, an action taker. His response to the new thing that Mandak wanted to become a Western feathered angel was passive and destructive. He performed Material Processes to stop Mandak's plan by confining Mandak in a chicken coop. The male mentality was merely restricted to the old tradition that the mainstream society proposed. Therefore, the Malay woman, Mandak who embraced changes and was

ambitious for a transformation in her life had to give way to the old tradition, the Malay way of life perceptions.

## 4.3.4 Mandak - The Woman Transcending Tradition

Interestingly, in Text 2, Mandak was much more compatible than her male counterpart compared to the female protagonists in Text 1, *Mariah*. The Material processes she held was just slightly lesser than her counterpart, Ipeng. A closer examination of the processes she possessed would unfold her true identity and justify her as the heroine of the story, as an action taker with mind and might. Mandak is indeed a representation of Malay women who yearned for changes of life. Evidently, Mandak dominated most of the topical themes in Text 2 '*And She Became an Angel*'. She was the heroine in the village she is circumscribed in, a Malay society in the rural Terengganu. She sought for a transformation and free life in an obscure form. Mandak fought against life with routines and boredom from the beginning of the story as shown in the following excerpt:

"One day, Mandak <u>looks</u> up from the mashed chili, onions and garlic mix she <u>is pounding</u> in the old *batu lesong* that she <u>had inherited</u> from her mother, and [she] <u>decides</u> that she <u>wants</u> to be like in the movies on television she <u>watched</u> when she was young; exactly like those in foreign books of devotion she <u>had seen</u> when while [she <u>was</u>] attending primary school run by missionaries – all whiterobed, with white feathered wings [were] spreading serenely; that kind of angel.

Mandak <u>is not</u> a woman given to impulsive, life-changing decisions. She <u>does not think</u> very deeply about anything either, for how could she when she <u>has</u> a family and household to run, and chickens to care for? This <u>is</u> a new thought; one she cannot ignore. The thought <u>ignites</u> a very strange feeling somewhere deep in her chest. It <u>feels</u> warm, and [It] <u>keeps</u> growing until she <u>becomes</u> breathless."

(And she became an angel, p.37)

Mashing chili, onions and garlic mix had captivated Mandak's life, especially with an 'old *batu lesong* that she inherited from her mother', almost akin to an old and stone-

hard bondage passed down from her mother, another female in her past. The monotonous rhythm created when grounding the mixture makes her fed up with the cooking that she did every day (C18). She had done nothing but taking care of her husband in her entire married life" (p. 38). As a result, she was drowning into the daily house chores and suddenly an impulsive call from a remote time when she was in primary school tapped in. It was an impulsive thought of being a western angel with feathered wings she witnessed when she was very young. It was ridiculous and absurd to anyone in a Malay society, especially her husband Ipeng, who represented traditional family values and religion. Looking further on, she was nevertheless a true Actor of the clauses where she was given Material processes as shown in the examples in Table 4.17.

Table 4.17

Text 2 - Examples of Processes taken by Mandak

No	Clause No	Examples
1.	C15	She sits on the floor
2.	C28	She stops mashing
3.	C32	She <b>rips</b> the feathers
4	C119	and [she] <b>nibbles</b> the rayed meat.
5.	C137	She has also abandoned her monthly trips to
6.	C180	and [she] blows out the kerosene night-lamp.
7.	C259	she <b>ventures</b> only a few yards out of their compound.
8.	C283	On one night, she <b>climbs</b> to the top of a shed.
9.	C309	"I have been travelling."
10	C414	She <b>kicks</b> the weak wood of the <i>reban</i>

All these processes were a realisation of her dream, the "one thing in her life" (C26). The Material processes whereby she was realized as Actors were dynamic and vigorous

when they were enhanced with her other roles of Participants in the clauses where she took the role as carriers to the adjective adjuncts describing her "I am a pretty angel;" behavers "she sees..." "she hears..." or sayers "she blesses..." as verbiages. Definitely, Mandak was vividly depicted and colourfully painted as a heroine when looking into different types of Processes she preceded in. She is a real protagonist, a 3-Dimensional character who could be seen, heard and anticipated from all angles: the Material processes (49.7%) as Actors performing all the doings, Relational processes (16.6%) being Carriers for her attributes *She has been angry before* (C109), when she was younger (C144); Tokens suggesting Values of her being, "if she could be just one thing in her life..." (C26), "she is on mission" (141), and "I am a pretty angel" (C219); Sensers (14.5%) who can see, hear, feel and think in clauses like "she looks at her bewildered husband..." (C68), "she feels time is short" (C142), "I simply want to become an angel" (C172), and "she hears [her friend] plead to God ..." (C274).

In addition, Mandak was a protagonist who could be heard by the readers when she performed the role as Sayers in a number of clauses with approximately 11.9% of the overall processes. She "grunts" (C60), "sighs" (C63), "complains" (C105), "petulantly tells" (C113), "retorts" (C117), asks (C123, C347, C391), "wishes" (C143), "says" (C178, C232), "blesses" (C186), "nothing to say" (C222), "tell" (C311, C316), "lies" (C322), protest (C330, C331), "squeals" (C334), query (C339, C411), refuse (C341, C342, C343), command (C344), insist (C358), "shoos" (C383), "calls out" (C409), "cries" (C442), and exclaims (C 450, C459). With all these Verbal processes, Mandak is the heroine who did not quietly accept her fate but courageously fought against being anonymous in a remote Kampong from a quiet and simple life.

### 4.3.5 The Representation of the Kampong Folks in Text 2

According to Halliday, a text is a system of network of meaning making through different selection of language resources (Halliday & Matthiessen, 1994, 2004). Drawing on the basic Hallidayan notions (2004, 1994), the Theme-Rheme system presents "a resource for making meaning" which "resides in systemic patterns of choice" (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004, p.23). Through the selection of meaning making resources, the thematization of clauses in the text, the language and the process of making meanings is said to be greatly determined by the writer or the speaker who organizes the structure of the sentences and the utterances. Thus, a study of the context that the text resides is indispensable. Correspondingly, a study of the social-cultural and natural elements in the text can never be ignored. As mentioned in section 4.2.2, the Participants of Text 2 are classified into three categories, namely, Mandak, Ipeng, and the social-cultural and natural elements as Participants in the story text.

In Text 2 'And She Became an Angel', the kampong folks did not play an active role in the progression of thematic choice compared to Text 1, Mariah. When Ipeng sought consultation from the shaman, "but he [Ipeng] receives no direct answer" (C98) and the shaman huffed, "You're the husband, you should know" (C99, C100 & C101). The readers could only know them through Mandak's eyes and ears, for instance, "She [Mandak] sees her friend weeping" (C273), "and she hears her plead to God" (C274) "Her [friend's] husband has left the house" (C277). When the story comes to almost the end, in the scene of the fire, the kampong folks played in a team. No any kampong folks stood out as a particular individual like what Table 4. 18 presented below.

Table 4.18

Text 2 – Processes led by Kampong Folks

C426	At the village, men and women <b>form</b> a water chain
C427	some <b>throw</b> buckets of water at the burning store
C428	others <b>throw</b> sand to quench its fiery thirst
C432	On the top of the roof of the store, they <b>see</b> what looks like a large hen
C444	The crowd <b>stops</b> playing fireman
C445	and [the crowd] gape.
C446	They <b>are amazed</b> by the sight of Mandak in her feather.

Unlike the kampong folks in Text 1, *Mariah*, they were quieter and more distanced from the two protagonists. Mandak and Ipeng were the two characters dealing with the conflicts and struggles from the beginning to the end of the story. When even the shaman was given an opportunity to intervene in Mandak's peculiar behaviors, he refused to be involved in it (C98-C101). The society where Mandak and Ipeng dwelt in was framed in a remote and far-reaching rural area. The kampong folks' daily life only became vigorous when Mandak "ventures", "hunches", "using the trees for cover", "crouches under the house" during her nightly excursions, "peeking" through a hole and seeing her friend crying and pleading to God about her husband wanting to marry another woman.

On another occasion, she climbed up to the top of a shed and saw the Imam and his colleagues performing the midnight prayers at the mosque. On another night in her adventure, she spied the Imam and his wife making love. The kampong scenes were made alive only through Mandak's eyes and ears. That is, if tracing the processes and roles played as participants of the kampong folks, these people were framed into an inanimate status from the Material processes they were embodied with. However, they became animated only through Mandak's Mental processes. Mandak saw and heard and anticipated the boredom of kampong life where people were drowned into the routines

of life and became anonymous. Malay women who did not take actions like what Mandak did would possibly be suffocated because of the endless household chores and monotonous of daily pace.

## 4.3.6 The One Thing in Mandak's Life in Text 2

The one thing in life that Mandak wanted was to become a "all white-robed, with white feathered wings spreading serenely" (C5). It was the angel she "had seen when attending primary school run by missionaries" (C4). The angel that Mandak described can be grouped under the third category of Participants: social-cultural and natural elements as Participants in Text 2. In contrast to the **old** *batu lesong* inherited from her mother and the Muslim *malaikats* (C174), the **feathered-wing angel** could be described as the reflection of the life she desires, a mission originating from the Western cultural influence from her buried childhood, a **new thought** (C9) after garnishing garlics and onions using them for cooking every day. The desire grew until she became breathless (C13). To gather feathers for making the two wings, she "rips" her pillows (C32), "spry, chasing the hens and roosters in their compound" (C75), "There are already five naked chickens and one naked rooster (C76).

The feathers, the chickens, the rooster, the *malaikat* were a representation of social cultural elements as they helped projecting the existence of the community that Mandak dwelt in. For instance, the *malaikat* or the Western feathered angel could be taken as a symbol of the metaphysical longing that Mandak yearned for. All these social-cultural elements became significant when Mandak wanted to make a transformation of her life.

The journey of breaking through herself became lively from the Material and Mental processes that she carried and revealed her full determination in taking those actions.

Literally, Mandak was not oppressed because of her desire to become an angel; the kampong fire was just an incident which could have happened accidentally in any village at any time. Neither the kampong folks nor her husband was accused as the cause of the oppression. With a very nice husband and a community of kind kampong folks, the force of oppression was driven from a new thought buried during her childhood in the form of a Western angel in the devotional book she read in the missionary's school. The intensity pushing her to seek for transformation was prompted because of the boredom of routine house chores. After performing all the Material processes, being an Actor, she had transformed herself into an angel by sacrificing herself to save the kampong folks from the burning fire. The fire became a divine ritual of sacrifice which was performed with fire, smoke and audience. The kampong folks thus "gape" and "amazed" while worshipping her as an angel setting on the zealous flames.

Deprivation or oppression was disguised in Text 2, *And She Became an Angel*, as Ipeng, Mandak's husband was a good man from a humble background but "They have no children; they just never had any" (C22, C23). His mediocre nature as a carpenter in the kampong, a husband who cooked simple meals and gently questioned his wife's passion to become a western form of an angel but not an Islamic one, has never been recognized as a source of deprivation in a peaceful Malay kampong. Rather, he envied his wife's passion but kept reminding himself that all her strange behaviours were against the Malay customs. He said, "we are Malays" (C233). As a good and gentleman,

"To have a wife who wants to become an angel, is one thing. He could tolerate that as long as she confined her activities inside the home, but now she says she wants to go out. We are Malays, he thinks, such a thing would be unbecoming, not to mention syirik. How is he going to explain this to his friends and his family? How is he going to tell them that Mandak wants to fly" (C230- C236)?

A gentle and nice man's solution for his struggles, a Material process "He could lock her up" (C237), but he "has always prided himself on not being" (C238) that type of husband who allowed his wife to do what she wants. The struggles were resolved when one day "he peers through the open window to see her admiring her angel-self in the mirror" (C248). Deprivation pushed him wondering whether to let "his wife flap about all over the village and be mocked" (C243, C244). The mingling between the Material and Mental processes demonstrated the hidden feelings and the overt actions of the poor Ipeng. The impact from seeing his wife admiring her angel-self in the mirror could possibly be rooted from his jealousy towards his wife's determination and passion, "and [he] becomes jealous for her new passion" (C183).

A good man is always deprived. Ipeng was too good to follow with what being a Malay should be and dealt so comfortably with life as a carpenter, a husband, and a member of the community. The only challenge he faced was being unable to stop his wife's mission to become an angel. Prisoned himself within the cultural setting of the community he dwelt in, when Mandak ended her life in the fire, to a certain extent, the incident had released the husband, Ipeng from what people might see and say about his wife, Mandak. Subsequently, the story was ended with "he goes home" (C498), "He

sighs" (C501), "He picks it (a feather) up (C507)", "and [he] strokes its softness, then [he] lets it fall, and [he] goes home (C511-C513).

Mandak who performed herself vigorously for the one thing in her life could be ambitious and aggressive. However, she is not harmful. Like many of the Malay women in the society she dwelt in, she had sweated and toiled for the one thing in her life but never expected the society she was attached to support her pursue. Instead, many Malay women's efforts to actualise life-changing transformations sometimes would have been defeated by their mediocre family members and neighbours. The finding here is parallel with the findings that contended that Malay women characters in the MLE give way to family when there exist conflicts between the pursue of career, dreams and family (Muslim et. al, 2012).

# 4.4. Distribution Matters – Thematic Choices in Text 3 – A Subtle Degree of Restraint

Thematic Choice is an investigation on the points of departure or clause initial elements of clauses across the text. The Theme-Rheme structure or the Thematization of the text presents a systemic flow of information. Correspondingly, the point of departure in each clause also shows the prominent message highlighting the writer or the speaker's wishes consciously or unconsciously. Thus, a study of thematic choices of the clauses in the text is an intensive examination of the focal points of the message foregrounded by the writer, an investigation of the communicative strategy applied by the writer. In general, the current research is a study tracing the organization of the message and

information across the clauses as well as exploring the meaning of potentials in the experiential, logical and interpersonal realms of the selected text.

A total of 245 clauses were analysed for Text 3, *A Subtle Degree of Restraint*. As usual, the analysis followed the same procedure taken in Text1 and Text 2. Thus, minor clauses were not analysed. In Text 3, only 10 minor clauses were identified in the analysis but as Text 3 was shorter, the number of minor clauses were acceptable when compared by measuring the percentage of occurrences in Text 1 and Text 2. From the investigation of the three selected short stories, it is undeniable that Unmarked Topical Themes dominated the largest portion of Themes in any genre of text and here the selected short stories. Unmarked Topical Themes were experiential as the Participants of these themes were demonstrated as action doers, carriers, sensers, or sayers.

Correspondingly, in Text 3 'A Subtle Degree of Restraint', Unmarked Topical Themes have had the highest distribution dominating 162 clauses out of the 245 clauses or contributed to 66.1% of the total types of themes. It was followed by Textual + Topical Themes (28 clauses or 11.4%) and Marked Topical Themes (25 clauses or 10.2%). The patterns of the distribution of themes followed the usual style, Unmarked Topical Theme – Textual Unmarked Topical Theme – Marked Topical Themes – Interpersonal Unmarked Topical Themes and so on so forth. Altogether, there were 13 types of Themes classified. However, only three types of Themes were more prominent and significantly selected in the experiential interpretation of the story text. This is because other than the Marked/Unmarked Topical Themes and Textual Unmarked Topical Themes, those different types of Themes were scattered with the domination of less than 10 clauses and some even less than 1% upon the overall 245 clauses investigated.

Table 4.19 presents the specification of the analysis for Text 3 *A Subtle Degree of Restraint*. The table serves as a linguistic census of text, detailing types of thematic choice found in Text 3.

Table 4.19

Text 3 - Specification of Thematic Choice in 'A Subtle Degree of Restraint'

Theme in Decorative Mood	No of clauses	Frequency of occurrences		
Unmarked Topical Theme	162	66.1		
Textual + Unmarked Topical	28	11.4		
Interpersonal + Unmarked Topical	2	0.8		
Textual + Interpersonal + Unmarked	1	0.4		
Topical				
Marked Topical	25	10.2		
Textual + Marked Topical	3	1.2		
Fronted β Clause	1	0.4		
Textual + Fronted β Clause	1	0.4		
Theme in Wh Interrogatives				
Unmarked Topical	7	2.9		
Textual + Unmarked Topical	6	2.4		
Theme in Yes/No Interrogatives				
Unmarked Topical	7	2.9		
Textual + Unmarked Topical	1	0.4		
Theme in Exclusive Imperative				
Topical Unmarked	1	0.4		
Total Themes	245	99.9%		
Minor Clauses	10			
Total Clauses	255			

As usual, the Stage 1 analysis of Text 3 points out that Unmarked Topical themes stood out among all other types of themes. The Unmarked Topical Themes were dominated by the main protagonists who performed most of the doing or carried out the various Mental processes that presented the overt actions or inner stream of consciousness. On the other hand, the textual elements of Textual Marked/Unmarked Topical themes served as cohesive ties that connected clauses across the text in order to achieve coherences and cohesion of the text. They appeared simultaneously in the text with the

Topical Themes either marked or unmarked and in different Mood classes. The examples of Unmarked Topical Themes and Textual Unmarked Topical themes in Text 3, "A Subtle Degree of Restraint", are shown in Table 4.20.

**Table 4.20** 

Text 3: Examples of Clauses with Different Types of Thematic Choice

No.	Example of Clauses	Types of Themes
C96	"So, do you even want babies?	Textual + Unmarked Topical (Yes/No Interrogative)
C203	Then lifting her gaze, [she] said,	Textual + Marked Topical
C213	"But when – [did you marry]?	Textual + Unmarked Topical (WH Interrogative Mood)
C234	and [she] walked towards the restaurant's entrance.	Textual Unmarked Topical
C237	and [she] pushed with the palm of her hand.	Textual Unmarked Topical

Marked Topical Themes construe extra meanings of the clauses in terms of providing temporal, spatial or manner information of the Participants and the Processes. Instead of following the usual clausal structure S + V, the foregrounding of a clause sometimes could be unusual when the writer wishes to highlight atypical meaning of the message. Markedness of the theme is thus related to the conflation of Theme with other constituents in the Mood structure. That is, the usual conflation of Unmarked Theme goes with the usual clause structure in different mood class. For example, "The waiters were on their break" (C 231), the clause is in declarative mood and the Theme follows the usual pattern, S + V. However, when the conflation is of an atypical one, the clause may start with a circumstantial Adjunct. The instances collected are listed in Table 4.21.

Text 3: Examples of Marked Topical Themes

**Table 4.21** 

No.	Example of clauses	Types of Circumstantial Adjunct
C73	The only time she ate with her husband was at dinner	Cir Adjunct: Temporal
C89	Sometimes a hand [was] brushing her breast,	Cir Adjunct: Frequency
C135	<u>Inside</u> , I am thin.	Cir Adjunct: Location
C143	Almost twice the size of Elena, whose own limbs stayed neatly within the boundaries of her seat.	Cir Adjunct: Manner
C167	<u>Lips together</u> , she stretched her lower jaw,	Cir Adjunct: Manner

## 4.4.1 The Force of Restraint – A Betrayal of the Roles of Participant and Types of Processes

The concern of writers is usually revealed through the experiential elements of the clauses, first from the Participants, next the Processes in the analysis of Stage 3 through the examination of the System of Transitivity. The markedness of the themes complements the experiential interpretation of the Participants and Processes, contextualizing the text. Be it marked or unmarked, the thematic choices presented in various forms of the clauses, have enabled the Experiential and Interpersonal meanings to be construed into the messages from the dominating distribution of clauses. The exploration of the experiential components is bound to the types of themes in the nomination with a scanning of the characteristics of the participants and processes. The whole procedure in this study was categorized into four groups in Text 3, 'A Subtle Degree of Restraint', where the protagonists and the circumstantial elements of the

story were labelled according to the frequency of occurrences in the analysis. The examples are shown in Table 4.22.

Table 4.22

Text 3 - Groups of Participants in 'A Subtle Degree of Restraint'

		Groups o	Groups of Participants				
No.	Clauses	Elena as Topical Themes	Badaria has Topical Themes	Azman as Topical Themes	Social & Cultural Elements as Topical Themes		
					e.g. dining chairs, the vase, the unangi, the willow, babies, luck, etc.		
C233	Elena left the cash on the table.	1					
C234	and [she] walked towards the restaurant's entrance.	1					
C235	The florid, pinkish vessel loomed steadfast in her path.				1		
C236	She reached out	1					
C237	and [she] pushed it with the palm of her hand.	1					
C238	It rocked left,				1		
C239	[It rocked left] right,				1		

The findings of the analysis in Stage 2 are shown in Table 4.23.

**Table 4.23**Text 3: Marked/Unmarked Topical Themes: Types of Participants and domination

No		No of Clauses	Percentage of Occurrence
1.	Elena as Marked/Unmarked Topical Themes	86	35.1
2.	Badariah as Marked/Unmarked Topical Themes	57	23.3
3.	Azman as Marked/Unmarked Topical Themes	12	4.9
5.	Social-cultural & natural elements as Marked/Unmarked Topical Themes	90	36.7
	Total of clauses investigated	245	100.0%

Surprisingly, it was found that the most dominant protagonist in Text 3 'A Subtle Degree of Restraint' is neither Elena nor Badariah. Surprisingly, the social-cultural and natural elements that were a combination of the surroundings of the restaurant, like the decoration of the scenes or the incidences happened in the past, such as the slimming programme dominated the most in the distribution of topical themes. The ranking of the distribution subsequently followed by Elena, the protagonist or the heroine, who ironically played a passive role when it was further looked into from the role of Participants and Processes in the clauses that she is leading. Next to Elena, the third ranking of types of Participants and domination is attributed to Badariah, an action taker and vocal protagonist unlike Elena, who seemingly played a subtler role in the story.

## 4.4.2 Elena – A Representation of the Malay Women in the Cosmopolitan

The experiential metafunction adopted in the analysis was an attempt to investigate how the identity of the protagonists could be realized through the SFL analysis. The focus is drawn into the types of processes bound to the Participants. The processes determine the types of Participants the protagonist possess and the interpretation of the identity is then dived in, as shown in Table 4.24.

Text 3 - Types of Processes dominated by group of protagonists

**Table 4.24** 

Types of Process (meaning)		Group of protagonists					
	Ele	ena	Badariah Azm			nan	
	N.o.C.	%	N.o.C.	%	N.o.C.	%	
Material (Actor; Goal)	33	38.4	26	45.6	6	50	
Mental (Senser, Phenomenon)	21	24.4	5	8.9	1	8.3	
Relational (Carrier, Attribute; Token Value)	11	12.8	6	10.5	0	0	
Behavioral (Behaver, Behavior)	10	11.6	9	15.8	3	25	
Verbal (Sayer, Verbiage)	11	12.8	9	15.8	2	16.7	
Existential (Existent)	0	0	2	3.5	0	0	
	86	100	57	100	12	100	

Note. *N.o.C.* – *Number of Clauses* 

In *A Subtle Degree of Restraint*, it could be easily seen that Elena, being an elected main protagonist, involved more Mental Processes as Sensers in the story when compared to the normal pattern of Processes to her other counterparts in Text 1 and Text 2. Despite the normal trend occurring for most leading protagonists, Elena looked inactive by dominating 38.4% of the Material Processes that was merely 14% more than her mental processes (24.4%). She was presented as a quiet and reserved Malay woman in an international metropolis, confining herself to her own judgments towards the surroundings. The excerpt below is one of the chunks with clauses that show her inactiveness: "She saw it" (C1) and her eyes strayed to its bulbous presence (C7)

(C1) On entering the restaurant, she saw it. (C2) A large fuchsia orb that occupied the room with its gaudy hue, (C3) [The large fuchsia orb was] holding a generous spay of elegant brown willow twigs. (C4) The vase was probably imported from Vietnam, with a cracked lacquered surface intended to lend it an antique effect. (C5) All through lunch, her eyes strayed to its bulbous presence.

(A Subtle Degree of Restraint, p.1)

Elena, as the protagonist, occupied 38.4% of the material processes, but only 24.4% of her Mental Processes led to the surroundings and the past happenings which had been developed into the highest group of Participants of social-cultural and natural elements by 36.7% of the total themes, which were the interactions and judgements she made towards her high school girl friend, Badariah. The excerpt shown is just one of the instances. It describes her mind and eyes on the environment of the restaurant and the fancies of food. Her thought later flashing through the slimming programme she went through in order to secure a husband, the baby she was hungry for and the judgements upon Badariah's weight. Lastly a subtle protest after knowing Badariah's pregnancy by giving the vase a shove, making it tip and roll around the carpet floor before leaving the restaurant and walking to her car.

The clauses collected in Table 4.24 is a summary of the Mental and Behavioral Processes that Elena was leading. The pattern of thematization of these Mental and Behavioral Processes all pointed towards the external groups of Participants such as "the delicate, lithe backs of the dining chairs (C7), the demureness of the cream carpet (C8), the hunger of her body (C38, the hunger for a baby (C45 – C52), the Iron Chefs of human bodies (C55-C61) and so on so forth. "[her uncorsetted waist was] restrained by her throat that constricted against all manner of deliciousness" (C62) was how Elena imprisoned and restrained herself from her surroundings, the food and the marriage with "tak ada rezeki", no baby no luck no blessing. The Mental Processes underlined all these. Evidences are provided in Table 4.25.

Table 4.25.

Text 3 – Examples of the Mental Processes Led by Elena

C38	By now, two years into her marriage, Elena no longer noticed her own ravenous
	hunger.
C44	Fancy, she now knew, was a dangerous thing.
C50	She imagined they [babies] tasted like lamb, only sweeter.
C51	But the thought of subjecting herself once more to the assault of slimming centers
	was enough to keep her fancies at bay.
C67	She forgot the taste of real food,
C97	She was hesitating between the green and the white (mochi).
C110	She watched the waiter return with a fresh pot.
C138	Elena mentally calculated how much Badariah weighted.
C140	[Elena was] judging from the spillage of thighs over the edges of the delicate dining chair.
C144	She wanted to grab the chair from beneath Badariah,
C145	[she wanted to] forced her to stand up.
C167	Elena watched her friend chew,
C168	[she was] imagining the soft elasticity of the white ball in her own mouth,
C171	She wanted the last mochi.

C179	[her eyes were] staring at the now empty plate.
C182	Elena thought.
C205	All these years, Elena assumed Badariah didn't have a love life.
C209	Elena felt a hunger build,

Elena, an unhappy new hybrid of Malay woman in the cosmopolitan was indeed voiceless and motionless. She was restrained by the social protocol she learnt from her surroundings. To secure a husband, she needed to keep herself in shape, to show her social status, she puts on all the luxurious materials, drives a car, carries a handbag, and has a meal in a Japanese restaurant in a hotel. However, she was lonely and helpless. The only time she met her husband Azman was dinner time. The conversation between Azman and her was all about Azman's day time activities, such as the Chinese businessman's Rolex watch, the strike in front of the husband's office in a government department, or the issue of foreign workers that her husband handled. The modern Malay woman did not share excitement that her husband concerned, but "Sleep well, mother of my children-to-be" (C88, A Subtle Degree of Restraint, p.4) became a curse that was chanted onto her. She didn't express herself much in the interactions with her husband, and also with her girlfriend in the high school. She was always listening but distracted herself quietly with her own stream of consciousness. Barrenness is an unspeakable topic among Malay Muslim women. They were not condemned openly but the stress they experienced was seldom highlighted in the past research explained in section 2.2.4.

#### 4.4.3 Badariah – A True Actor

The findings presented in Table 4.23 shows that unlike Elena, Badariah was more vigorous with Material processes (45.6%), Verbal (15.8%), and Behavioral (15.8%) Processes that make up a modern and outspoken Malay woman. She was a 3-Dimensional protagonist, a heroine in action. She was presented in Material, Verbal and Behavioral processes (45.6% +15.8% + 15.8%). She was heard as Sayers, "So how come you still don't have babies?", "Are you going to eat that?", "So, do you even want babies?" (C94), "Sure, thanks. Food's good. Nice restaurant", (C101-C104), "What? The vase? I think it's lovely! Don't you like it?" (C116- C119) and "I'm pregnant" (C202). She was also seen as Behavers, for example, "Badariah frowned" (C114), "Badariah laughed (C128), her eyebrows raised (C129), "Badariah cackled (C149)". Lastly, she was performing as Actors, "Badariah reached across the table" (C34). "its neat, uneaten half [was] pried apart by Badariah's deftly held chopsticks" (C37), "Badariah wiped her generous lips" (C95), "Her trunk-like hand reached out for a mochi" (C96) "Lips together, she stretched her lower jaw" (C165), and "She rose" (C219), "[she was] tossing a clutch of ringgit on the table" (C220). The ranking of themes led by Badariah was in the Third place, lesser than the social cultural and natural elements as Themes and Elena as Themes. However, she was the one who performed most of the doings in the restaurant.

#### 4.4.4 Azman – A Haunting Shadow

Elena's husband was supposed to be classified into the social cultural elements as themes initially as he did not stand out as a leading Thematic Choice in Text 3. However, he deserved a closer analysis as he was one of the three husbands in the three selected short stories, a male representation that should not be ignored. The young husband in the short story appeared only in 12 clauses and some would say that he did not even exist at all in the short story. He was in Elena's stream of consciousness, and nobody knew who he really was except from Elena's contact. When Azman was introduced in Text 3, "Azman would never have given her a second glance if she looked like her old self –plump and soft..." (C34). This was why Elena needed to make efforts in going through the slimming programme of "Iron Chefs of human bodies" and why she started the journey making her "uncorsetted waist restrained by her throat" (C64). According to her, it was an inhumane behaviour for a husband, "If Azman noticed anything, he never **mentioned** the absence of food on her plate" (C73). The  $\alpha$ +  $\beta$  clause in C34 or the fronted  $\beta$  clause in C73 were all redirected to the main messages: "Azman would never have given" and "he never mentioned the absence of food on her plate". Although Azman only occupied 12 clauses in Text 3, he is the Senser and Sayer of the two clauses, and if he did not perform either the Mental process or the Verbal process, the rest of the messages would be in void. To learn who Azman is, the excerpt below evidences the final chunk of clauses that demonstrate Azman as the Participant:

"If Azman noticed anything, <u>he</u> **never mentioned** the absence of food on her plate. <u>Talk</u> **turned**, instead, [talk turned] to bigger things. How his secretary..., [how was] the Chinese contractor's..., [how was] the Government, [how was] the protestors ... and [how were] goat ... and how the Indonesians ... and [how the Indonesians...]." (C72-C83)

(A Subtle Degree of Restraint, p.4)

In the conversation or the interaction with Azman, Elena was not the focus of the talks, instead, they centred around Azman's life. The focus was not on Elena's plate but the talks about the secretary, the Government, the chicken, the Indonesians, all of which were seemingly "bigger" things in a male's life, but not the wife or the life partner.

Later, as they both stretched limbs around pillows and [they] claimed their own piece of the shared duvet, he kissed her goodnight, sometimes a hand brushing her breast, [he was] murmuring, "Sleep well, mother of my children-to-be." Then even though he slumbered with his face turned to her, he draped his arm around a soft, yielding pillow, [his] fingers digging gently into its pliant depths, [his fingers] pulling it closer to his chest. (C84-C93)

(A Subtle Degree of Restraint, p. 4)

Azman the husband was a shadow haunting Elena's life, the source of restraint. "Sleep well, mother of my children-to-be", with this Azman was indeed the Sayer who spoke his mind, casting a spell to control a hungry soul and a barren Malay woman, Elena.

A good husband made a good wife. By studying the husband Azman, readers also could know the wife, Elena. Even though the husband did not show much face in Text 3, Elena's nerves observing things around her hinted that as a lady of leisure in a cosmopolitan, life is lonely and helpless. The stress is unnamed. She seemed to have all the good things in life, but keeping her body shape by controlling her diets, pleasing her husband and wanting a baby had stolen the happiness she was embodied with as a modern Malay lady of leisure. She was helpless as she dared not express her true self in the two important people of her life, her husband and her good friend from high school.

#### 4.4.5 Globalization in a Restaurant

Unlike the previous two texts, Text 3 took place in a restaurant, a very much globalized restaurant in the cosmopolitan of Kuala Lumpur with approximately 36.7% of the clauses thematizing the setting of the story. The two protagonists were Malay women, and the restaurant was serving Japanese cuisine with *unagi, mochi*, and green tea by a foreign worker in a Malaysian setting. The restaurant was decorated with Vietnamese vases at the centre of the hall and the Chinese willows drooped in the Zen Garden, and lastly "Hitching her handbag strap higher on her slim shoulder, she walked towards her car." The handbag must be an Italian handbag and a German car representing the leisurely life of a Malay lady. The last clause in Text 3, provided that clause, text underscored it all.

In the era of rapid globalization that happened in the cosmopolitan of Malaysia, Malaysian Malay women would never lack of exposure to the high end materialized enjoyments; however, the fulfilment of all physical needs could never be replaced by the desires to be accepted and respected from her loved ones, her husband. The modern Malay women in an international cosmopolitan was suffering mentally but not materially. The materialised image in fact told the emptiness of self spiritually. Her good friend, Badariah, was pregnant without being legally married to her Muslim boyfriend and this became inequitable as Elena was carefully and tremblingly monitoring her possession of a good husband and a good life.

### 4.4.6 Deprivation

From a close investigation of thematic choices that dominated in *A Subtle Degree of Restraint*, ironically, neither Elena (35.1%) nor Badariah (22.3%) were ranked as the most dominating Participant in the story. Instead, the highest domination of thematic choices of the clauses were the cultural and natural elements or inanimate objects (36.7%) such as a vase, a *mochi, unagi*, carpeted floor, the willow, etc. Elena was a slim, modern young wife whereas Badariah was a hybrid of the new Malays, the latter who had come back from abroad with an open perspective about various topics and issues. They were two representations of the modern Malay in a globalized metropolis, where they could enjoy eating Japanese dessert while criticizing the design of a Vietnamese vase. Elena seemed to be independent in her thinking, while enjoying a luxurious lifestyle, depicted through her sentiments about the vase, the food and Badariah's body shape; amusingly, all these took up all of Elena's focus and dominated the Topical themes of the clauses that intertwined each other's as text.

Elena experiences a subtle degree of deprivation that was invisible from the scene. The invisible oppression in fact, was from within, when she 'imagined', 'forgot', 'wanted', 'didn't expect', 'watched', 'thought', 'assumed', and so forth. The Processes accompanied by Elena as Participant were mostly passive and motionless; they were Mental, Relational, Verbal, Behavioral and Existential processes. Elena was intensely prisoned by her own thoughts, with the terrible experience of getting herself to remain in a marriage through a torturous slimming programme. The ravenous hunger starts from her to keep herself in shape, partly being guilty for being barren. Apparently, she was a lady of leisure who had little to do with her days, a new modern Malay lady with

freedom of time and good taste of life that many envied; however, the invisible prison surrounding her resonated as listed in the following Table 4. 26.

Table 4.26

Text 3 - Processes showing Elena's Restraint in 'A Subtle Degree of Restraint'

C167	Elena watched her friend chew, [she was] imagining the soft elasticity of the white
	ball in her own mouth,
C168	its pliant dough [was] sticking to the teeth.
C169	The crunch of finely ground peanuts [was] bursting salty amidst the sweetness.
C170	She wanted that last mochi.
C171	But Badariah had devoured it without asking.

As for Badariah, she was free from food, sex and all the good things in life. She finished eating the *unagi*, *mochi* and enjoyed a good laughter while discovering her friend's intolerance with the round vase placed at the centre of the restaurant. She exerts her victory when Elena was startled by her announcement, "I'm pregnant" and asked her "But when—who married you?" Badariah with a 'wry smile' replied, "Not everyone has to starve themselves to get a man." Badariah-a Malay lady with a distinctive Malay name then did something to appear ridiculous and contradicted to the Muslim culture. She claimed success in fighting for freedom with her 'wry smile'; however, there was a subtle degree of restraint after all the mocking comments she pours on herself as evidenced by the analysis shown in Table 4.27.

**Table 4.27** 

*Text 3 – Badariah mocking Herself* 

C131	"I'm a skinny girl in a bodacious body.
C132	[I am] Just like that vase.
C133	Inside, <u>I</u> 'm thin.

In response to Badariah's statement, Elena starts her judgments as evidenced by the analysis shown in Table 4.28.

**Table 4.28** 

Text 3 – Elena's Judgmental Processes

C138	Elena mentally calculated how much Badariah weighed.
C139	[Badariah is] Pushing eighty kilos probably, [she is] judging from the spillage of
	thighs over the edges of the delicate dining chair.
C140	Almost twice the size of Elena, whose own limbs stayed neatly within the
	boundaries of her seat.
C141	[There is] No extra flesh oozing over the lip of the chair's bottom.

However, Badariah's mocking announcement of victory was questionable though it was not concluded in the story. Badariah, another type of new hybrid Malay women, declared no victory though. Her smile ironically foreshadowed a sarcastic complexity of the new Malay women. Because of the impact of globalisation in an urbanised Malay community, people were distanced. Apparently she was not afraid of the force imposed by the Syariah court in which Muslim women would never be allowed to have premarital sex and get pregnant without a lawful marriage. Nevertheless, due to the distanced relationships of Muslims in the cosmopolitan, she could be exempted from the enforcement of Syariah ruling.

### 4.5. An Overview of Text 1, Text 2 and Text 3

This section presents an overview of the text analysis from the types of thematic choice, grouping of the thematic choices and lastly a zoom in on the role of the participants and processes that construe the meanings of Malaysia Malay women from the three selected texts.

### 4.5.1 Answering Research Question 1 – Types of Thematic Choice

This section is an overview of the Thematic Choice found in the three selected short stories. Types of the Thematic Choice in Text 1, Text 2, and Text 3 have been presented in Table 4.28. The findings in the analysis of Stage 1 has fulfilled the **Research Question 1: What are the types of Thematic Choice found in the selected short stories?** For an overview of Thematic Choices investigated in the three selected short stories, the specifications of Thematic Choice are listed below in Table 4.29.

**Table 4.29**Specifications of Thematic Choice in the Three Selected Short Stories

		Text 1: Ma	riah	Text 2: And She Became an Angel		Text 3: A Subtle Degree of Restraint	
No	Theme in Decorative	No of clauses	Frequency of occurrences (%)	No of clauses	Frequency of occurrences (%)	No of clauses	Frequency of occurrences (%)
1	Unmarked Topical Theme	279	56.3	282	59.2	162	66.1
2	Textual + Unmarked Topical	96	18.1	130	27.3	28	11.4
3	Interpersonal + Unmarked Topical	16	3.2	3	0.6	2	0.8
4	Textual + Interpersonal + Unmarked Topical	3	0.6	0	0.0	1	0.4
5	Marked Topical	36	7.3	22	4.6	25	10.2
6	Textual + Marked Topical	9	1.8	0	0.0	3	1.2
7	Interpersonal + Marked Topical	1	0.2	1	0.2	0	0.0
8	Textual + Interpersonal + Marked Topical	3	0.6	0	0.0	0	0.0
9	Fronted β Clause	10	2.2	2	0.4	1	0.4
10	Textual + Fronted β Clause	2	0.3	0	0	1	0.4
11	Interpersonal + Fronted β Clause	1	0.3	0	0.0	0	0.0
12	Marked +Fronted β Clause	1	0.3	0	0.0	0	0.0

	Theme in Wh Interrogative						
13	Unmarked Topical	19	3.8	15	3.2	7	2.9
14	Textual + Unmarked Topical	2	0.4	5	1.1	6	2.4
15	Interpersonal + Unmarked Topical	0	0	1	0.2	0	0.0
	Theme in Yes/No Interrogative						
16	Unmarked Topical	5	1.0	9	1.9	7	2.9
17	Textual + Unmarked Topical	1	0.3	2	0.4	1	0.4
	Theme in Exclusive Imperative						
18	Unmarked Topical	5	1.0	2	0.4	1	0.4
19	Interpersonal + Unmarked Topical	2	0.4	0	0.0	0	0.0
20	Textual + Unmarked Topical	0	0	1	0.2	0	0.0
	Theme in Inclusive Imperative						
21	Unmarked Topical	2	0.4	0	0.0	0	0.0
	Theme in Exclamative						
22	Unmarked Topical	3	0.6	1	0.2	0	0.0
	Total Themes	496	98.9	476	99.7	245	99.9
23	Minor Clauses	32		35		10	
	Total Clauses	528		511		255	

As can be seen from Table 4.29, most of the messages in the clauses were realized as Unmarked Topical themes, with 279 clauses or 56.3% in *Mariah*, 282 clauses or 59.2% 'And She Became an Angel', and 162 clauses or 66.1% A Subtle Degree of Restraint. Apparently, Unmarked Topical Themes stood out among all other types of Thematic Choices in the three texts. The distribution of themes generally followed the sequential pattern like this: Unmarked Topical Themes → Textual + Unmarked Topical → Marked Topical → Unmarked Topical in Wh-Interrogative mood and then types of Thematic Choice in different sentence moods that occupied approximately 1% or lower than 1%, with only several clauses in the text analysis. The pattern is not unusual as Unmarked and Marked Topical Themes configured the content of a text, while Textual Themes connected the flow of the content in sequential or logical flow.

On the whole, the clausal structure is presented with a regular pattern of Theme and Rheme. Clauses in the Decorative, Interrogative or Imperative mood were either formed in coordinate or subordinate clause structures beside the common main ones. Minor clauses were performed by interjections, calling of names, and answering yes or no. It is noted that *Mariah* presented a wide variety of clausal structures, with approximately 21 types of different clausal patterns; however, the clausal patterns of And She Became an Angel and A Subtle Degree of Restraint followed a more conventional type of texts, with 15 types and 13 types of clauses respectively. The varying types of Thematic Choice have shown the skilfulness of the writers in creative writing and proved the Hallidayan notion of text (Bloor and Bloor, 2013; Halliday, 2004, 1994; Martin & Rose, 2003,) that the writers were the master of words who decide what to write about and how to word it out. Parallel with the notion of text, it could be concluded that the flow of text in Mariah was a more dynamic one which allowed more dramatic effects in the interactions among the protagonists with a great variety of types of Thematic Choice in different speech mood. Nevertheless, the pattern flows simultaneously in And She Became an Angel would foreshadow the monotonous life style in a faraway Malay kampong in Terengganu, an unnoticed small little place with unknown ordinary kind hearted kampong folks. Similarly, the progression of theme types in A Subtle Degree of Restraint construes a suffocated cosmopolitan where talks were seldom heard and people were distanced in an all materialized setting.

Marked or Unmarked Topical Themes represent the experiential realm of the text, explicitly they form the domination of participants in the clauses. It was from these Participants, the content of Who, What, When, Where and How were performed as Actors for Material Processes, Sensers for Mental Processes, Behavers for Behavioral Processes and so on so forth. The Markedness of these Thematic Choice further depicted the environmental, manner or temporal elements which construed Experiential meanings of the texts. To simply put, Topical Themes either Marked or Unmarked

revealed a dominant status of the protagonists' overt or inner actions which included their action, behavior, verbiage, and mental behaviours.

Findings of these Thematic Choice in Stage 1 analysis thus contoured the textual proportions of the short stories grammatically and further evidenced that lexicogrammar could provide meaning potentials to the text from its context. However, the interpretation of Malaysian Malay women's identity took a further step in the analysis in Stage 2 and Stage 3 with a closer examination of the System of Transitivity that these Thematic Choices represented in construing the meanings of the identity of Malaysian Malay women. In other words, findings from the analysis of Stage 2 and 3 demonstrated how Research Question 2 was answered and subsequently conformed to the listing of prevalent themes that realised Malay women's identity which were the concerns of the selected Malay women writers in the MLE.

#### 4.5.2 Answering Research Question 2 (I) – Grouping of the Thematic Choice

The analysis of Stage 2 is designed as the first step to interpret the meaning of Malaysian Malay women from the selected short stories. In Stage 2, the analysis revealed the domination of the protagonists as the Participants in the texts. The ranking of the domination determines who would be more or less important in the short stories as it shows the distribution of clauses occupied by these protagonists. The findings are therefore initiated to answer **Research Question 2: How do these Thematic Choices enhance the understanding of Malaysian Malay women's identity in the selected short stories?** 

Findings pertaining to Research Question 2 are associated with the groups the Participants who had led different types of Thematic Choice classified in Stage 1 analysis. The interpretation of how Thematic Choice would enhance the identity of Malaysian Malay women will subsequently, be further examined by probing the roles of the Participant and the Processes from the resources of Transitivity, the role of Participants and the Processes types preceded by these Thematic Choice in Stage 3 analysis. The double folded investigation is to validate the interpretation of the identity of Malaysian Malay women and their social context. To authenticate the validation, all types of Marked/Unmarked Topical Themes either accompanied by Textual or Interpersonal elements in the thematic position have been identified and categorised. In the grouping of Participants of the clauses, the researcher has categorized the Participants of different types of Thematic Choice into different respective groups. For example, in Text 1, *Mariah*, the main protagonists liked the Imam, Cik Yam and Mariah were sorted into their respective groups whereas the social cultural and natural elements such as the Kampong folks, Cik Gu Nap (C99), the Sheikh (C274), the kain lepas (C121) were placed into the same category. Correspondingly, four groups of Participants heading the Thematic Choices were identified in Text 1, *Mariah*, while three groups of Participants in And She Became an Angel, and four groups in A Subtle Degree of Restraint as shown in Table 4.30.

Table 4.30

Marked/Unmarked Topical Themes in selected short stories: Domination of the Participants in Thematic Choice by categories

Text 1	Mariah	Author: Husna Zahari						
No	Marked /Unmarked Topical Themes	No of Clauses	Percentage of Occurrences					
1.	The Imam	163	32.9					
2.	Cik Yam	81	16.7					

3.	Mariah	70	14.1			
4.	Social-cultural or natural elements	182	36.3			
	Total of clauses investigated	496	100			
Text 2	And She Became an Angel	Author: Dina Zaman				
No	Marked /Unmarked Topical Themes	No of Clauses	Percentage of Occurrences			
1.	Mandak	193	40.9			
2.	Ipeng	154	33.5			
3.	Social-cultural or natural elements	129	25.5			
	Total of clauses investigated	476	99.9			
Text 3	A Subtle Degree of Restraint	Author: Karina B	ahrin			
No	Marked /Unmarked Topical Themes	No of Clauses	Percentage of Occurrences			
1.	Elena	86	35.1			
2.	Badariah	57	23.3			
3.	Azman	12	4.9			
4.	Social-cultural or natural elements	90	36.6			
	Total of clauses investigated	245	99.9			

The domination is further illustrated in Figure 4. 1

Figure 4.1

Thematic Distribution by Protagonists in the Three Selected Texts

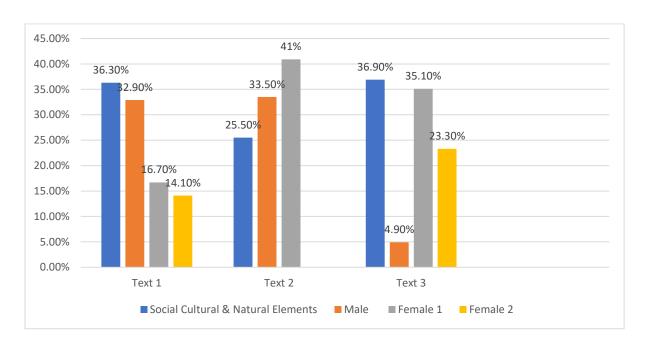


Figure 4.1 illustrates the domination of protagonists in the selected short stories, Text 1, Text 2 and Text 3. It can be seen that in these three fictional Malay Muslim

communities, social cultural and natural elements as well as male protagonists dominated the most Thematic Choices in the three texts. They altogether took up 69.2% in Text 1, 59% in Text 2, and 41.8% respectively. To study the identity of Malaysian Malay women's identity, their social backgrounds and male counterparts were then inevitably needed to be looked into. This is because female's description and women's voices were rarely emphasized and heard as mentioned in the past researches in section 2.2.1. Eventually, the male counterparts in the selected texts played significant roles in reflecting the social realities that these women dwelt in. In addition, as Text 1 and Text 2 is taking place in two Malay kampongs or two rural areas in the East Coast of Malaysia, the dominations of male protagonists were found higher if compared to Text 3, the cosmopolitan Kuala Lumpur. The composition of the two Malay Muslim communities in the rural areas were quite similar. However, the content on the social cultural and natural elements and male protagonists in the analysis of Text 3 were presented differently.

On the other hand, Thematic Choice owned by female protagonists in the three selected texts varied from one another. For Text 1, the domination of Cik Yam and Mariah was lesser than that in Text 2. Mandak alone stood out as the main character in the short story while clauses on Cik Yam and Mariah were subsidiary. Mariah was nonetheless a materialized object who could only be heard by saying 'yes' and sigh. She was a pretty woman and eventually became a goal or an obsession of the male protagonist, the Imam, "I shall make her mine" (*Spirit of the Keris*, p.9). On the other hand, Cik Yam is a standard model for all Malay Muslim women because she would say and act something followed the political correctness as a wife of a religious leader in her community. She wept but the sorrow was secretly buried in her own bedroom. The

domination of Thematic Choices in the analysis for both women in Text 1 signified women as a subordinate role in a male dominant world. They could not control their destinies but just survived as they needed to meet the expectation of the people around them.

In Text 2, Mandak seemingly proclaimed victory by dominating most of the Thematic Choices in the analysis. However, the journey to victory was full of hard toil and tears. She went through the evolution from a woman of feminism, to a feminist fighting for her fate, and lastly the female who could bravely show her true colours in front of the audience. While in Text 3, Elena is supposed to occupy the largest portion of Thematic Choice, but in contrary, what she saw, she felt and she thought led her to the social cultural environment and the natural elements that had drowned her into a whirlpool of self-pitifulness. Badariah though did not possess much of the Thematic Choices, performing most of the actions as a vocal new hybrid of Malay women. On the whole, the analysis in Stage 2 has shown that Malaysian Malay females inhabited a male dominant world from the investigation of the clauses in the selected texts from a Systemic Functional perspective.

# $4.5.3 \ Answering \ Research \ Question \ 2 \ (II) - The \ Transitivity \ Resources \ Construing$ the Identity of the Protagonists

The domination of Participants in the analysis of Stage 2 is indeed a sketching stage of the portrayal of Malaysian Malay women's identity. The countenance of Malaysian Malay women is outlined before painting the colours of these women in the analysis of Stage 3. To answer RQ 2 on how Malaysian women's identity is construed, the two

stages of analysis are simultaneously important. Stage 2 is setting up whom to be investigated while Stage 3 breathing in life to the objects of investigation. Given a thorough clausal base analysis of the selected texts in the two stages of text analysis, the interpretation of Malay women identity has become empirical and the understanding of Malay women's representation in the society they resided consequently is enhanced with substantial evidences from the thematic choices of the clauses. The details of investigation in Stage 3 are presented in Table 4.31.

**Table 4.31**Roles of Participant and Types of Process by Protagonists in Text 1, Text 2, and Text 3

Types of Process (meaning)	Group of protagonists in Text 1, Mariah						Group of protagonists in Text 2, And She Became an Angel			Group of protagonists in Text 3, A Subtle Degree of Restraint						
	The Imam Cik Yan		m Mariah		Mandak		Ipeng		Elena		Badariah		Azman			
	N.o. C.	%	N.o. C.	%	N.o. C.	%	N.o. C.	%	N.o. C.	%	N.o. C.	%	N.o. C.	%	N.o. C.	%
Material (Actor; Goal)	74	45	29	35	26	38	97	50	76	49	33	38	26	47	6	50
Mental (Senser, Phenomenon)	31	19	14	18	14	21	29	15	34	22	21	24	5	9	1	8
Relational (Carrier, Attribute; Token Value)	33	20	18	23	24	35	31	16	12	8	11	13	6	11	0	0.0
Behavioral (Behaver, Behavior)	6	4	6	7	0	0	14	7	15	10	10	12	9	16	3	25
Verbal (Sayer, Verbiage)	18	11	15	18	4	6	23	12	16	10	11	13	9	16	2	17
Existential (Existent)	3	2	0	0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	1	0	0.0	2	4	0	0.0
	165	101	82	101	68	100	194	100	154	100	86	100	57	103	12	100

N.o.C.: Number of Clauses; %: Frequency of occurrences

In general, the protagonists whose roles as Participants and the Processes that they inherited in the clauses were examined and classified as shown in Table 4.31. When the protagonists were performing an overt action, the role of the Participant was labelled as Actor; when experiencing inner emotions such as feeling, sensing, the role of the protagonist has turned into Senser, uttering Sayer, and so on so forth. The grouping of

Participants and Processes were demonstrated in the theoretical framework in section 3.2.1, Table 3.2. The findings showed that the Imam and Ipeng or the male protagonists played mostly the Actor in Text 1 and Text 2. However, the interpretation varies as when studying the Processes that they owned as an individual in the story setting respectively. The details were presented in section 4.1.2, section 4.2.5 and section 4.3.2.4.

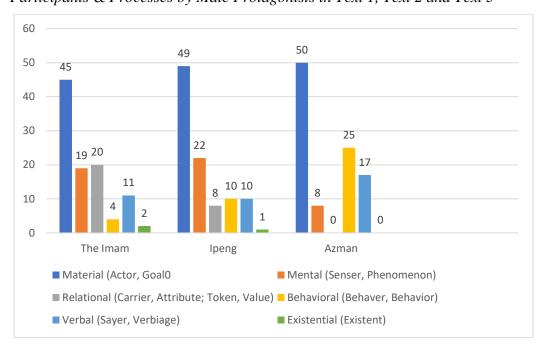
Figure 4.3 and 4.4 demonstrated how RQ2 is answered from the analysis of Stage 3. The study is conducted to probe Malaysian Malay women's identity from a Systemic Functional perspective. Thus, the theoretical framework drawn on Hallidayan's System of Theme and Rheme and the resources of Transitivity were deployed to construe the meanings of Malaysian Malay women from the overall distribution of Thematic Choices as well as the Transitivity interpretation of the clauses. The analysis in Stage 1 was designated to establish the boundary of the texts, while Stage 2 and Stage 3 sketched the countenance and coloured the identity of Malaysian Malay women's identity from the findings depicting the Malaysian Malay males' representation in the social reality in order to juxtapose their female counterparts in the same community they inhabited. The understanding of these Malay women was further delved into from the Participants and Processes they embodied with after establishing the social reality these women dwelt in.

Figure 4.2 presents the variety of Process types inherited by the male Participants while Figure 4.4 depicts their female counterparts. The analysis of Stage 3 intended to examine Types of Participants and Processes that these protagonists inherited and with

the meanings construed from the analysis of Stage 3, a consolidated view of Malaysian Malay women's identity was obtained.

Figure 4.2

Participants & Processes by Male Protagonists in Text 1, Text 2 and Text 3



As can be observed from Figure 4.3, the overt doing labelled as Material Processes of the protagonists in the three texts dominated quite similar percentages, the Imam (45.4%), Ipeng (50.6%), and Azman (50%). The male protagonists in Text 1 and Text 2 were illustrated with six Types of Participants that realized various overt or inner Processes, but Text 3 with only four types of Processes. Although Azman in Text 3 did not present himself with Relational and Existential Processes, he still followed the trend that most male protagonists did, with approximately 50% of Material Processes in his overall domination as an Actor in the story.

From the findings shown in Figure 4.2, four prominent Types of Processes that forged these male protagonists were Material, Mental, Behavioral, and Verbal Processes. In

the selected short stories, male protagonists could be identified from their overt performance in the Material Processes which is the most obvious attributes of these Malaysian Malay men. They were action takers, and their mental activities could be their likes and dislikes, their feelings were made known through their behaviours and the verbiages they spoke out. These Malay Muslim men lived in a world that firstly their control of the clauses in the texts were higher than their female counterparts from the domination of Thematic choices in the texts. Secondly their overt doings in the clauses they possessed were more prominent and proactive compared to their inner thinking and behaviours.

Unlike the female protagonists in the selected short stories, these male protagonists were there for the readers to see them performing and taking actions. The Attributes that they carried as Carriers were not significant except for Text 1 in which the Imam took up 20% of the Thematic Choices realizing Carriers^ Attributes or Token^ Values. The clauses with Carrier ^ Attributes were subjective description as the Auxiliary Verb to Be identified with an Adjective as the identifier could be decided by different degrees of personal perception. Furthermore, it could be presented in passive or active voices and positive or negative construction of the entity. The examples in Table 4.32 were some of this group of Participant ^ Processes

Table 4.32

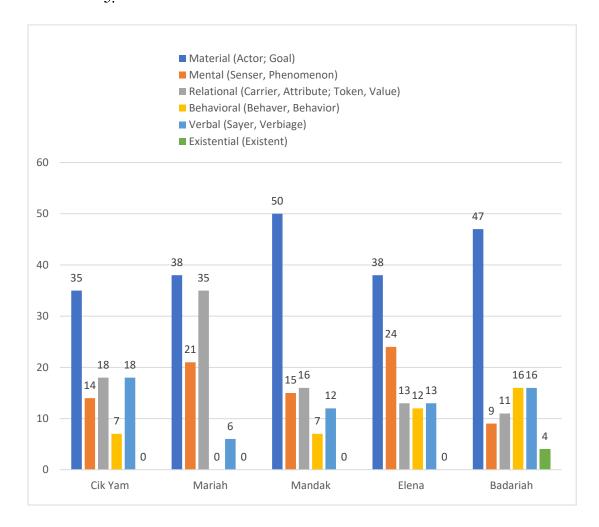
Examples of the Imam as the Carrier or the Token in Relational Processes

C240	The Imam was miserable in Petani.	Carrier + Attribute (The Imammiserable)
C339	The Imam was punctual	Carrier + Attribute (The Imampunctual)
C360	He was, after all, the village Imam.	Token + Value (He the village Imam)

C364	The Imam is an extremely modest man,"	Token + Value (The Imaman extremely modest man)			
C448	"I will always be your husband	Token + Value (I your husband)			

From the examples taken, Relational Processes did not project much about the Imam's experiences as a Carrier who carried a certain attribute because the description could be a subjective opinion or observation of the narrator. However, the identity of the Imam was revealed from the Relational Processes whereby the Imam identified as Token with the identifier of his role or position as Value. Therefore, to describe who the protagonist was from Material, Mental, Verbal and Behavioural Processes would be more tangible. This is because through these Processes the protagonists became Actors, Sensers, Sayers and Behavers. The sculpture of these male protagonists became real and animated. As such, findings derived from Stage 3 analysis confirmed that the female protagonists were truly residing in a male dominant world where their male counterparts were substantially acting as tangible Participants of the clauses with different types of Processes. However, the female protagonists were comparatively quieter and more passive. The details of Participants and Processes inherited by these female protagonists are presented in Figure 4.4.

**Figure 4.3** Participants and Process by Female Protagonists in Text 1, Text 2 & Text 3.



Among the five female protagonists, Mandak and Badariah were the two who were compatible to the male protagonists in the short stories, with 50% and 47% of Material Processes as Actors in Text 2 and Text 3 correspondingly. However, Cik Yam, Mariah in Text 1 and Elena in Text 3 dominated 35%, 38%, and 38% for each of them. The role of Participants and the Processes inherited by these female protagonists exhibited the character of these protagonists. In general, the female protagonists with more Material Processes displayed more dynamism by performing more doings and happenings. As mentioned in section 4.2.6 and section 4.3.2.3, Mandak and Badariah

were 3-dimensional heroines in Text 2 and Text 3. They demonstrated themselves to the readers from their doings, their utterances, their feelings and behaviours as Actors (50%; 47%), Sayers (12%; 16%), Sensers (15%; 9%) and Behavers (7%; 16%) constantly throughout the flow of the texts.

The roles of Participants with the Processes they inherited indeed embroidered themselves with colourful gems as a representation of Malaysian Malay women who would never compromise to male dominant circumstances and the challenging world. However, Cik Yam, Mariah and Elena were relatively more passive as the Material Processes that construed more animated temperament were not manifested much. In addition, the overt doings they performed were not noteworthy as shown in Section 4.1.4 and Section 4.3.2.2. Furthermore, these female protagonists displayed themselves as Sensers and Carriers who performed more inner and abstract quality of their beings; however, these Mental and Relational Processes in fact weakened their animated nature as Mental Processes were fluid while Relational Processes depended more on one's subjective perception with the Verb -to be.

On the whole, the study has proven that many past researches claimed that the voices of these Malay women were not heard (Halimah, 2015; Hamid, 2015; Noritah, 2014; Syazliyati, 2007). The gap between the education Malaysian women obtained and the general index on economic adaptability, education, physical condition and involvement in politics ("The global gender gap report, 2018") was again evident as the portrait of Malaysia Malay women were deem and shallow from the types of Processes and role of Participants inherited in the clauses construed. Even though one of the female

protagonists in the selected short stories, Mandak, tried to break through the bondage she inherited, the results were tragical and unresolved at the end of the story.

# 4.5.4 Answering Research Question 3 – Prevalent Themes representing Malay Women from a Systemic Functional Perspective

Overall, the current study holds its concerns on the Malay women and the society they dwell in. By employing Systemic Functional perspective, the analysis probed the thematization of clauses and interpreted the text to its context through the Transitivity system. The analysis construed the meaning of Malay women identity which included the nature of their being performed through different roles of Participants and Process Types they inherited in the clauses. The exploration was subsequently consolidated from a discussion of themes in the short stories using approaches found in discourse analysis and feminist study. The analysis concluded several prevalent themes after the empirical study of lexicon-grammatical structures of the short story texts. The concerns of the writers were revealed in the following discussion and subsequently answered Research Question 3: What prevalent themes construe the representation of Malay women's identity in the selected short stories?

## 4.5.4.1 *Mariah* – Malay Women in a Perfect Muslim World

Che Husna's *Mariah* construed a perfect Muslim world where Malay men and women were almost perfectly created in an exemplary Islamic world for the realization of Islamic values. A world where the widowed was taken in; the barren lived with hope, the pious man upheld the outmost Islamic value of modesty as a religion head in the

community. The portrayal of Muslim women in *Mariah* could be collocated from the men they live together in the same community. As the clauses and the thematic choices of women such as Cik Yam and Mariah were relatively fewer than the Imam, the realization of the identity of Malay women in *Mariah* can be drawn from a proximity of the Imam, the male kampong folks, and the social cultural elements of the story. A few themes were summarised in the discussion that follows:

**Modesty.** Self-contradictory is a common norm in the Islamic world as demonstrated in the selected short stories. In *Mariah*, the Islamic world is a perfect one. The Imam showed his modesty the first-time he met Mariah and revisited Mariah in the following days as evidenced in the following excerpt:

The Imam would take the *nasi belauk* without averting his gaze from the plate in accordance with the Quranic injunction for men to lower their gazes. He would tremble slightly, but the men in the *kedai merpati* attributed that to extreme modesty. "The Imam is an extremely modest man," thought the other men, "not used to the company of women." Every time he took the *nasi belauk* from Maria he would feel a pang of guilt, remembering his wife's *nasi belauk* under the *tudung saji*. (C363-C370)

(*Spirit of The Keris*, p.12)

The term modesty in Islam is known as 'Haya'. It is applicable to both men and women. For men, they should lower their gaze at the opposite sex. For women, they should not display their beauty to the public except their husbands. It is a state of faith and helps to deter lust. Both males and females should avoid themselves from anything deemed as haram and be pure and holy before others and also when they are alone. Cik Yam keeping herself away from the women's gossiping, Mariah's kain lepas and the Imam's struggle of seeing Mariah construe a recurring theme of modesty.

For the Imam, all the struggles and the justifications of the Imam are testified by his religious monologues with Allah and the Prophet. He was a pious man who upheld modesty; thus, when facing the alluding Mariah, the passion of his long-lost first love, he needed to assure himself from different angles, the Qur'anic teaching, the Prophet's concerns and lastly the permission from his first wife, Cik Yam. Mariah's asset as a widow and Cik Yam's barrenness were justifiable and co-existed perfectly in the Muslim world.

For Cik Yam, she demonstrated herself as an almost perfect Muslim woman who diligently completed the household chores in a blameless condition and distanced herself from gossiping when the kampong womenfolk tried to poke her. She gracefully performed her duties as a submissive and a modest Muslim wife compatible to her husband, the Imam, a religious leader in their kampong. However, the balance between modesty and the human's lust was betrayed by Cik Yam's wailing when her husband pleaded for taking a second wife. The feeling of "despair and humiliation" (C435) cruelly shattered the perfect wife's destiny. Even in a perfect world, the almost perfect woman would still suffer with betrayal of her loved one. Worst even, she had to respond political correctly facing the loss of love. Cik Yam's modesty indeed paid with priceless self-control.

Despite this self-contradiction, the Muslim world in *Mariah* was perfectly portrayed as it was ended with a happy ending in the sacrifice of a perfect Muslim wife, Cik Yam. Mariah the "blousy lady, untutored in religion" was nurtured by a pious man and his sainted wife whom "Mariah was, in fact, slightly in awe of the pious Cik Yam" (C493). In the end, nobody was oppressed and nobody was offended. Cik Yam succumbed to

her husband's desires to have a second wife and the kampong folks were happy attending the second wedding of the Imam. The world in *Mariah* presented the highest value of modesty from an Islamic perspective, harmoniously.

**Discrimination.** Social discriminations were actually presented in a disguise. The investigation on Theme and Rheme showed that Mariah was nonetheless an extremely peripheral object of the Imam. She did not lead the story though she was entitled with that privilege from the title of the story. The Processes she entailed were trivial as the Material processes did not really perform her identity. Furthermore, she was not felt in the Mental processes, and not heard in the Verbal processes. Her kain lepas was just a minimum shield in her body to the Muslim world where it is haram if a Muslim woman exposes her body shape to the public in a piece of kebaya, the authentic Malay traditional clothing. Eventually, she caught all men's eyes on her at the entrance of the market place and was thus labelled as 'a blousy lady, untutored in religion'. It was in the mercy of the Imam and Cik Yam who were in a higher social status to recruit Mariah into the main stream, the dakwah. Oxymoron is the term found when probing gender equality in the Muslim world (Offenhauer, 2005). Mariah is like a secular goddess waiting to be upgraded into the mainstream of the Muslim world, the inferior goddess debuted. In the name of God, Cik Yam, like other tragic heroines, sacrificed herself in an absurd way, generously sharing her husband with another woman after feeling humiliated and out of despair.

**Submission and Virtue.** Malay women's submission and virtue had successfully convinced Cik Yam to be 'a model wife' who 'would certainly be found sheltering in the shade of the Umbrella of Siti Fatimah (the Prophet's daughter) on the day of

Judgment' when everyone was 'in awe of her virtue and steadfastness'. She depressed her spontaneous feelings of "despair and humiliation" to allow her husband to take a second wife. The story demonstrated that polygamy found a perfect solution when the first wife was barren and the second wife was a widow. Modesty, submission and virtue were indeed hijacked in the name of God.

Feminism and Islamic Feminism. The convergence of feminism and Islamic feminism inevitably argues in between women's right and gender equality with different narratives. Seemingly, *Mariah* declared a battle loss of women's right and gender equality in the perspective of feminism. Feminist activates would not tolerate the beautified polygamy system in *Mariah*, and the debuted Cik Yam could not be a role model in the eyes of a feminist spokesperson. However, muslimah scholars contended that Islamic feminism is not an issue of veiled or unveiled, but more on the issue of humanity and cultures (Fatima Seedat, 2013; Noor, 2000). The translation of Islamic feminism from the movement of feminism which was originated or imported from the Western world definitely challenges the Islamic world.

Che Husna indeed wittily plays in between the lines. *Mariah* presented Mariah a financial independent woman in a tradition kampong in a rustic remote area of Malaysia, Kelantan, a state ruled by PAS (Malaysian Islamic Party) for more than a half century over a short history of independent Malaysia from the British ruling. The geographical and historical social background suggested that it is a fertile breeding ground of all Islamic teachings; thus, the perfect Islamic utopia is acceptably well plotted. Che Husna herself as a university professor of material engineering trained overseas in London is supposed to have a grand shower of the Western culture.

Nevertheless, Cik Yam and Mariah represent a perfect blending of creativity and competence of Malay women. They are traditional because of their faith to God; however, they are adept in dealing with defeat and challenges in the real world. Mariah became a *nasi* seller, surviving after the demise of her first husband; Cik Yam professionally performed herself as a successful woman head in the community with quality housework and cooking skills, and lastly a dramatic compromise to her husband after a night long despair.

The proclaim of feminism is perfectly translated into Islamic feminism by Che Husna in *Mariah*. Nor Fadirah (2000) asserts that the convergence of feminism and Islam is nonetheless of taking a more in depth understanding of human nature and experiences, while Seedat (2013) argues that it is indispensable taking a journey from Western feminism to Islamic feminism, but the adequacy of this translation would only be equal and fair by adopting cultural and gender differences. Che Husna triumphed over the dilemma of the inappropriateness between the West and the Islamic, humorously mocking the Serious and presented a harmonious world that the original Malay upholds, not by religion but by nature.

### 4.5.4.2 And She Became an Angel - Malay Women in an On-Fire Paradise

Malay women in *And She Became an Angel* presented a new chapter of gender equality and Malay woman right in a freaky way. A remote Malay kampong and peaceful living could be a paradise for many. Mandak must be living in a heaven where she was one of the angelic citizen in the heaven. The remote kampong was a peaceful one full with all good people. Mandak the angel was bored with heaven where everything went well,

a good husband and a simple and routine life in a peaceful village. Life was supposed to be easy and happy there. However, a spark ignited out of her long-buried memory when she was garnishing garlics and onions. She suddenly wanted to become a Western angel that she came across in a devotional book while she was attending primary school run by missionaries. She wanted to "have something of her own, something she can be proud of, something that's all hers" (*And She Became an Angel*, p.38).

**Household Chores.** In tradition, Malay women could never separate themselves from the household chores (Ling & Abdullah, 2018; Zuraini, Tan, & Noor, 2018; Alharafesheh, 2016; Kan & Laurie, 2016; Samani, 2016). The household chores were an endless repetition, especially the old *batu lesong* she inherited from her mother. She "is fed up with cooking" (And She Became an Angel, p.38) and taking care of her husband all her marriage life, the responsibilities of completing household chores. She became determined and brave, "a strange feeling growing somewhere deep in her chest, growing until she becomes breathless" (Ibid, 37). The desire to have feathered wings like a Western angel took off. She was a true Actor from the Systemic Functional perspective, dominating most of the Material processes, evenly presenting herself in the Mental and Verbal processes. The β clause, "If she could be just one thing in her life, it would be that: an angel" pushed her towards the life time mission of becoming a feathered wing Western angel.

**Domestic Violence.** Domestic violence was not bloody when it was executed by a gentle but incapable husband, Ipeng. He was presented in a timid way by carrying more Mental processes, dialoguing with himself when his wife became absurd, wanting to

become a Western angel with feathered wings in a Malay society. He was gentle and timid because he "cannot bear" to watch birds being humiliated like this' and he "secretly" checks his wife's batik sanitary towels to see it it's that time of the month.' When his wife did not function as a wife, he cooked the family meals and continued repairing the *surau* as his *rezeki* (earning for the family). Gaping when seeing "the peculiar looking wings on Mandak's back"; he asks, "are you planning to go out in that"; then, "I think we need to talk", and he "smokes much that night".

Facing challenges created by his wife, he seemed very gentle. However, he realized "We are Malays", and becoming a Western angel in the village was intolerable. He asked himself, "How is he going to explain this to his friends and his family? "How is he going to tell them that Mandak wants to fly?" He started thinking of locking her up but still kept everything in view. The decision made when he found out that she was venturing out and spying around the village at night. Ipeng's mental struggle between being a Malay and becoming a Western angel took a stand. However, the gentle husband was still gentle when he said, "I'm sorry, Mandak; this is not acceptable" and he "does what he believes he has to do" – by locking Mandak in a chicken coop. Domestic violence was performed with apologies. A chicken coop was the final destination to keep his wife from fulfilling her "one thing of life".

Oppression in a patriarchal paradise. In the Third World Feminism, the movement of women is related to the development of the society. Women's oppressions were materialized in different forms. Household chores, monotonous life style, incapable husbands could be the mediators of oppression. Mandak could be the victim of the patriarchal system although the husband seemed not harmful at all. The courage pushed

Ipeng to perform an abusive decision, leading to the questions "How is he going to explain to his friends and family?" and "How is he going to tell them Mandak wants to fly?" When the husband was drawn into the patriarchal whirlpool, the right actions were usually abusive and violent. He absolutely had the right to determine the fate of his wife, but in an obscure form too.

Feminism, Feminist and Female. According to Nor Fadirah (2003), Malay women writers evolved from displaying feminism in the beginning stage when MLE setting was dominant by only the male writers. Then it was followed by the uproar of feminist movement, and shifted to the contemporary when Malay women writers now can bluntly perform who they are in the MLE. Similarly, Mandak evolved from a woman of feminism to a heroine as a feminist, and lastly a female, her true identity in the public. She at first presented herself doing housework such as cooking and preparing meals, a woman framed in feminism, displaying all the elements showing the identity of Malay women. Subsequently she started her journey to become a Western feathered angel as her "one thing of life", putting all the effort in to make two feathered wings and making night excursions like an angel. She was capable to make her dream come true, a feminist who was bravely fighting against all odds. And at the end, she is a female who showed her true identity gracefully in front of the kampong folks, an angel saving a fiery paradise! Malay women likewise ultimately were set free from the traditional portrayal (Metger,1991; Ungku Maimunah, 1986). The fire and the sacrifice underscored a beautiful ending; a Malay woman finally was free.

## 4.5.4.3 A Subtle Degree of Restraint – Malay women in an invisible prison of the cosmopolitan

Karina Bahrine presented elements of a cosmopolitan Kuala Lumpur in *A Subtle Degree of Restrain* which she herself a native in this bustling and diverse city. From the hotel, the Japanese restaurant, the Vietnamese vase to the Chinese zen garden and the imported car, challenges of new Malay women are subtle. The international elements presented simultaneously agreeing with the lifestyle of Elena and Badariah. The setting and the discourse of the old school girls' gathering construed a subtle degree of restraint for both the two extreme representation of new hybrid of Malay women. Elena imprisoned herself in a prison of her own while Badariah was set free with a wry smile.

An invisible prison for the new hybrid of Malay women. Elena was caught in a prison of her own. She built the prison with a husband, the need for a slim body in the surroundings where she resided, a highly globalized metropolis. When she entered the restaurant, "she saw it" – "A large fuchsia orb that occupied the room with its gaudy hue, holding a generous spay of elegant brown willow twigs. The vase..." (C1-C4). Her Mental processes such as "saw", "her eyes strayed", and "the thought", "imagined" led all to the surroundings she was in and the past events that took place in her mental status. Her penchant for food was restrained by her marriage, a husband she managed to secure after going through the torture of the "Iron Chef of human bodies "presided over her," "poaching her belly in rare herbs", "sloughing the puckered skin of her thighs until the cellulite retreated in terror...". The journey then began on her wedding reception day. Even after six wedding receptions, "her uncorsetted waist did not expand

to its former liberal self, restrained by her throat that constricted against all manner of deliciousness" (C63-64).

A phantom of the marriage. It is not fair to claim that Elena was cramped in a prison of her own and forsaking "her former liberal self" who enjoyed all "manner of deliciousness". What enslaved her was the traditional Malay system represented by her husband, Azman. The traditional value dictated that a Malay woman must have a husband representing good life with all materialized belongings which include a rich and young husband who can afford six wedding receptions, and the talks around "the Chinese contractor's Rolex", "the Government", "the protestors who unloaded cows and chickens and goats in front the State Secretariat" but not "the absence of food on her plate" (C73-C89). The discourse of business and politics were emphasised as the "bigger things" (C75). Then the husband kissed her goodnight, murmuring, "Sleep well, mother of my children-to-be" (C89). The role of a Malay woman is again highlighted as a child bearer. The deprivation within her grew because of the traditional expectation and the goodness of new materialised reality.

A new packaging in the old body. Elena though had an all envied lifestyle as a new hybrid Malay woman, she undoubtedly remained as the woman in the 60s and 70s where Malay women were depicted as "they would simply move around without any specific purposes and were willingly dominated by their male counterparts" (Metger, 1991, as in Chapter 1, p.2). The portrayal of Malay women became more substantial from the image Elena carried in *A Subtle Degree of Restraint*, a fashionable city woman with all the luxurious materials, good food, an imported handbag, a successful husband, a colourful *tudung* with graceful posture probably. She was veiled beautifully, however,

all her processes in the SFL perspective were not significant to represent who she was as the mental processes were overwhelmingly active in her mind not her physical doings. She remained mysterious and unknown although she performed her unwillingness and anger when walking out of the restaurant.

A wild note. Badariah is a rare representation in the Islamic society. She was overweight, yet she enjoyed good food in the girly gathering with Elena, almost finishing everything they had on the table, sweet *mochi*, sumptuous *unagi*, and some green tea. Food and sex are two basic human needs. She had both soothing her being as a Malay muslimah in a highly Islamised country. No contradiction found within her with the world outside except a 'wry smile' when declaring herself pregnant without a formal engagement of marriage in the Islamic social setting. She victoriously proclaimed, "Not everyone has to starve themselves to get a man...". Blunt and bold were further amplified when she tossed some cash notes on the table paying the bill for the dining.

Women against women. Overweighed Badariah, on the other hand, was the imagined enemy of slim and well-shaped Elena because she "pried apart" the *unagi* before Elena's reply, "munching her mochi" and "reaching for the last mochi" while Elena was always a step behind to reach the food. Mentally calculating Badariah's weight, Elena then concluded, "No extra flesh oozing over the lip of the chair bottom. No deep lines on the back of her thighs where the wood cut into her skin." (C142-C143). The hatred increased when Badariah declared, "I'm pregnant. He is a Malay". For Elena, she assumed that Badariah did not have a love life because "The protective instinct of men who felt threatened by a woman larger than them"; thus, Badariah was unlikely to

have a man. "But when — who married you?" The new hybrid Malay woman then answered, "You silly bitch," she said with a wry smile. "Not everyone has to starve themselves to get a man...". Elena secured a husband diligently with highly self-controlled on food and wanted a baby to fulfil a good marriage life; however, Badariah had all she wanted by living out who she was, spontaneously and effortlessly.

A true hybrid. Badariah, the new hybrid Malay woman had returned from the United States; having her own career and becoming pregnant before marrying a man were all unbelievable for Elena. Knowing that all Badariah had been enjoying in life as a new hybrid Malay woman in the urban Kuala Lumpur, Elena's protest against the reality was a subtle one. She then walked on to the entrance, pushing the round shaped vase, and making it rocks right and left. Giving the vase a shove, she made it tip and roll around. Careening her neck across the carpeted floor, she reached and opened the restaurant door, letting it roll out into the sunlight and finally settling beneath a bush. She protested that her counterpart, Badariah an overweight woman who could enjoy food and sex without any restraints, triumphed over her with a man and a baby. Unlike her, marriage was not a social bondage for this new hybrid Malay woman, Elena reckoned. Malay women in the cosmopolitan put up a new look compared to their counterparts found in Text 1 and Text 2. However, the deprivation and challenges of marriage remain.

### 4.5.5 Malay women's identity -- The representation of Malay women in the selected short stories

The portrayal of Malay women evolving from Shanon Ahmad's perspective and Ungku Maimunah's comments in the early decades of 20th century to these selected female writers has unfolded the many facets of Malay women from these creative genres of social documentation in Malaysian literature. They were first presented blurry in the literary works as a sketch of women, then Malay women, or Malay Muslim women. venturing through the background of Malay adat and Islamic creeds in life (Metger, 1991; Ungku Maimunah, 1986). Nevertheless, they were born human who deserved equality and all human rights universally. In the selected short stories, these women sustain a harmonious Muslim world by juggling the values of modesty, virtue, and submission in the Malay traditional culture, under a patriarchal male dominant world (as in Mariah). However, they also evolved becoming independent and brave individuals who were not bound in the captivity of tradition and religious doctrines (as in And She Became an Angel & A Subtle Degree of Restraint). The selected Malay women writers, Che Husna, Dina Zaman, and Karina Bahrin unveiled the complexity of Malay women identity and unfolded the many facets of a precious gem from the representation of Malay women in the selected short stories from a linguistic spectrum of Systemic Functional perspective.

### **4.6 Chapter Summary**

This chapter has answered Research Questions 1 & 2 in sections 4.1, 4.2 and 4.3. By probing the distribution of the Thematic choice in the story texts and investigating the Participants and Processes that are embodied in these Thematic choices, the study has attempted to illustrate the identity of Malaysian Malay women from a Systemic Functional perspective. A consolidation of themes found in the selected short story texts was presented in section 4.4 presenting a discussion of Research Question 3. On the whole, the analysis employing the System of Theme and Rheme has foregrounded the fundamental interpretation of the Malay women identity. The meanings of women identity were further testified through the Transitivity system in the Ideational or Experiential metafunction. A holistic interpretation of Malay women identity was subsequently made from Feminist theory and CDA exertions. The analysis suggested that the SFL framework is a valuable resource for construing experiences and ideals at a higher level. The clausal base investigation is an approach worth promoted for an empirical research on text and the context.

#### **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **CONCLUSION**

### 5.1 Introduction

In this study, the investigation was an attempt to explore the representation of Malaysian Malay women's identity from a Systemic Functional perspective, specifically, meanings that construed Malaysian Malay women by employing the System of Theme and Rheme and the System of Transitivity. The text analysis in a clausal level was applied to three selected short stories, namely, *Mariah*, *And She became an angel*, and *A subtle degree of restraint* written by three Malaysian Malay women writers, Husna Azhari, Dina Zaman and Karina Bahrin respectively. The analysis was based on Halliday and Matthiessen's System of Theme and Rheme and System of Transitivity (2004) which are also in turn developed from Halliday (1994) and Halliday (1985). The theory is also validated by Bloor and Bloor (2004), Thompson (2004) and Eggins (1994). The meaning of Malaysian Malay women identity was eventually consolidated from the perspectives of the Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) and Feminist studies in the discussion after the findings were attained from the SFL analysis.

Bridging lexico-grammar to literature through Functional approach was an empirical method used to probe universal and humanistic values in the selected short stories that were parallel with the research objectives. The realisations of meanings through

different themes of the selected short stories provided a novelty of reading in literary works. Despite the claim that Systemic Functional approach is "too much linguistics" (Dijk, 2001, p.352), the analysis from the current research was an evidence that SFL could be a resourceful instrument for the analysis of social semiotics, especially selected short stories as a documentation of social cultural evolution in a Malaysian context. Furthermore, the thematic choices identified from the analysis explicitly unveiled the countenances and voices of Malaysian Malay women channelled by the Malay women writers in MLE.

### **5.2 Summary of the Main Findings**

The main findings in the present study were centred around answers pertaining to the Grand Tour Question: How would Thematic Choice construe Malaysian Malay women identity in the selected short stories written by three Malay women writers? In line with this, the findings first were attained from different types of Thematic Choice of the selected texts. Next, from the thematic analysis of these selected texts in Stage 1, the researcher drew out the domination of the protagonists in the clausal level to determine the representation and impact of these protagonists in the selected texts. The thematic analysis in the first and the second stages were in fact foregrounding the experiential interpretation in the third stage of analysis. The textual analysis via Theme and Rheme attuned the focus of meanings construed in the selected texts. It helped determining the concerns of the selected Malay women writers as the departure point of each clause which would consciously or unconsciously reveal the writers' or the speakers' intentions. After the focus of the writers had been established textually, the resources of Transitivity were inaugurated for the study on the meanings of Malaysian Malay women identity, from the text to its context.

### 5.2.1 Summary of Findings Pertaining to Research Question 1: What are Types of Thematic Choice Found in the Selected Short Story Texts?

Across the three selected short stories as Text 1, Text 2, and Text 3, Unmarked Topical Theme was the most prominent type of themes. It was in accordance with the theory proposed and the findings from many past researches (Katrini, 2015 as cited in Erni, M, 2017; Arunsirot, 2013; Eggins, 2004; Ma, 2003). The textual analysis via the system of Theme and Rheme conformed the focus of the experiential content of the short stories. It unveiled what contained in the bosom of the selected Malay women writers textually. In general, Textual Unmarked Topical themes came up as the second place in the types of thematic choice of the story text. In the story genre, the flow of textual themes glued the inter and intra sentential coherences and presented the climaxes of the plots in a free-flowing style.

The distribution of thematic choice leads to the experiential investigation of the goingson performed by the animate and inanimate protagonists in the story texts. Subsequently,
a tangible portrayal of the protagonists as the Participants and the Processes they entail
was created. This is parallel with Halliday's collection of paper on text and discourse
whereby Theme/Rheme structure construes textual meanings beyond clauses in
discourse analysis that transcends grammatical structure of the clauses (Martin, 2002,
p.53). The analysis is an evidence that was claimed by Hasan (2009), "there can be no
comprehensive scientific linguistics without paroled, and no study of parole without
context" (p. 168). The Theme/Rheme analysis which presented the different types of
Marked/Unmarked Topical Themes in different mood types were in fact a system of

meaning realization serving as instances of social semiotics where short stories served as models of language system to the resource of parole (Hasan, 2009, p.170).

In J. R. Martin's *Discourse Studies* (2009), a range of sample analysis of different genres was mentioned but not creative writing such as novels or short stories. The creative genres of writing were rarely analysed. The range of discussion included the analysis of narrative, exposition, service encounter, appointment making or classroom discourse; however, short stories as a creative writing genre was not found in the discussion. Creative writing is more unpredictable in terms of thematization. Taking Text 1 as an example, there was a total of 20 types of Marked/Unmarked Topical themes in different grammatical mood types. On the other hand, the thematization of Text 2 and Text 3 were presented in 14 types and 15 types of different grammatical mood types respectively.

The different mood types of thematization has proven creative writing as a unique genre whereby the writers took charge of the style and creativity of writing. This was further proven by the minor clauses found in the three selected texts followed the sequence of 32 minor clauses for Text 1, 35 for Text 2, and 16 for Text 3. Clauses are taken as minor clauses because they are incomplete clauses grammatically. In other formal or informal types of writing, genres like commentary, narrative writing, expository writing or academic writing, minor clauses are rarely found. The violations of linguistics systems of the text, the parole from its context justify novel, short stories, or poems belong to the artistic domain of social semiotics.

The present study, conferring SFL linguistic framework to an applicable model of text analysis has not only proven that SFL is a resourceful theory for social science study, but also suggested the application of the System of Theme and Rheme followed by the System of Transitivity in the SFL are compatible in the interpretation of meanings for any types of social semiotics.

# 5.2.2. Summary of Findings Pertaining to Research Question 2: How do these Thematic Choices Realize the Interpretation of Malay Women's Identity in the Selected Short Stories?

Findings of thematic choices that answered RQ 1 has established a common ground for the subsequent investigation of thematic choices. Viewing from the Theme/Rheme progression, the cohesion of text was actually a modelling discourse of the text. According to Martin (2010), the cohesion of text transcends grammatical structure. It is similar to Halliday's claims that "cohesion involves non-structural relations beyond the sentence" (1973, a 141). The findings in the second level of investigation done by sorting out the categories of thematic choices opted by different protagonists in the selected texts were in fact revealing the organization of cohesive resources in the story texts. The inventory of cohesive resources (Halliday & Hassan, 1976) such as reference, ellipsis, substitution, conjunction and lexical cohesion, helped sorting clauses into different categories of themes led by the psychological subjects or points of departure of the clauses.

In summary, the categorization revealed that Mariah was not the main actor in Text 1, the story 'Mariah', while Mandak had successfully proven herself as a heroin in Text

2, 'And She Became an Angel' and Elena had betrayed herself in Text 3 'A Subtle Degree of Restraint', exchanging her role as the main protagonist by appointing the social-cultural surroundings to become the first place in the domination of clause initials from what she saw, she thought and she felt. The processes that determined the roles of the protagonists in the short stories validated the goings-on in reality. Meanwhile, the Material Process which was paired up with the Actor or Goal of the process showed overt physical actions, whereas the Mental Process went with the Senser expressing the inner experiences of reality. The Relational Process matched with Carrier or Token and informed the readers about the personality of the protagonists through the attributes or the value that followed. In the short stories, psychological conducts or responses of the protagonists were spotted regularly as the Behaver via the Behavioral Process. The main characters of the selected stories had become real when they frowned, cried and laughed. These characters were further breathed in with life when they were given the role as the Sayer, voicing out their thoughts in the Verbal Processes.

Short stories deserve their unique credibility as a documentation of humanistic representation because they are themselves a literary method of recording universal values for humanity in general. The identity of Malaysian Malay women was established through the domination of Thematic Choice in the short stories and it was further validated by the Processes and the Participants of the Processes of the clauses examined with the Transitivity resources in the selected short stories. The interpretation of identity transcends across time and space (as in Chapter 2); however, it would never go beyond the studies of gender, religion, family and the environmental surroundings of the short stories. The clausal investigation through the System of Theme/Rheme

defined the boundary of WHOM to be investigated in the short stories while the System of Transitivity detailed WHAT were the goings-on within the boundary.

The short story entitled *Mariah* could be changed with the title as "*The Imam's Long-Lost Love*", or "*A Perfect Wife's Woe*" but definitely not '*Mariah'*. Mariah was nonetheless a materialized object of the Imam's obsession. An almost perfect Muslim woman like Cik Yam had a permanent woe and heartbroken moment of life when her husband sought her perfect reply to have a second wife. It was a perfect Muslim world in '*Mariah*'. The Imam was anonymous who could be of any religious leader in any Malay village, but the Imam was powerful as he dominated the most Material Processes of the story. The Imam was nonetheless a representation of a patriarchal Muslim society. On the other hand, Cik Yam, the Imam's wife who was perfect from every angle, being capable of keeping the household chores as a housewife, was also virtuous and submissive as a religion leader's wife. She further yielded herself to the perfect Muslim ideology as she was unwillingly, but gracefully welcoming the second wife of her husband, a widow who was beautiful and rich.

Little would the readers know about Mariah. She was financially independent by selling *nasi belauk*, pretty with attractive swaying body shape, and making herself isolated or unknown to the gossips of the kampong men and women folks. Surprisingly, she after being widowed for many years would compromise herself to the courting of the Imam. Mariah could be a representation of modern Malay women who seemed independent in all aspects of life; however, she had ended herself up as a second wife of the Imam in order to upgrade herself from an inferior social status (widowed and sexy) to a more religious mainstream. The findings were also parallel with another research conducted

by Nor Faridah (2007) where she concluded that the heart of a Malay woman is always a signage leading them towards God. Becoming a second wife or accepting a husband's new wife is a sacred act that has perfected the Malay woman's pilgrimage to Jannah, the Islamic paradise.

Polygamy won the battle field of gender equality with beautiful excuses and divine causes. This is in accordance to a few research done (Abdullah, Abdullah, & Ferdousi, 2015; Alamgir, 2014; Offenhauer, 2005) and was evident with the verification of Global Gender Gap Index in 2018. Malaysian Malay women who are highly educated, capable and modern but at the end they "still closely adhere to their traditional cultural roles in the family". It is also matching the findings that Malaysia Malay women earning higher degrees of education, would compromise themselves to the need of their families, especially their children when given opportunities for the betterment of their careers (Nor Fadirah, 2000).

The view of modesty is the highest value in a Muslim world. In Text 1, *Mariah*, nobody is offended at the end of the story. The social agreement is upheld in a harmonious and peaceful way when a widow was taken by an Imam with the permission of the Imam's first wife. In a light-hearted way, Che Husna ended the story happily, all were happy folks, both men and women in the kampong. The Given/New or Theme/Rheme overflew within the constraint of the context from the different personalities in the rural kampong setting of a Malay community. People shared the same values of life, bestowing harmonious relationships among themselves because of upholding the utmost teaching of modesty from the Qur'an. The Imam went through all the struggles

and performed his acts of modesty religiously; however, his true desires uncovered his real intention ultimately in this sophisticated world of hypocrites.

In 'And She Became an Angel', Mandak had the highest domination of thematic choices in the clausal analysis. Her role as the heroine who performed the most actions in the story was further justified because of the different types of Participant and Processes she carried. She stood out among all her other counterparts in the story with the mission to become an angel, specifically a Western-look angel. Her desire to transform her life into another level was a gem in a rustic kampong, shining in the rough. The Material, Mental and Verbal Processes were well proportionated across the clauses she possessed. These findings had successfully moulded her as a 3-Dimensional heroine in the story. She performed doings or goings on, she felt, and she spoke out. She could not be sealed in between lines or words because her actions told. The mission to become an angel in an odd way had been completed in a spectacular manner, a village fire in the dark night. With this ending, Mandak had been ordained as an epic heroine, ironically, a goddess in the Muslim world.

By employing SFL as a resourceful tool to interpret meaning potentials of the text, Ipeng, Mandark's husband and the kampong folks were comparatively trivial and unimportant from the clausal analysis; nevertheless, they were the immediate causes of the fire and the tragic ending for the epic heroin. Words are mightier than sword. In 'And She Became an Angel', Ipeng was not a harmful husband and the kampong folks were all nice people; however, the invisible curse of 'we are Malay' repeated twice in the story and released its venom to condemn the epic heroine.

Mandak as a woman of feminism in the beginning of the story, was "garnishing chili and garlic" while cooking meals for the husband, going through the journey as a feminist fighter of life, trying all her efforts to gather feather for the making of the angel, venturing through the village at night, searching for the justice of life among the villagers' affairs. At the end of the story, she demonstrated herself a female angel who came and extinguished the village fire when everyone was in the hustle and bustle of ceasing the fire. Against all odds, she was an action taker with speed and full of courage when she jumped into the fire for rescue. The Malay women's identity portrayed in *And She Became Angel* presented in a refreshing demeanour. Mandak was empowered with her one thing of life with a manner of no turning back to her past. Her mission completed though in a violent ending. A life-pricing transformation of a Malay woman's life has marked her as a brave and independent female who would shine in the dark at all times.

As for "A Subtle Degree of Restraint", Elena had deceived herself by turning herself into becoming the second position in the domination of clauses. The most prominent category was thus the social-cultural elements as themes in the thematization of the clauses. All these clause initials began from what Elena thought, saw and felt, but were released from her five senses independently into new clauses that eventually had forsaken Elena as the Subject of the clause or in Hallidayan terms -- the Participant of the Process. The story was occupied with all the minor and trivial things like a vase, a mochi, a glass, and a waiter. The inanimate objects had dominated most of the clauses ranging from what Elena recalled of the Iron Chefs of human bodies in her slimming programmes, the six wedding receptions in the past, what Elena saw such as a vase in the restaurant, a mochi she was struggling for.

From the flow of the clauses, Elena was a highly materialistic woman with things representing modern city life, slimming programmes, Japanese cuisine, a hotel restaurant, a young husband with political connections, and so on so forth. However, she was not a happy modern Malay woman. She had to go through slimming programmes in order to secure a husband with a certain social status. She was lonely and helpless as she was imprisoned by her surroundings from the dearest husband to a round-shaped vase at the hotel hall. She was lonely as she was mutedly indulging herself in her stream of consciousness. She was helpless because she was alienated by her husband and her good girlfriend. She is a typical representation of new highbred Malay women in a cosmopolitan, gaining all the material possessions by losing her freedom to be herself.

Her focus throughout the whole short story was on all the materialized gains and perception of things around her. She was barren and desperately wanting a baby for herself to secure her marriage; however, the baby that she desired became a metaphor of the food she was desiring. Her fancy for babies became "the plump, doughy ones with big pools for eyes looked good enough to eat," and "slow-roasted on a rotisserie, until the cuteness caramelised into gooey skins encasing juicy, tender meat." (A Subtle Degree of Restraint, p. 3). She is a lady of leisure, a prototype of new hybrid of Modern Malay women in the cosmopolitan. She enjoyed good life, driving a car, meeting an old girlfriend at the Japanese restaurant in a hotel, wanting to destroy a round-shape vase and repaying some money for the destroyed one at the hotel. She had all the wild desires for food and baby in her mind but at the end of the story, after knowing her over-weight girlfriend pregnant without getting married, enjoying all the good food during the

gathering at the Japanese restaurant, she was enraged with all the contradictions of life that she walked out from the hotel unhappily.

In fact, Elena was not an action taker. The departure points of the clauses revealed her more as Sensers through different Mental Processes. Despite having all the good things of life, her education, high social status, and material enjoyment of life, she had not progressed into becoming an independent and modern Malay woman. Instead, she was enslaved to the perception of becoming a modern Malay woman with a fashionable image but remained financially dependent on her husband with certain political connections.

Unlike Elena, Badariah was the opposite of the new hybrid Malay women. She openly expressed her likes and dislikes, enjoyed food on the table without any hesitations because of her weight, and when she said, "I am pregnant. He's a Malay", this terrified Elena with the response "But when—who married you?" The reply came with a wry smile, "You silly bitch," "not everyone has to starve themselves to get a man. Mine is actually likes me this way." Pregnancy before marriage is *haram* in the Muslim world. Badariah had violated this social norm in the Muslim world and was dimly acceptable with her background studying in a college and working as a successful career woman in the USA.

Although Badariah did not dominate the most clauses as the Participants of the Processes in the clausal level, she had most Material Processes upon her domination of clauses. No further judgement to the so called 'haram' in the story, Elena the Senser would not take any action and Badariah the Actor would walk away from the social norm that she detested. She tossed some money for the bill at the end of the reunion

gathering. The Material, Behavioral, and Verbal Processes that she carried had demonstrated her an Actor, a Behaver, and a Sayer who feared not the surroundings, internally and externally.

# 5.2.3 Summary of Findings Pertaining to Research Question 3: What prevalent themes construe the representation of Malay women's identity in the selected short stories?

The concerns of the three selected Malay women writers could never have departed from their upbringing and societies they reside in. Accordingly, the employment of SFL as an analytical tool of the text (the Mode) can be extended to the study of the social context (the Field) and the writers' background (the Tenor) concurrently. The realization and the representation of Malay women's identity therefore include discourse on women, Malay women, and Malay Muslim women from the Malay women writers to the Malay women characters in the selected short stories.

### 5.2.3.1 Malay women writers and the world they reside

The prevalent themes in the realization of Malay women identity in the selected study of short stories are rooted in the bosom of the three selected Malay women writers. In the findings of *Gender, Malayness and the Ummah* (Dahlia, 2014) probing cultural consumption and Malay-Muslim identity, anxieties of being Malay have been discovered through different types of locally-produced popular material. One of the examples regarding the censorship applied in Yasmin's movie *Sepet* (2004) is nonetheless an evidence showing the anxiety that a certain scene is not adhere to the official line of Malayness by the authorities when the scene of two women picking lice

from each other's head was censored. In the progressive evolution of the new hybrid Malay, many Malay women writers in the MLE first identified themselves as Malay Muslim. Che Husna presented a perfect Muslim world in *Mariah*, while Dina Zaman said "*I am Muslim*", and coincidentally Karina Bahrin also claimed that "*I am a Muslim*, too" in her personal blog. One would not stress on and pronounce their identity belonging to a certain community since they reside in their own homeland as part of the largest population in their own country. The anxiety is over spilt, apparently.

#### Che Husna and Mariah

To handle anxiety, deep in the writers' consciousness, the polygamy in "Mariah" was perfectly justified. The outmost highest human values of polygamy are to help and protect women who were under privileged in the traditional setting. Accordantly, Mariah (Nor Faridah, 2000) with the status of being widowed has met the fundamental criteria set in the Qur'an. Instead of marrying an old woman who needed help and protection like what the prophet did in the Qur'an, the Imam marries an attractive woman with a slim body shape and enjoying financial freedom, Mariah. Polygamy is further supported because Cik Yam was barren after over 10 years of marriage. The sainted Imam "is an honest man with modesty" (C 366, C367, Spirit of the Keris, p.12) while struggling against his personal lust to take Mariah as the second wife.

In an interview and a past research related to Che Husna's literary works (Quayum, 2007; Nor Faridah 1996), polygamy is not a matter of dispute from the Islamic perspective; however, the Imam's dramatic performance in *Mariah* is nonetheless a satire, mocking the lustful and selfish Imam who sabotaged his identity as a religious leader and the Qur'an's teaching of modesty. While claiming universal values of

humanity in their fictional works, Malay women writers advocate the essence of Quranic teachings at the same time. Instead of highlighting gender equality, Che Husna presented cultural and gender differences in the Muslim world which seemingly, interpreted a balance of feminism and Islamic feminism (Seedat, 2013; Nor Fadirah, 2000).

Che Husna is a Malay woman writer with great humour when she ended *Mariah* in a heart-lighted way. Cik Yam has been crowned as the almost perfect Muslim wife of a religious leader, and continued her life as a female religion head among the women folk with her outstanding housekeeping skills, her unconditional submission to her husband and her awareness to stand away from gossips in the women talks. Their perfect world co-existed without any conflicts among its inhabitants. Che Husna's witty humour is revealed from those minor clauses, "Oh Mariah..." interrogative and explanative, "Oh Mariah, why do you have to look like her from your toes right up to your eyebrows!" mocking the pious man, the Imam's devilish desires. Skilfully plotting the story, Che Husna amusingly applied irony and sarcasm underscoring *Mariah* as a satire, a comedy.

### Dina Zaman and And She Became an Angel

To have a profound view upon Mandak in *And She Became an Angel*, Dina Zaman and her anthropological explorations of her Muslim faith and the Malayness of her Malay identity could be a contributing factor in a collection of her columns *I am Muslim* and a collection of her short stories in *King of the Sea*. Her fascination with different faiths (Zaman, 2018) in the *tanah air* she resides is also another area of studies that could be an enriching interpretation of *And She Became an Angel*. Instead of saying she had an over-spelt amount of anxiety declaring herself "*I am Muslim*", Dina Zaman did not

frame herself inside the box of being a Malay Muslim. Rather, she is relaxed and confident. Thus, Mandak showed no hesitation and made no withdrawal in the mission of her "one thing of life" in *And She Became an Angel*.

Another contribution to her daring of writing taboo topics in the Malay Muslim society could be detected from her international upbringing and education as a writer professionally trained in the world class university of creative writing, Lancaster University in the U.K. With the professional training in creative writing, she could always distinguish the arts of creative writing from her inherited background as a Muslim, a Malay Muslim, and a Malay Muslim female writer. Thus, the taboo topics are never a dispute from her perspective as her focus is on creative arts of writing from the subject-matters she has immersed herself in the daily life.

From her interview (2018) in a YouTube video, and from a reading and sharing session held by The Art House which directed by Steinberg in the series of a National Critics Choice (July, 2014) that the researcher attended, Dina Zaman shared her experience as a Muslim living in the Western countries, her exposure to different interpretations of becoming Muslim in international settings, and her adaptation as a Muslim in her home country. Her experience implied that though many Muslim's lives were regulated by the constitution, they still could find *little spaces* of their own after abiding themselves to Sharia ruling such as putting on a hijab or a burqa. In her interview, she quoted an example that even while donning a hijab, the Malay Muslim woman could still be an in-house pole dancer for her Muslim husband (Dian Zaman, 2018).

The universal values of humanity should be transcending across all religions (Dina Zaman, 2014). Viewing from the study of anthropologies, she contested that one should embrace the past of one's legacy instead of blindly following the Islamization from the Middle East. In a few occasions, her liberal views exploring different religious practices in the Malaysian contexts were in fact a taboo to the main stream of her Muslim background (Dina Zaman, 2018).

In *King of the Sea*, Dina Zaman's characters in the short stories were somehow peculiar from the normal people in the Muslim world. The nine short stories in *King of the Sea* presented different types of magical realism in the remote rural Malay settings. Bradley concluded that Dina's attempt at imparting magical realism in her stories did not "go far enough" (2014). While domestic researchers like Ida Baizura & Nor Hashim (2018) and Alifah (2015) investigated *King of the Sea* from Islamic and cultural perspectives, Alifah claimed that Dina Zaman would possibly confuse Malay Muslim's faith because of the magical and miraculous characters or plots in the stories.

Viewing from alternative and non-objective Muslim Malay worldviews, the characteristics of magical realism in *King of the Sea*, was no stranger in reflecting local Malay superstitions, myths and legends (Ida Baizura & Nor Hashim, 2018). From the interviews and her research on faith from an anthropological perspective, Dina Zaman had indeed "gone" far enough as a Malay Muslim. The elements of magical realism in her short stories were in fact one of the *little spaces* she could enjoy with when Mandak saw a "ray of light" (C 284) in the worshipping congregation at the mosque and claimed "Allah is wonderful" (C286). Dina Zaman seemed like being entrusted with a mission to remind her fellow Malay folks, beside using the most dominant marker of identity

like becoming Muslim under the Malaysian constitution to identify themselves as Malays, the Malayness passing down from the folklores, the superstitious past in the rustic kampong could be a cultural marker which is actually inseparable from the Malay legacy.

On the whole, her effort in putting herself being a Malay and a Muslim should be taken with a respectable manner. She is indeed happy being a Malay and a Muslim. Mandak a tragicomedy is again a nostalgic mirage of the old good kampong days. Similar with *Mariah*, Dina Zaman illuminated the readers a balanced but metaphysical Malay origins who embrace their legacy as Malay and also Muslim, the outmost value of modesty in the Qur'an. Mandak in *And She Became an Angel* was indeed ended beautifully and has shown the interpretation of Malaysia Malay women's identity in Dina Zaman's heart. At times she admitted herself a member of the Islamic constitution; however, the interpretation of being Muslim should transcend doctrines that were abused by different parties of the Muslim ummah. Similarly, Mandak on one hand, demonstrated a victimised female sacrificing herself at the end, while on the other hand, she has fulfilled her life mission of becoming a feathered Western angel openly in the eyes of the kampong folks. The sanctification process of Mandak through the village fire was the final destiny she desired, a comedy instead of a tragedy.

### Karina Bahrin and A Subtle Degree of Restraint

The setting of *A Subtle Degree of Restraint* was entirely different from Mariah's Kelantanese kampong and Mandak's old, rustic village in Terengganu. Malay women in a globalized Kuala Lumpur were presented in a sophisticated manner. Elena represented ladies of leisure who resided in the cosmopolitan Kuala Lumpur. They did

not need to attend the routines of 9 to 5 office hour work life, but enjoyed luxurious lifestyle such as going for slimming programmes, having afternoon tea with their girlfriends, showing intolerable mannerisms towards things they disliked, and so on so forth. Elena with an urbanised lifestyle with luxury in a highly globalised cosmopolitan, yet still enslaved herself with all the traditional old mentality of securing a husband by keeping herself slim and pretty. She is indeed not moving forward from the Malay women in the 60s and 70s. From the investigation of the clauses she initiated in the SFL, nothing important happens in her daily routine except day dreaming of babies, body weight, and sumptuous food. A portrayal of Malay woman in a modern image but with the old bondage in the inner.

Karina Bahrin sketches Badariah as a reflection of the new hybrid Malay woman. Badariah was the new hybrid Malay woman, coming back from the USA, working as a successful career woman, being overweight, and showing a good appetite for fine food. She was fearless and confident. Nonetheless, independent. Badariah could be a successful transformation of Mandak in *And She Became an Angel*. Mandak is an action performer in the village, while Badariah a brave native of the cosmopolitan.

A Subtle Degree of Restraint is a story of two Malay women in an urban setting. They were presented as the two extreme representation of new hybrid Malay women in a highly globalized cosmopolitan Kuala Lumpur, eating unagi and mochi in a hotel decorated with a big round vase imported from Vietnam. A casual gathering and chitchatting with not much disclosure of their identity of who, from where, doing what were compatible to their citizenship in the cosmopolitan. People living in cities could be known by their names, such as Elena or Badariah; however, the readers would not

know where they live, what they earned for a living, what they liked or disliked, and how they overcame their ups and downs of life. As such, pregnancy before marriage could be a possible experience that this new hybrid of Malay women have when they are distanced from other Muslim ummah.

It is through the investigation at the clausal level of *A Subtle Degree of Restraint*, the main protagonist of the story, Elena, was unveiled. Nevertheless, she is known not by her overt doings, behaviour or conversation but her inner stream of consciousness and emotions. She is a typical urban woman, reserved and careful in her actions, but could be suddenly provoked because of the stress she was experiencing. The premarital pregnancy of Badariah is comparatively safe from the detection of the Shariah Court in the urban than in the rural. Badariah with her independent financial status and career as a Modern Malay woman, the issue of marriage or premarital pregnancy consequently could be covered spontaneously since living in an expensive condominium or residential dwelling, people are distanced and indifferent in the community.

Karina's *A Subtle Degree of Restraint* has been under-researched as the writer is relatively not that prominent compared to Che Husna and Dina Zaman. The review on *A Subtle Degree of Restraint* was mentioned in Chapter 2. Karina Bahrin confessed herself a more privilege urban habitant with fortunate upbringing where she was not restricted to pursue her dreams as her parents were both professional intellectuals (Shankar, 2020). However, she made a dramatic move relocating herself from Kuala Lumpur to Pulau Langkawi, from the cosmopolitan where she had been living and working for more than 40 years. She did not allow herself being nailed inside the box, in the cosmopolitan after over 20 years of success in her PR agency career.

Seemingly, Badariah, could be a representation of the new hybrid of Malaysia Malay women who were brave, independent and out-spoken. In contrast, the dilemma of Elena could be a release of anger from the heart of a Malaysian Malay woman in the jungle of concretes with fast moving globalization. Karina Bahrin, born an urban citizen, knew and understood both Badariah and Elena like her own self. A very short story, *A Subtle Degree of Restraint*, underscores Malaysian Malay women in the challenging cosmopolitan.

Malay women writers in the MLE are marginalized not because of their ethnicity or contribution but just because of their scarcity if compared to other women writers of MLE of Indian or Chinese origins. This is possibly because Malay literature has been debuted as the national literature, and the strategy of confirming Malay identity through their religion, culture and language (Jerome, 2013) has inevitably side-lined those Malay writers who laboured in the MLE. These Malay writers in the MLE could be alienated in their homeland by their own people. However, even though they were small in number, they shone and enlightened the world they lived in and the community they represented. Karina Bahrin is one of these examples; she wrote and inspired from the construction of the characters in *A Subtle Degree of Restraint*.

From the clausal investigation of the story, the sense of restraint overflows. Elena is supposed to be the doer performing all the overt actions, in SFL terms, Actors with different Material Processes. On the contrary, she has betrayed herself with her other roles as Sensers, and Behavers in those clauses she initiates. Unquestionably, in Karina Bahrin's cosmopolitan, Malay women on one hand are trapped in the traditional role of the past as Elena, passive and reserved; on the other hand, they are forward looking like

Badariah, brave and aggressive. Husbands and child bearing have never stopped haunting their thought, but premarital pregnancy and financial independence are not taboo issues in the conversations any more.

### 5.2.3.2 Malay women and the world of the short stories they reside

The portrayal of Malay women in *Mariah* was descended by the Malay women who lived in the 60s and 70s. They were there but they were silenced. Cik Yam as the women head was defeated by the patriarchal system (Nor 2000). As a member of the perfect Muslim world, women were essentially didactic, willingly or unwillingly dominated by their male counterparts (Ungku Maimunah, 1986). The *nasi berlauk*, the women chatters, the *kain lepas*, the wailing in the bedroom, and lastly the perfumed Mariah were all elements of feminism which had created ripples but not strong enough as waves that could bring changes to the real world they resided.

The didactic virtues and submission were sacrifices of the Malay women to the perfect Muslim world. Gender equality is succumbed as all the women were happy in the ending of the perfect world. However, that Mariah received the entitlement of the short story *Mariah* implies that Malay women were seen though they were not heard; they were not leading yet they were debuted. A step forward of Malay women was moved in *Mariah* by Che Husna if compared to the women in Shanon Ahmad's portrayal. After all, these women were the heroines who sustain the perfect Muslim world.

Mandak, being the only representative of Malay women in *And She Became an Angel*, characterises a very contrasting image of Malay women's identity. Her life effort is to become a western-like angel with two feathered wings, the one thing of life after

garnishing garlics and chili every day for almost her entire life. Mandak portrayals an awakening Malay woman whose eyes sparks with the dream of becoming an angel. She forsook her feminism elements such as preparing meals, waiting for the husband, and started her pursue of the one thing of life. In contrast to *Mariah*, *And She Became an Angel* signifies a breakthrough that Malay women could fight against the didactic and submissive role in the tradition of being Malay women.

A Subtle Degree of Restraint foregrounded an eruption of Malay women's sentiment in a rapid globalised cosmopolitan. Elena has physically qualified her identity as a native of the cosmopolitan Kuala Lumpur; however, the struggles of securing a first-class husband with the slimming programme and controlled diet, becoming timid and quiet in front of her husband and her long-time girlfriend have shuttered the dream of the new hybrid Malay woman. Her anger exploded while walking out from the restaurant accentuated the degree of restraint being a Malay woman in the great cosmopolitan.

The complication of being new hybrid Malay women is foreshadowed by Elena's anger and Badaria's "wry smile". In a rapid globalised city, Malay women were neither winners nor losers. In fact, they no longer take a moralistic stance like their forbearers of the Malaysia Malay literature in response to the social changes and challenges they were experiencing. On the contrary, both Elena and Badaria were courageous from different ways. One clung on the tradition but presented herself a refreshing portrayal of Malay women with probably a colourful *tudung*, refined makeover, and branded accessories. Another presented an independent, open and jolly figure of Malaysia Malay woman with all types of freedom, no diet control, no hunger of love and sex, and

most importantly no financial hiccups. They both indeed have depicted a new portrayal of Malaysia Malay women in a rapid globalised cosmopolitan.

### 5.3 Conclusion

Focusing on the central notion of language and its configuration of meanings in the text, the present study demonstrated how textual and experiential metafunctions construed the representation of Malaysian Malay women that realise their identity in the investigation of the three selected short stories written by three Malay women writers. The designated mission was completed mainly due to the fluidity of language that the writers used in creating fictional worlds, the overt and inner realities of human beings. Meanings of the short stories realized were parallel with Halliday's conceptual framework in which writers consciously or unconsciously negotiated with the readers their main concerns about the world they perceived. Language has indeed given the power to illuminate readers in creative writing genres. The study of literature has become substantial when it is empirical and the evidences provided in this study is proven. Likewise, discourse analysis is no longer a dispute with too much grammatical analysis as it is able to provide insightful findings in the textual configuration that reviews the writers' concerns towards the world they reside in.

Issues on Malaysian Malay women presented in the three selected short stories unveiled the concerns of the three selected Malay women writers. With different upbringings, these Malay women writers shared various life experiences of Malaysian Malay women from the remote rural area to the Cosmopolitan of Kuala Lumpur. However, these experiences of life realise certain universal truth of humanity. Malaysian Malay women

planted in a highly Islamised society, either enjoyed their peaceful lives in the kampong or indulged in luxurious materialised life styles in the cosmopolitan. It can be safely construed that they faced challenges and issues that are commonly anticipated by many women all over the globe.

### **5.4 Implications of the Study**

Findings of Malaysia Malay women either in the Malaysian Literature or the MLE from the past have formed stereotyping images of Malay women from the chronological investigations or conventional literary theories. Malay women most of the time carried a blur image in the fictional world of Malay literature in the early decades. They were nobody. No actual actions shown, no voice heard and no clear countenance seen. Limited to the lanes of male writers, they were either presented as a didactic model (Shanon Ahmad, 1966) or a victimized prey of their male counterparts (Azizi, 1979).

Even after the cutting edge of the development in the MLE, studies of Malay women in the MLE from an Islamic theory were still confined in the tradition, virtues and family in the rapid globalised setting (Ellina Abdul Majid, 1997). However, from a clausal base text analysis, a refreshing encounter of Malay women was reformed. Independent Mariah and submissive Cik Yam were the two pillars which sustained the perfect Muslim world in *Mariah*; victimised Mandak became the epic heroin in *And She Became an Angel*; Badariah in *A Subtle Degree of Restraint* could be an anonymous revolutionist of the religious tradition.

The present study has demonstrated the employment of the System of Theme/Rheme and the System of Transitivity as instruments probing a discourse analysis of Malaysia Malay women's identity from three selected short stories. The Hallidayan System of Theme and Rheme is proven resourceful in attuning the writers' main concerns and investigating the representations of the inner and outer world of experiences that the protagonists involved. It also imparts a unique approach bridging grammatical knowledge to literature reading. In the three selected short stories, choices made by the writers in the clause initials have inaugurated the progression of themes.

The distribution of the thematic choices which are linked by the cohesive ties intertwining across the clauses discloses the concerns of the women writers and eventually unveils the meanings of Malaysia Malay women identity. The interpretation of the identity of Malaysian Malay women is subsequently triangulated from the representation of the Process Types, Participants and Circumstances of the clauses. The 3-stage analysis of the short stories is indeed an empirical method of investigating meanings construed by the short story.

Connecting SFL approach to CDA is frequently found in analysing political commentary in the newspaper (Alvaro, 2014), political speeches (Kazemian & Hashemi, 2014), news reports (Lukin, Butt, & Matthiessen, 2014) and news commentary (Sim, 2007). SFL analysis in newspaper commentary, classroom texts, and business letters are commonly applied as this investigation also fell in the realms of genre and corpus analysis. Within a certain pattern, the exploration of speech and power is fascinating to many researchers.

Triangulating literature, CDA, and literature criticism is what the present study is commissioned to. A refreshing approach of reading short stories would be beneficial to students, educators and academicians if the findings of the study are reader friendly and comprehensive when it associates the solemn grammar rules to creative writing with an in-depth perspective upon certain social discourses. This is because literature represents discursive communities while grammar in the language is restricted to grammatical rules. The interpretation of a literary work from its grammatical threads in the text is thus a reflection of connecting the relationship of the text to its context. The hermeneutic approach in this study had implied a paradigm worth of further consolidation in future literary and linguistic studies.

Discourses in the Malaysian Malay women's identity have been discussed many times from the Islamic theory of analysis, gender and feminist studies. With a certain framework, these discussions were arrayed by Malaysia's own political correctness and social-cultural complexity. In addition, it could be also constrained by the deep-rooted social-cultural ideology that the researchers, religious leaders and policy makers imposed. The current research, with its empirical investigation of text, is a refreshing and divergent view of religion and culture on the Muslim world or Islamic topics such as polygamy and deprivation of the Muslim womanhood.

It further hovers over the limitation of the findings that *Mariah* is not a story of Mariah, where polygamy was sanctified by a selfish Imam; Western-like angels are not unacceptable by its woman writer; and the new hybrid of modern Malay woman is in a dilemma with globalization, are explicitly true from the grammatical analysis at the clausal level. Hence, this study has shed some lights on the exploration of humanity in

the pool of literary criticism, especially on the discussion of women issues from the marginalized group of Malay women writers in the MLE.

## 5.5 Recommendation

The study has shown how the Hallidayan notion of Themes function as points of departure in clauses within the text in the selected short stories and how thematization leads to the Transitivity configuration of meanings in the Experiential interpretation of texts. Due to constraints from certain unforeseen circumstances, the current study was confined to three short stories written by three Malaysian Malay women. However, it engaged a dynamic and in-depth investigation to the lexico-grammatical resources of the selected literary works and provides a different hermeneutic approaches to a broader realm of text analysis, specifically to the creative genre of literary works. Hence, the results derived from bigger corpus investigation of literary works would further support the credibility of the present study.

As the literary works written by Malaysian Malay women writers in MLE are limited to the number of writers of Malay origins, similar approaches could be employed in researching literary works written in Bahasa Malaysia for a more holistic finding in the construction of the identity of Malaysia Malay women. A comparative study between works written in two languages on the perception of Malaysian Malay women's identity would enhance the knowledge of Malaysian Malay Muslim women and challenges the they faced. This will also support the findings declared by the Global Gender Gap Index in 2018.

As the researcher has been involved in tertiary education for more than 10 years, applying grammatical knowledge in reading literary texts could be a possible teaching methodology in teaching literature in the English Language programmes. The analytical approach applied in the current research is an attempt at simplifying tedious grammatical rules to its basic version in categorizing different types of clauses, identifying the characteristics of various Subjects and Verbs accordingly. It is thus a practical application for English Language students at the tertiary level to test their grammar knowledge and also employ critical and analytical skills in reading literary texts.

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## **APPENDIX**

Mariah					Dec.				WI	n-in	Y/I	N-in	E.iı	mp.	l.in	Ex					
Stage 1 Analysis	Marked Topical	Marked Textual	Marked+Inter	Marked+Textual+Interp	Unmarked Topical	Unmarked Textual	Unmarked Interpersonal	Unmarked+Textual+Inter	Topical	Textual	Topical	Textual	Topical	Interpersonal	Topical	exclamination	minor clause	Fronted B clause	Textual +Fronted	Marked Fronted	Inter Fronted
It was seven in the morning on a typical day in the small village town of Molo.					1																
The main trunk road from Pasir Puteh to Kota Bharu was already choked with the bicycle traffic from school children winding their way to the three main schools in the village.					1																
The hub of activity was now the market square where men congregate to have breakfast.					1																
Breakfast could be the various <i>nasi, roti</i> <i>canai</i> , or the myriad Kelantan breakfast <i>tepung</i>					1																
That particular morning, though, most of the men were not eating their breakfast	1																				

but instead their												
gaze was fixed												
on the main												
entrance to the												
square.				1								
Seven a.m. was												
a bit late for												
breakfast;			1									
already the first												
slant of sunlight												
was filtering												
through the eaves of the												
blinds in the												
market.				4								
The men were				1								
getting restless.			1									
They were												
definitely waiting												
for something to												
appear.			1									
Very soon after,	1											
however; there												
was much												
excitement.												
All eyes were												
transfixed on a												
figure coming												
through the entrance.												
			1									
It was the figure												
of a woman.			1									
She was delicately												
balancing two												
huge <i>basins</i> on												
her head, her												
hips swaying												
gaily to and fro												
with the rhythm												
of the balancing.			1									
That particular												
gyrating seemed												
to mesmerise the												
men			1									

and [That particular gyrating] glued them to their places.				1								
There was much to mesmerise as far as Mariah was concerned,			1									
for that was the name of the lady with the two basins on her head.				1								
Mariah was a <i>nasi</i> seller in Molo, in fact <i>the nasi</i> sell er in Molo.			1									
Every morning at seven sharp she would walk past the market entrance into the village square	1											
and [she]mesmerise the men with her swaying hips as well as her nasi: nasi k erabu, nasi belauk and nasi dagang.				1								
Rumour had it (started by women folk) that her <i>nasi</i> weren't much to crow about,			1									

but it was a												$\neg$
combination of												
Mariah's												
swaying as well												
as her easy												
smile that made												
all the men flock												
to the village												
square.												
				1								
Many a <i>nasi</i>												
belauk breakfast												i
remained cold												
			1									
and [many a												
nasi belauk												
breakfast]uneate												
n in the houses				1								
as men ignored												
their wives'												
cooking				1								
and [men] paid												
tribute to												
Mariah's instead.												
Mariah also had				1								
another asset.												
			1									
She was without												
a husband.			1									
Note that I didn't												
say either												
divorced or widowed.												
								1				
It would not have												
mattered either												
way in Kelantan.												
The most	$\vdash$		1									_
important thing												
was she was not												
with a husband.												
This was not to			1									$\dashv$
imply that she												1
was not												
decorous in her												
manners												
			1									

				1	1						 	
but men seem to want to partake of her nasi more because of her unmarried state.				1								
Mariah had been married once,			1									
but her husband had passed away soon after.			1									
There had been many suitors after her husband's untimely demise,			1									
but Mariah had seemed singularly uninterested.				1								
Rumour too (also spread by the womenfolk) had it that it was our Mariah who drove her husband to an early grave.			1									
This rumour was never corroborated by medical evidence,			1									
so we will never be able to confirm this allegation.				1								
Fifteen years after her husband's death, which would make her fortyish,	1											

Mariah would easily pass for a beauty in her late twenties.  Mariah was tall 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1	B 4 1 1 1 1 1						ı			,	,		-	
beauty in her late twenties.  1														ı .
twenties.  Mariah was tall  and [she was]well- proportioned  and [Mariah] moved gracefully  No, [she did ]not gracefully  but [she moved]sensuous ly.  Her face was unlined, her complexion fair  and her very dark, very black eyes appeared to glow.  Mariah always had on a short kebaya whi ch accentuated her well- proportioned curves.  As a concession to propriety she used to cover her head and part of her torso with akain lepas, a two-metre traditional head and body cover much favoured by the working womenfolk of														
Mariah was tall and [she was]well-proportioned and [Mariah] moved gracefully.  No. [she did ]not gracefully 1   1   1   1   1   1   1   1   1   1														
and [she was well-proportioned and [Mariah] moved gracefully.  No.				1										
was well-proportioned and [Mariah] moved gracefully.  No, [she did ]not gracefully but [she moved]sensuous ly.  Her face was unlined, her complexion fair and her very dark, very black eyes appeared to glow.  Mariah always had on a short kebaya which accentuated her well-proportioned curves.  As a concession 1 to propriety she used to cover her head and part of her torso with akain lepas, a two-metre traditional head and body cover much favoured by the working womenfolk of				1										
proportioned and [Mariah] moved gracefully.  No. [she did] not gracefully 1  but [she moved]sensuous ly.  Her face was unlined, 1  her complexion fair 1  and her very dark, very black eyes appeared to glow. 1  Mariah always had on a short kebaya whi ch accentuated her well-proportioned curves. 1  As a concession 1 to propriety she used to cover her head and part of her torso with akain lepas, a two-metre traditional head and body cover much favoured by the working womenfolk of														
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moved gracefully.  No.  [She did] not gracefully 1	· ·				1									
gracefully.  No, [she did ]not gracefully  but [she moved]sensuous ly.  Her face was unlined,  her complexion fair  and her very dark, very black eyes appeared to glow.  Mariah always had on a short kebaya whi ch accentuated her well- proportioned curves.  As a concession to propriety she used to cover her head and part of her torso with akain lepas, a two-metre traditional head and body cover much favoured by the working womenfolk of														
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but [she moved]sensuous   y.	[she did ]not													
moved]sensuous ly.  Her face was unlined, her complexion fair  and her very dark, very black eyes appeared to glow.  Mariah always had on a short kebaya whi ch accentuated her well-proportioned curves.  As a concession to propriety she used to cover her head and part of her torso with akain lepas, a two-metre traditional head and body cover much favoured by the working womenfolk of	gracefully			1										ı
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and body cover much favoured by the working womenfolk of														
much favoured by the working womenfolk of														
by the working womenfolk of	-													
womenfolk of														
														1
														,

The Kota Bharu Nickies [prefer either a sliver of a scarf or go bare-headed],				1									
or the more modern women prefer either a sliver of a scarf or go bareheaded,					1								
but in Molo one does not go about without a kain lepas.		1											
To do so would be to incur the wrath of the village Imam, who was the guardian of modesty and propriety and enforcer of stringent mores.				1									
On that particular morning, the Imam was with the men,	1												
[the men was] falling on Mariah's nasi belauk with much relish.				1									
His wife's own nasi belauk was still waiting for him on his kitchen table under the tudung saji,				1									
[the nasi belauk was]getting very cold indeed.				1									

The Imam's wife													
was pottering													
about in her													
spotless kitchen,				1									
[The Iman's wife													
was] muttering													
about the Imam's													
lateness for													
breakfast.													
		-	$\dashv$	1									
The Imam liked													
his <i>nasi belauk</i>				1									
and his wife took													
great care in its													
preparation.					1								
Her culinary													
skills were not													
her only attribute;													
				1									
her	$\vdash \vdash$	$\dashv$	$\dashv$										
housekeeping													
was also a													
model to be													
followed by other													
womenfolk in the													
village.				1									
One could													
always call at the													
Imam's house at													
any time of the													
day, guaranteed													
to be greeted by													
a well-turned-out													
wife, hot													
tepung and													
fragrant													
surroundings.													
				1									
The Imam's wife													
was somewhat													
assisted in this													
respect by not													
having grubby													
children who													
would mess													
things up.													
				1									

It was the only												
flaw in an												
otherwise perfect												
marriage.												
			1									
Quarrelsome												
couples who												
called at the												
Imam's place for												
arbitration would												
be sobered by												
the domestic												
serenity of the												
lmam's abode.												
			1									
They would all												
gape enviously												
at the												
surroundings			1									
and [they] forget												
to quarrel.				1								
They would												
listen attentively												
to the Imam's												
sermon and												
exhortations to												
peace, hang												
their heads in												
shame												
			1									
and [they												
would]make new												
resolutions,				1								
but promptly		1										
quarrel again as												
soon as they got												
home.												
Their own												
domestic												
atmospheres												
were just not												
congenial												
enough for												
peace.			اما									
			1									

about the Imam's exemplary household,  more important events were unfolding.  As the Imam's wife was vigorously scrubbing at an already spotless sink, there were salutations from the front door.  It was a delegation of womenfolk from the village headed by Cik Gu Nab, one of the local women leaders.  She was a teacher at a local primary school.  Cik Yam wiped her hands  and [Cik Yam] bade the visitors in.  They were unexpected  but [they were]		г	Т	1	1			1	1	1 1	ī	1 1	1	1 1	1		1	Т
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primary school.  Cik Yam wiped her hands 1																		
Cik Yam wiped her hands 1																		
Cik Yam wiped her hands 1	primary school.																	
her hands 1						1												
and [Cik Yam] bade the visitors in.  1  They were unexpected but [they were]	Cik Yam wiped																	
bade the visitors in. 1 1	her hands					1												
in.         1           They were unexpected         1           but [they were]         1	and [Cik Yam]																	
They were unexpected 1 but [they were]	bade the visitors																	
unexpected 1   but [they were] 1	in.						1											
unexpected 1   but [they were] 1	They were																	
but [they were]						1												
	but [they were]																	
	not unwelcome.						1											

Cik Gu Nab made small talk for a while, commenting first on Cik Yam's exquisitely appliquédsafrah before launching into the matter at hand.									1				
The matter at hand turned out to be none other than Mariah.			1										
"Cik Yam,"											1		
began Cik Gu Nab, trying to put the matter across as delicately as possible,	1												
we mean our sisters no harm,			1										
in fact we are very happy if each one of us goes about doing her own thing.					1								
As we often say, each woman to their own <i>rizq</i> .				1									
In fact, we feel very bad about having to come to you.					1								
We don't like to backbite our own sister"			1										
Cik Gu Nab cleared her throat			1										

and [Cik Gu Nab] looked at													
the others for assent.				4									
Having got it in				1									
the form of													
gravely nodding heads, Cik Gu													
Nab continued:											1		
"Cik Yam ,										1			
the problem now													
is that one of our own sisters is not													
doing her own													
thing at all,			1										
but instead													
[she's]meddling with other													
people's".				1									
The Imam's wife				_									
Cik Yam listened													
attentively.													
"Who do you			1										
mean,						1							
Cik Gu Nab?"										1			
Cik Yam asked,													
"er,this troublemaker?",													
wondering what													
this meandering													
of Cik Gu Nab's													
was leading up to.													
Cik Gu Nab was			1									_	$\dashv$
known to favour													
a touch of													
melodrama			1										
and [Cik Gu													
Nab] to use it to maximum effect													
always.				1								ı	ı
always. " <i>Why</i>	-			1						1			

							1							
we mean Mariah,														
of course, the														
nasi seller!														
			1											
Don't tell me you														
don't know what														
she's been up														
to!"									1					
Cik Gu Nab									_					
looked peeved at														
Cik Yam's														
ignorance of														
important village														
matters.														
			1											
What can Mariah														
possibly be up														
to,			1											
thought Cik Yam.	1													
Mariah was apt														
to go around in														
her short and														
loud <i>kebaya</i> ,			1											
but she was														
always properly														
covered by														
her <i>kain lepas</i> .				1										
If she hadn't				1									-	$\dashv$
been so, the Imam would														
have reminded														
Cik Yam to pay														
her a visit.												1		
So it couldn't														
have been														
the <i>kain lepas</i> .				1										
"No,											1			
I don't know,			1											
Cik Gu Nab.											1			
What has she														
been up to?"						1								
Cik Yam smiled														ᅱ
sweetly.			1											
Cik Yam knew														$\dashv$
about most														
village matters,			1											
villago matters,			1											

but not quick enough, it would seem.		1											
She was always too busy with housework to gossip.				1									
Besides, it was not considered proper for the Imam's wife to be caught gossiping.					1								
"Cik Yam,"											1		
continued Cik Gu Nab,	1												
"Mariah has been enticing our men to abandon their homes for herkedai merpati.				1									
You know											1		
her nasi cannot be that special.				1									
Why,											1		
I am sure for one she cannot beat your nasi belauk."				1									
(Cik Yam readily agreed).				1									
"But why do all these men seem hell-bent on eating breakfast at her place?							1						
I reckon,				1									
I mean				1									$\Box$
we reckon she has put something in her nasi."				1									

Cik Gu Nab			I					1		l				$\overline{}$
paused for														1
breath.				_										ı
"I can't believe				1										
														1
that,				1										
Cik Gu Nab!											1			
God forbid!"											1			
Cik Yam														
considered her														i
next words														i
carefully.				1										
"We cannot														
accuse Mariah of														
something so														1
grave without														
any concrete														
evidence.				1										1
That's terribly														
unfair [to her],				1										1
you know,											1			
Cik Gu Nab.											1			
Perhaps that		1												
'something' you														
alleged she put														1
in the nasi is just														
plain skill,														1
Allah knows."											1			
Cik Gu Nab														
started.				1										1
She felt she was														
being														
reproached.				1										
She did not like														
this allusion to														
her cooking skills														
either.				1										
Certainly , it was													$\dashv$	
not her forte,					1									
still Cik Yam was										<del>                                     </del>			$\dashv$	
being very														
malicious, she														
thought.					1									
"I didn't say 'it'	$\vdash$		$\vdash$										-	-
enticed all the														
men, Cik Yam.				1										
mon, on rain.			L							<u> </u>				

				1								· •	
My Cik Gu Leh													
(Cik Gu Nab's													
husband), for													
instance, would													
never dream of													
having breakfast													1
anywhere but at													1
home.			1										
Some men do													
get easily													
enticed,			1										
some don't.			1										
	1		1										
Speaking of	1												
which, I saw the													
sainted Tok													
Imam himself													
having breakfast													
at Mariah's"													
Having delivered													
this stinging													ı
repartee, Cik Gu													ı
Nab stood and													
left in a huff.													
											1		
In a pointed	1												
rebuff, she did													
not even say a													
proper farewell.													
Cik Yam went a													
deep shade of													
crimson.													ı
			1										
Cik Gu Nab's last													
retort was as													
good as a slap													
on the face.			1										
Cik Yam,													
incidentally, was													
a seasoned													
politician.			1										
The words stung													
her, surely,	L		1				L						
but she did not													
flinch.				1									
She was													
unnerved,			1										
		 								_	_	 	

but she quickly								l					
but she quickly													
regained enough													
composure to smile at the rest													
of the delegates,					1								1
[she] served													
them her													
beautiful tepung				1									
and [she]													
indulged in the													
social niceties													
required.					1								
Replete with Cik	1												
Yam's tepung an													,
d fortified with													
the latest gossip,													
the ladies then													
left.													
Only then did			1										
Cik Yam sit down													
to think of a way													
to settle the issue													
with the Imam.													1
He was not													
going to escape													
unscathed, that													
she was going to													
make sure of!				1									
The Imam went													1
about his usual													1
business				1									
and [The Iman]													1
came home at													1
12:30 to have his													
lunch.	Ш				1								
Cik Yam was													
there to greet													
him;	Ш			1									
she took of													
his <i>kuffiyah</i>	Ш			1									
and [she]gave													
him a													
clean <i>sarong</i> to													1
change into.					1								

				ı		i i	1	i i		i i	i i	i i		<del></del>
The Imam looked at his wife with obvious pride.														
				1										
There was not a living man in Molo who did not envy him for having such a devoted wife.				1										
But then, quick as lightning, as always he would look around at his empty house		1												
and [he would] let out a sigh.														
Why couldn't his wife bear children like other women?						1								
Some women, it seemed, have the fecundity of rabbits, but not his wife.												1		
Like all men of his generation, it never occurred to him he could be the culprit in his wife's supposed inability to bear children.	1													
As far as he was concerned, bearing children was a woman's job	1													
and if she didn't there was something wrong with her.													1	

F	1											I	
Fertility had													
nothing to do													
with men.				1									
"Is lunch ready,													
Yam?"							1						
asked the Imam.	1												
"Why,										1			
yes,										1			
Abang.										1			
I am sure for one													
she cannot beat													
your nasi													
belauk."				1									
replied Cik Yam.	1												
The Imam picked													
up the tudung													
saji for his lunch,													
				1									
but much to his		1											
surprise it turned		-											
out to be the													
morning's <i>nasi</i>													
belauk.													
He was stunned													
into silence for a													
good few													
minutes.				1									
Cik Yam took the				1									
opportunity to													
confront him.													
				1									
"I thought you													
would still like to													
finish off my nasi													
belauk after you													
breakfasted at													
Mariah's.													
				1									

Affor all I have												
After all, I have												
to prove that												
my <i>nasi</i>												
belauk is still												
edible compared												
to												
Mariah's especia												
lly since the												
whole village												
saw you eating												
away, behaving												
as if your wife												
has never												
prepared <i>nasi</i>												
belauk for you!												
_				1								
And Abang,										1		
I had to learn of												
it through												
someone else												
too!"			1									
Cik Yam threw												
the tudung												
saji on the floor,												
narrowly missing												
the Imam's foot,												
			1									
then [she]ran												
sobbing to their												
bedroom.				1								
What the hell is												
happening,					1							
thought the	1											
lmam.												
How did she												[
know I had												
breakfast at												
Mariah's.						1						
It must have												
been one of the												
womenfolk.			1									
"Oh women!										1		
They are so												
impossible;			1									

less also the ess	ı	I	I					I	I			ı		T	<del></del>
why do they															
have to go															
around making															
life difficult for															
men?							1								
[This]Beats the															
hell out of me,"				1											
muttered the	1														
lmam in															
vexation.															
It was the only															_
time he had ever															
gone to															
Mariah's.				1											
And he had															
done so only at															
that Cik Gu Leh'															
insistence.					1										
Cik Gu Leh had															
been extolling															
the virtues of															
Mariah's <i>nasi</i>															
belauk,				4											
				1											_
but really Cik Gu Leh is no															
authority on the															
subject						1									
as his wife Cik															
Gu Nab, as															
everybody knew,															
was a hopeless															
cook.					1										
The Imam					_										
begged to be															
excused,				1											
but Cik Gu Leh				1								<del>                                     </del>			_
was most															
					ا ا										
persistent.					1										
So finally, the															
Imam relented.						1									
The <i>nasi</i>															
belauk was, as															
he had expected,															
passable, but no															
more.															
				1											
										l .					

			1		_			·					
It did not surprise him in the least.			1										
The thing that did surprise him was Mariah herself.			1										
At the thought of Mariah the Imam smiled dreamily to himself.	1												
What a woman she is!										1			
The Imam became transported to another time, his youth			1										
When the Imam was a young man of fifteen his father had voiced his wish for his son to be sent to Pattani in Southern Thailand to learn under the tutelage of a well-known Sheikh.											1		
His father had spent a few years there himself			1										
but [his father]had not progressed very much.				1									
He had always nursed a secret ambition for his son to be the scholar he could not be			1										

				1	1	1	1		1			-	
and in doing so [he] exculpate himself.	1												
The Imam had													
protested, full of													
other plans.			1										
He had no													
stamina for the													
arduous task of													
being a scholar.			1										
He feigned			1										
indelicate health,													
indendate nearin,													
h 4 la ! a f a 41a a			1										
but his father													
had decreed.				1									
The Imam, under													
protest and													
under duress,													
was sent to													
Pattani.			1										
The Imam was													
miserable in													
Pattani, moping													
for his mother													
and his friends													
rather than													
studying.			1										
But Allah is great													
				1									
and the Imam's													
misery was soon													
alleviated.				1									
One day when				_									
he had been in													
Pattani about													
three month, the													
Imam took his													
water pot to go to													
the communal													
well for his													
ablutions.												1	
<u> </u>													

	1											
It was around												
two or three in												
the afternoon												
when there were												
not many people												
about.			1									
The Imam saw												
from a distance a												
young lady												
drawing water												
from the well.			1									
Perhaps she												
thought there												
was no one												
about					1							
so her head was												
not covered.												
				1								
The Imam saw												
her tresses in												
their full silken												
glory.												
			1									
The white of her												
skin on her bare												
throat was												
blinding.			1									
The Imam												
stopped in his												
tracks,			1									
then [he] took full												
flight.				1								
He ran trembling				_								
to his hut,												
panting and												
breathless.												
			1									
He took a drink												
of water			1									
and [he]												
reflected upon												
the event.				1								
Who could that												
beautiful												
creature be?						1						
"I love her,"			1			<u> </u>						
he said to												
himself.			1									
			Т									

"I love her				1									
and I shall make													
her mine.					1								
I want no one													
else,"				1									
he vowed.				1									
				1									
He felt his head.				1									
It was throbbing as hard as his													
heart,				1									
[It was													
throbbing]as hot and feverish as													
his passion.				1									
Then he learnt													
that the object of													
his ardour was													
the daughter of													
the Sheikh													
himself.					1								
The Imam kept													
the burning													
secret to himself.													
				1									
Even his													
housemates													
never knew of													
this love.					1								
The Imam's													
behaviour was													
nothing but													
exemplary.				1									
His manners		$\exists$		_									
were extremely													
correct,													
especially to the													
ladies.				1									
He was		$\dashv$								<del>                                     </del>			
punctilious in the													
performance of													
his duties.				1									
If the Imam was				1									
consumed with													
love, the Sheikh was the last													
person to know.													
THE STATE OF BUILDING	ı I							I			1		

<del></del>	1			1									
The Sheikh thought that the Imam stayed for the love of the Deen.				1									
It is true that as the years passed the Imam grew to love the Deen and the Sheikh,				1									
but so too did his love for the Sheikh's daughter grow.		1											
In the Imam's final year, the Sheikh was entrusting more and more of his duties to his model pupil, the Imam.	1												
The Imam was conducting <i>kulliy</i> ahs, performing prayers				1									
and sometimes [he]even paying courtesy calls on the Sheikh's behalf.		1											
He is grooming me to take his place and to be his son-in-law,				1									
thought the Imam. How full of hope	1												
he was!										1			
How sweet were the days as they passed for the Imam!										1			

		ı	1									1	1	
How he patiently														
waited for the														
day when the														
Sheikh would														
broach the														
subject to him							1							
but it was not to														
be.					_									
					1									
The Sheikh did														
broach the														
subject of his														
daughter to him				1										
but [The Sheikh]														
only to invite him														
to his daughter's														
wedding to a														
cousin.														
					_									
The state of the s					1									
The Imam was														
shattered.				1										
His world														
crashed around														
him.				1										
Pattani was														
nothing but a														
cauldron of														
smouldering														
embers.				_										
				1										
The Imam														
packed his														
books				1										
and [The Iman]														
bade good-bye														
to his Sheikh.					1									
He was really														$\neg$
very fond of the														
old man				1										
and [he was]														-
also very grateful														
for the tutelage,														
					1									
but he had to														
go.					1									

The Sheikh												$\neg$
begged him to												
stay to look after												
his mosque for												
him,			_									
			1									
but the Imam				_								
gently refused.				1								
If it were not for												
the agony of												
having to see his beloved as												
somebody else's												
wife, he would												
have stayed.												
liavo otayou.												
The Imam came										1		$\dashv$
home grieving to												
Kelantan.			1									
His mother			1									
understood the												
grieving			1									
and in a few	1											$\dashv$
months [she]												
found him Cik												
Yam.												
Cik Yam, though												一
no raving beauty,												
was an												
accomplished												
cook as well as												
being modest												
and extremely												
virtuous.												
			1									
She had been an												$\exists$
obedient			1									
and [she had												
been an												
]excellent wife,				1								
but she was not												7
the Sheikh's												
daughter.				1								
The Imam had												
been happy with												
Cik Yam			1									

l	1			1									I	$\overline{}$
and gradually			1											
as he grew older														
the hurt had													-	
eased.				1										
He had not														
thought again of														
the Sheikh's														
daughter for a														
long time				1										
that is, until that														
morning, when,														
by the fate of														
God, Cik Gu Leh														
had dragged him														
to														
Mariah's <i>kedai</i>														
merpati				1										
"Oh Mariah"											1			
sighed the	1													
lmam.														
"Why do you														
have to be so														
like her my														
long-lost love,														
the Passion of														
My Youth?							1							
Oh Mariah,											1			
why do you														
have to look like														
her from your														
toes right up to														
your eyebrows!							1							
It's a test.				1										
By Allah!											1			
It's a test."				1										
The Imam														
became very														
frightened.				1										
He left the table,				1										
[he] took his														
ablutions				1										
and [he] quickly														
went to the														
mosque.					1									

"Let me find refuge there," 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1	
he though.  "Save me, O God."  1	
"Save me, O God."	
God."	
What had his	
Sheikh always	
said in times like	
this?	
He quickly	
recollected.	
Abase Yourself	
to the One You	
Love.                   1	
Passion is Not	
Easy.	
Indeed, passion	
is not easy.	
"I have	
dispensed with	
thee, O Passion	
I have divorced	
thee thrice."	
The Imam kept	
repeating this	
litany as if in	
prayer.	
After the 1	
afternoon prayer	
the Imam stayed	
long in	
prostration.	
He dallied in the	
mosque.	
He came out	-
but [he] went in	-
again.	
Finally he went	

			1										
and [he] fell into a troubled sleep, something which he had never done before.													
				1									
The days passed.			1										
Things appeared normal.			1										
The Imam was punctual in his prayers and diligent in his duties,			1										
but his heart was in turmoil.				1									
He remembered a verse from his Pattani days			1										
0										1			
lady of excess who strips away my acts of devotion in every state.			1										
There is no kindness in my wound			1										
Either it is by abasement				1									
and it is attached to passion,				1									
or it is by might				1									
and it is attached to Kingdom				1									
If you're in your immunity, it protects us											1		

/ ·c , ·							I					Ī
and if you're in												
the sea, you												
come in the boat.												
											1	
It was either												
from Fusus AI-												
Hakam, or the												
Knowledge of												
Man,			1									
the Imam could												
not be certain,			1									
but it certainly												
seemed apt now.												
				1								
The Imam tried to												
go home to Cik												
Yam												
after <i>subuh</i> praye												
rs,			1									
but every time	1											
somehow, in												
spite of himself,												
he would be by												
Cik Gu Leh's												
side going to												
Mariah's for												
breakfast.												
Mariah saw												
nothing amiss.			1									
She treated the												
Imam with												
reverence and												
courtesy,												
befitting his												
station and												
stature.			4									
She served him			1									
the choicest												
morsels on her												
best cutlery.			_									
			1									
He was, after all,												
the village Imam.			_									
			1									

The Imam would take the nasi belauk without averting his gaze
belauk without averting his gaze
averting his gaze
from the plate in
accordance with
the Quranic
injunction for
men to lower
their gazes.
He would
tremble slightly,
but the men in
the kedai merpati
lattributed that to
extreme
modesty.
"The Imam is an
extremely
modest man," 1
thought the other   1
men,
"[he is] not used
to the company
of women."         1
Every time he 1
took the <i>nasi</i>
belauk from
Mariah
he would feel a
pang of guilt,
remembering his
wife's nasi
belauk under
the tudung saii
"Forgive me, oh
God, for men are
weak," 1
supplicated the 1
Imam silently,
spooning nasi
belauk into his
mouth.

A (1 11 '	1											1	- 1
After the <i>nasi</i>	1												
belauk the Imam													
would still tarry,													
nursing a cup of													
coffee with Cik													
Gu Leh.													
At least, that was													
how it looked on													
the surface.					1								
That was the													
time the Imam													
would use to													
steal long													
lingering glances													
at Mariah.													
at Marian.													
His heart ached			1										
with the pent-up													
longing for the													
Sheikh's													
daughter.			1										
Oh Mariah!										1			
Things would													
never be the													
same again for													
the Imam.			1										
He spent the													
nights in													
supplication,													
asking God for													
succour.			1										
He was													
frightened of the													
emotions stirred													
up by his													
unintentional													
meeting with													
Mariah.			1										
It was too			1										$\dashv$
colossal for him													
to handle.			1										
And yet he felt			1										
elated.				4									
olatou.				1									

			1										
He believed it													
was fated, a part													
of a grand													
design by God to													
heal his heart;			1										
but [is it] on the			_										
account of a													
woman?								1					
Can a beautiful													
alluring woman													
_													
be a part of a													
healing process?							1						
It seemed so							Т						
profane to the													
lmam.			1										
But why should	$\Box$												
a woman be													
more profane													
than a man?						4							
Did not the						1							
Prophet himself													
say that three													
things are													
pleasing to him,													
prayers, women													
and perfume?							1						
There you are!			1										
[there are] Proof, exoneration for													
the Imam.			1										
He felt resolved													
to do what he													
had to do.			1										
Cik Gu Leh													
would be his													
emissary.			1	L									
The Imam chose													
the occasion													
well.			1										
It had to be on a													
Thursday night,													
the eve of													
Friday.			1										
<u> </u>			_										

After prayers and long supplication, the lmam went to his bedroom.	1											
Cik Yam was sitting on the bed waiting for him to finish.			1									
He knelt by the bed			1									
and [he] kissed Cik Yam's hands.				1								
Cik Yam was surprised by this reverent show of affection			1									
but [she]did not say anything.				1								
Cik Yam waited.			1									
The Imam kissed Cik Yam's knees			1									
and then [he] placed his head on Cik Yam's lap.				1								
Cik Yam stroked his head lovingly.			1									
Immediately as if released by a valve the Imam's hot tears fell on Cik Yam's sarong.												1
Cik Yam felt the hot tears on her skin			1									
as it seeped through the sarong.				1								
Cik Yam lifted the Imam's head			1									

d	ı	ı	1										ı		
and [she]															
looked at him															
questioningly.					1										
Fifteen years of															
marital bliss had															
left its mark.				1											
Love and															
understanding															
shone through															
Cik Yam's also															
tear-filled eyes.				1											
"Tell me what															
grieves you, my															
husband,										1					
and I will make it															
better for you,"					1										
Cik Yam															
whispered to the															
lmam.				1											
At these words	1														
the Imam felt															
himself choke,															
but he steeled															
himself.					1										
He told Cik Yam															
of his unrequited															
love for the															
Sheikh's															
daughter.				1											
He told Cik Yam															
of his pain and															
longing.				1											
He then told Cik															
Yam of Mariah,				1											
how he had															
fought his															
emotions							1								
and how he had															$\neg$
lost.								1							
He begged Cik															$\neg$
Yam's															
forgiveness,				1											
[he] kissed the															
hem of Cik															
Yam's sarong				1											
<u> </u>	1			_									I	I .	

			1									- 1
and [he] asked												
for her												
permission to												
take Mariah as												
his second wife!				1								
Cik Yam jumped												
up as if struck by												
a bolt of												
lightning.			1									
Can that												
dreaded thing												
most feared by												
women be real,												
happening to												
her?												
							1					
Please God, let it not be true,										1		
								1				
she prayed.						1						
Why couldn't it												
have happened												
to that lazy Cik												
Gu Nab, who												
couldn't even fry												
an egg												
properly?						1						
Why her?						1						
[Why]The loving												
devoted wife, the												
model												
housewife?						1						
Why [The loving												
devoted wife, the												
model												
housewife]?						1						
Why [The loving												
devoted wife, the												
model												
housewife]?						1						
Despair and												
humiliation all												
came			1									
and [all]passed												
through Cik												
Yam's heart.				1								

Ole a Manager												
She threw												
herself on the												
bed			1									
and [she] wept												
piteously.				1								
"O wretched,										1		
wretched self!"										1		
By then Cik Yam	1											
was racked by												
despairing sobs												
The Imam tried to												
hold her,			1									
but she pushed												
him away.				1								
Finally the Imam				_								
managed to												
capture her in his												
embrace					1							
and [he]												
placated her with												
promises of his												
love and												
continuing												
devotion.												
				1								
"I love you			1									
and [l] will												
always love you,												
Yam.				1								
Nothing can												
change that.			1									
I will always be												
your husband.			1									
I will care for you,												
Yam"			1									
he said in			_									
between kisses												
on Cik Yam's												
forehead, hands												
and finally, in the												
final act of												
submission, on												
Cik Yam's feet.			_									
			1									
Thus the night												
passed				1								

voices trailed away. The men in the												
			1									
village were all excitedly			1									
handling this issue in their own ways.			1									
They had all at some time or other in their lives fantasised about having second wives,			1									
but sadly, neither their wives nor their budgets were accommodating enough.					1							
Cik Yam became a paragon of virtue.			1									
Women wondered how she could have easily succumbed to the whole arrangement.			1									
The men, on the other hand, wondered what Quranic ayats the Imam blew on Cik Yam's face to subdue her.			1									
Perhaps he knew something they didn't.				1								
It was difficult for everyone to agree upon one common reason.			1									

There was, however, something that everybody													
definitely agreed upon			1										
and that was Cik Yam would certainly be found sheltering in the shade of the Umbrella of Siti Fatimah (the Prophet's daughter) on the Day of Judgement.				1									
"Mashallah!"										1			
they all whispered reverently in awe of Cik Yam's virtue and steadfastness;			1										
would that they were as strong as Cik Yam!			1										
But what of Mariah, the object of all this commotion?						1							
She continued, serenely unaffected, with hernasi belauk selling until the very day she married the Imam.			1										
When Cik Gu Leh, the Imam's emissary, came to her house asking for her hand,											1		

she had been												
surprised, to say												
the least.			1									
The Imam was												
not on her list of												
prospective												
suitor.			1									
Initially, she had												
thought Cik Gu												
Leh had come												
on his own												
behalf:					1							
					1							$\dashv$
Cik Gu Leh had												
been most partial												
to her <i>nasi</i> .												
			1									
Cik Gu Nab had												
even begun												
sending												
threatening												
messages.			_									
			1									_
But Cik Gu Leh												
had come for the												
lmam.				1								
Mariah only												
dithered for a												
day,			1									
then [she] said												
"Yes".				4								
				1								_
The Imam was												
the man to marry,												
if she would ever												
wish to marry.												
			1									
A man of religion												$\dashv$
would be the												
only person												
worth marrying												
after all those												
years of self-												
imposed												
celibacy.			1									
<u> </u>												

			r 1									1		T
She wondered														
why the Imam														
had ever														
considered														
marrying her.				1										
Cik Yam was a														
model wife.				1										
Mariah was, in														
fact, slightly in														
awe of the pious														
Cik Yam.				1										
Mariah felt like a														
harlot in her														
short														
orange <i>kebaya</i> ,														
sitting beside the														
robed Cik Yam.														
				1										
Cik Yam had														
been kind to her				1										
and [Cik Yam]														
allayed her														
fears.					1									
Truly Cik Yam														
was an angel, to														
willingly share														
her husband with														
her, Mariah the														
blousy lady,														
untutored in														
religion, in fact														
untutored in														
everything														
except nasi														
belauk selling!						1								
"It's all Allah's						Т								
decree,"														
	1			1										
sighed Mariah.	1													
"So be it."					1									
Mariah's														
wedding														
surpassed even														
her own														
expectations.				1										
L		•	 				 							

Hor relatives in												Ī
Her relatives, in deference to the												
stature of the												
new husband-to-												
be, organised												
the wedding with												
particular												
zealousness.			1									
She took out her												
savings												
from <i>nasi</i>												
belauk selling			1									
and [she]												
prepared a bridal												
chamber grander												
than that of her												
first wedding.												
				1								
In an	1											
uncharacteristic												
show of												
flamboyance and												
extravagance,												
Mariah had her												
wedding finery												
tailored in Kota												
Bharu, no less.												
Her first husband												
had not been an												
lmam,												
			1									
there had been												
no need for such												
fuss.			1									
Guests streamed												
into the house												
compound from												
sunrise till												
sundown,												
heaping												
compliments												
upon her and												
congratulating												
her.												
			1									

"Well,										1		
at least they												
harbour no ill												
feelings towards												
me,"					1							
she noted.			1		_							
After	1											
the isha' prayers,												
with the guests												
finally departed,												
she sighed with												
obvious relief												
that it was all												
over.												
Mariah found												
herself alone in												
the bridal												
chamber,			1									
ready to again	1											
[she] begin life												
anew as a married woman.												
The Imam												
saluted at the												
door,			1									
and she replied,			1									
giving him												
permission to												
enter.				1								
The Imam was				_								
dressed in a												
whitejubah and												
white serban,			1									
[The Iman was]												
looking												
resplendent.			1									
Mariah noticed												
that												
the serban was												
held in place												
with the ends												
fashionably tied back.												
Dack.			1									

She suddenly		l																			
realised how																					
physically																					
attractive the																					
Imam was: tall,																					
well-built and with measured																					
movements.					_																
Mariah quickly					1																
averted her eyes																					
from his piercing																					
gaze					1																
and [she] looked																					
demurely at her																					
hennaed hand.						1															
He came						_															
forward,					1																
[he] took																					
Mariah's hand in																					
his own					1																
and [he] kissed it fervently and																					
long, inhaling the																					
heady scent of																					
Mariah's Tabu																					
perfume.						1															
His eyes closed,					1	•															
his dream																					
realised,					1																
the Imam																					
managed a					_																
hoarse					1																$\dashv$
"Thank you, God, for Your																					
Bounty,"																	1				
<i>before</i> Mariah's																					
perfume																					
completely																					
enveloped him																					
and his senses.								1													
	36	9	1	3	279	96	16	3	19	2	5	1	5	2	2	3	32	10	2	1	1

Story 1 Mariah Azhari					
Stage 2 Analysis				nts	
S ,	mariah	Imam's wife	lman	socio-cultural element	
It was seven in the morning on a typical day					
in the small village town of Molo.				1	
The main trunk road from Pasir Puteh to Kota Bharu was already choked with the bicycle traffic from school children winding their way to the three main schools in the					
village.				1	
The hub of activity was now the market square where men congregate to have breakfast.					
				1	
Breakfast could be the various <i>nasi, roti</i> canai, or the myriad Kelantan					
breakfast <i>tepung</i> .				1	
That particular morning, though, most of the					
men were not eating their breakfast				1	
but instead their gaze was fixed on the main					
entrance to the square.				1	
Seven a.m. was a bit late for breakfast;				1	
already the first slant of sunlight was filtering					
through the eaves of the blinds in the market.				1	
The men were getting restless.				1	
They were definitely waiting for something to appear.				1	
Very soon after, however; there was much excitement.				1	
All eyes were transfixed on a figure coming				1	
through the entrance.				1	
It was the figure of a woman.	1				
She was delicately balancing two	1		_		
huge basins on her head, her hips swaying					
gaily to and fro with the rhythm of the					
balancing.					
That particular gyrating seemed to mesmerise the men	1				
and [That particular gyrating] glued them to	1				
their places.					

There was much to mesmerise as far as	1		
Mariah was concerned,	4		
for that was the name of the lady with the two basins on her head.	1		
Mariah was a <i>nasi</i> seller in Molo, in	1		
fact the nasi seller in Molo.			
Every morning at seven sharp she would walk	1		
past the market entrance into the village			
square			
and [she]mesmerise the men with her	1		
swaying hips as well as			
her nasi : nasi kerabu , nasi belauk and nasi			
dagang .			
Rumour had it (started by women folk) that			
her nasi weren't much to crow about,		1	
but it was a combination of Mariah's	1		
swaying as well as her easy smile that			
made all the men flock to the village			
square.			
Many a nasi belauk breakfast remained cold		1	
and [many a nasi belauk breakfast]uneaten in			
the houses		1	
as men ignored their wives' cooking		1	
and [men] paid tribute to Mariah's instead.			
		1	
Mariah also had another asset.	1		
She was without a husband.	1		
Note that I didn't say either divorced or			
widowed.		1	
It would not have mattered either way in			
Kelantan.		1	
The most important thing was she was not			
with a husband.		1	
This was not to imply that she was not			
decorous in her manners		1	
but men seem to want to partake of			
her nasi more because of her unmarried			
state.		1	
Mariah had been married once,	1		
but her husband had passed away soon			
after.	<b></b>	1	
There had been many suitors after her			
husband's untimely demise,		1	
but Mariah had seemed singularly	1		
uninterested.			

Rumour too (also spread by the womenfolk)					
had it that it was our Mariah who drove her					
husband to an early grave.				1	
This rumour was never corroborated by					
medical evidence,				1	
so we will never be able to confirm this					
allegation.				1	
Fifteen years after her husband's death, which	1				
would make her fortyish,					
Mariah would easily pass for a beauty in her	1				
late twenties.					
Mariah was tall	1				
and [she was] well-proportioned	1				
and [Mariah] moved gracefully.	1				
No,					
[she did ]not gracefully	1				
but [she moved]sensuously.	1				
Her face was unlined,	1				
her complexion fair	1				
and her very dark, very black eyes appeared to	1				
glow.					
Mariah always had on a short kebaya which	1				
accentuated her well-proportioned curves.					
As a concession to propriety she used to cover	1				
her head and part of her torso with akain					
lepas, a two-metre traditional head and					
body cover much favoured by the working					
womenfolk of Kelantan.					
The Kota Bharu Nickies [prefer either a sliver					
of a scarf or go bare-headed],				1	
or the more modern women prefer either a					
sliver of a scarf or go bare-headed,				1	
but in Molo one does not go about without					
a kain lepas.				1	
To do so would be to incur the wrath of the					
village Imam, who was the guardian of					
modesty and propriety and enforcer of					
stringent mores.				1	
On that particular morning, the Imam was					
with the men,			1		
[the men was] falling on Mariah's nasi					
belauk with much relish.				1	
His wife's own nasi belauk was still waiting for					
him on his kitchen table under the tudung saji,		1			

file and the least and a state of the state	1			
[the nasi belauk was]getting very cold indeed.				
			1	
The Imam's wife was pottering about in her spotless kitchen,				
•	1			
[The Iman's wife was] muttering about the Imam's lateness for breakfast.				
	1			
The Imam liked his nasi belauk		1		
and his wife took great care in its				
preparation.	1			
Her culinary skills were not her only				
attribute;	1			
her housekeeping was also a model to be				
followed by other womenfolk in the village.				
	1			
One could always call at the Imam's house				
at any time of the day, guaranteed to be				
greeted by a well-turned-out wife, hot				
tepung and fragrant surroundings.			1	
The Imam's wife was somewhat assisted in				
this respect by not having grubby children				
who would mess things up.	1			
It was the only flaw in an otherwise perfect				
marriage.			1	
Quarrelsome couples who called at the				
Imam's place for arbitration would be				
sobered by the domestic serenity of the Imam's abode.				
			1	
They would all gape enviously at the				
surroundings			1	
and [they] forget to quarrel.			1	
They would listen attentively to the Imam's				
sermon and exhortations to peace, hang their heads in shame				
			1	
and [they would]make new resolutions,			1	
but promptly quarrel again as soon as they got				
home.			1	
Their own domestic atmospheres were just				
not congenial enough for peace.			1	
But enough said about the Imam's				
exemplary household,			1	
more important events were unfolding.			1	
As the Imam's wife was vigorously scrubbing at				
an already spotless sink, there were				
salutations from the front door.	1			

III	1	1	1	
It was a delegation of womenfolk from the				
village headed by Cik Gu Nab, one of the				
local women leaders.			1	
She was a teacher at a local primary school.				
			1	
Cik Yam wiped her hands		1		
and [Cik Yam] bade the visitors in.		1		
They were unexpected			1	
but [they were] not unwelcome.			1	
Cik Gu Nab made small talk for a while,				
commenting first on Cik Yam's exquisitely				
appliquédsafrah before launching into the				
matter at hand.			1	
The matter at hand turned out to be none				
other than Mariah.			1	
"Cik Yam,"				
began Cik Gu Nab, trying to put the matter				
across as delicately as possible,			1	
we mean our sisters no harm,			1	
in fact we are very happy if each one of us			<del>_</del>	
goes about doing her own thing.			1	
As we often say, each woman to their				
own rizq.			1	
In fact, we feel very bad about having to			1	
come to you.				
•			1	
We don't like to backbite our own sister"  Cik Gu Nab cleared her throat			1	
			1	
and [Cik Gu Nab] looked at the others for				
assent.			1	
Having got it in the form of gravely nodding				
heads, Cik Gu Nab continued:			1	
"Cik Yam ,				
the problem now is that one of our own				
sisters is not doing her own thing at all,			1	
but instead [she's]meddling with other	1			
people's".				
The Imam's wife Cik Yam listened attentively.		1		
"Who do you mean,			1	
Cik Gu Nab?"				
Cik Yam asked, "er,this troublemaker?",				
wondering what this meandering of Cik Gu				
Nab's was leading up to.		1		
Cik Gu Nab was known to favour a touch of				
melodrama			1	
and [Cik Gu Nab] to use it to maximum				
effect always.			1	
·				

"Why				
Cik Yam,				
we mean Mariah, of course, the nasi seller!				
The mean manary or esaise, the has sener.	1		1	
Don't tell me you don't know what she's				
been up to!"	1		1	
Cik Gu Nab looked peeved at Cik Yam's				
ignorance of important village matters.			1	
What can Mariah possibly be up to,	1			
thought Cik Yam.		1		
Mariah was apt to go around in her short	1			
and loud <i>kebaya</i> ,				
but she was always properly covered by	1			
her kain lepas .	1			
If she hadn't been so, the Imam would have	1			
reminded Cik Yam to pay her a visit.				
So it couldn't have been the kain lepas.			1	
"No,				
I don't know,			1	
Cik Gu Nab.				
What has she been up to?"	1			
Cik Yam smiled sweetly.		1		
Cik Yam knew about most village matters,		1		
but not quick enough, it would seem.		1		
She was always too busy with housework to				
gossip.		1		
Besides, it was not considered proper for				
the Imam's wife to be caught gossiping.		1		
"Cik Yam,"				
continued Cik Gu Nab,			1	
"Mariah has been enticing our men to	1			
abandon their homes for herkedai merpati .				
You know				
her nasi cannot be that special.	1			
Why,				
I am sure for one she cannot beat your nasi				
belauk."			1	
(Cik Yam readily agreed).		1		
"But why do all these men seem hell-bent				
on eating breakfast at her place?			1	
I reckon,			1	
I mean			1	
we reckon she has put something in				
her nasi."			1	
Cik Gu Nab paused for breath.			1	
"I can't believe that,		1		

Cik Gu Nab!				
God forbid!"				
Cik Yam considered her next words carefully.				
cik fam considered her next words carefully.		1		
"We cannot accuse Mariah of something so				
grave without any concrete evidence.			1	L
That's terribly unfair [to her],	1			
you know,				
Cik Gu Nab.				
Perhaps that 'something' you alleged she				
put in the nasi is just plain skill,			1	L
Allah knows."				
Cik Gu Nab started.			1	L
She felt she was being reproached.			1	L
She did not like this allusion to her cooking				
skills either.				L
Certainly, it was not her forte,			1	L
still Cik Yam was being very malicious, she				
thought.		1		
"I didn't say 'it' enticed all the men, Cik				
Yam.			1	L
My Cik Gu Leh (Cik Gu Nab's husband), for				
instance, would never dream of having				
breakfast anywhere but at home.			1	L
Some men do get easily enticed,			1	L
some don't.			1	L
Speaking of which , I saw the sainted Tok				
Imam himself having breakfast at				
Mariah's"			1	L
Having delivered this stinging repartee, Cik Gu				
Nab stood and left in a huff.			1	L
In a pointed rebuff, she did not even say a				
proper farewell.			1	L
Cik Yam went a deep shade of crimson.		1		
Cik Gu Nab's last retort was as good as a slap				
on the face.			1	L
Cik Yam, incidentally, was a seasoned				
politician.		1		
The words stung her, surely,			1	L
but she did not flinch.		1		
She was unnerved,		1		
but she quickly regained enough composure				
to smile at the rest of the delegates,				
		1		
[she] served them her beautiful tepung		1		

		I		
and [she] indulged in the social niceties				
required.	1			
Replete with Cik Yam's tepung and fortified				
with the latest gossip, the ladies then left.			1	
Only then did Cik Yam sit down to think of a				
way to settle the issue with the Imam.	1			
He was not going to escape unscathed, that				
she was going to make sure of!		1		
The Imam went about his usual business		1		
and [The Iman] came home at 12:30 to have				
his lunch.		1		
Cik Yam was there to greet him;	1			
she took of his <i>kuffiyah</i>	1			
and [she]gave him a cleansarong to change				
into.	1			
The Imam looked at his wife with obvious				
pride.		1		
There was not a living man in Molo who did				
not envy him for having such a devoted				
wife.			1	
But then, quick as lightning, as always he				
would look around at his empty house		1		
and [he would] let out a sigh.				
Why couldn't his wife bear children like				
other women?	1			
Some women, it seemed, have the fecundity				
of rabbits, but not his wife.			1	
Like all men of his generation, it never				
occurred to him he could be the culprit in				
his wife's supposed inability to bear				
children.			1	
As far as he was concerned, bearing				
children was a woman's job		1		
and if she didn't there was something				
wrong with her.	1			
Fertility had nothing to do with men.			1	
"Is lunch ready, Yam?"			1	
asked the Imam.		1		
"Why,				
yes,				
Abang.				
Tam sure for one she cannot beat your nasi				
belauk."	1			
replied Cik Yam.	1			
The Imam picked up the tudung saji for his	1			
lunch,		1		
		1		

		1		
but much to his surprise it turned out to be the morning's nasi belauk.			1	
He was stunned into silence for a good few				
minutes.		1		
Cik Yam took the opportunity to confront				
him.	1			
"I thought you would still like to finish off				
my nasi belauk after you breakfasted at				
Mariah's.	1			
After all , I have to prove that my nasi	1			
belauk is still edible compared to				
Mariah's especially since the whole village				
saw you eating away, behaving as if your				
wife has never prepared nasi belauk for				
you!				
•	1			
And Abang,				
I had to learn of it through someone else				
too!"	1			
Cik Yam threw the tudung saji on the floor,				
narrowly missing the Imam's foot,	1			
then [she]ran sobbing to their bedroom.	1			
What the hell is happening,			1	
thought the Imam.		1		
How did she know I had breakfast at				
Mariah's.	1			
It must have been one of the womenfolk.			1	
"Oh women!				
They are so impossible;			1	
why do they have to go around making life				
difficult for men?			1	
[This]Beats the hell out of me,"			1	
muttered the Imam in vexation.		1		
It was the only time he had ever gone to				
Mariah's.		1		
And he had done so only at that Cik Gu Leh'				
insistence.		1		
Cik Gu Leh had been extolling the virtues of		1		
Mariah's nasi belauk,			4	
			1	
but really Cik Gu Leh is no authority on the				
subject			1	
as his wife Cik Gu Nab, as everybody knew,				
was a hopeless cook.			1	
The Imam begged to be excused,		1		
but Cik Gu Leh was most persistent.			1	
So finally, the Imam relented.		1		

The nasi belauk was, as he had expected,				
passable, but no more.			1	
It did not surprise him in the least.			1	
The thing that did surprise him was Mariah	1			
herself.				
At the thought of Mariah the Imam smiled				
dreamily to himself.		1		
What a woman she is!	1			
The Imam became transported to another				
time, his youth		1		
When the Imam was a young man of fifteen his				
father had voiced his wish for his son to be				
sent to Pattani in Southern Thailand to				
learn under the tutelage of a well-known				
Sheikh.		1		
His father had spent a few years there				
himself			1	
but [his father]had not progressed very				
much.			1	
He had always nursed a secret ambition for				
his son to be the scholar he could not be				
			1	
and in doing so [he] exculpate himself.			1	
The Imam had protested, full of other plans.				
		1		
He had no stamina for the arduous task of				
being a scholar.		1		
He feigned indelicate health,		1		
but his father had decreed.			1	
The Imam, under protest and under duress,				
was sent to Pattani.		1		
The Imam was miserable in Pattani, moping				
for his mother and his friends rather than				
studying.		1		
But Allah is great			1	
and the Imam's misery was soon alleviated.		1		
One day when he had been in Pattani about				
three month, the Imam took his water pot				
to go to the communal well for his				
ablutions.		1		
It was around two or three in the afternoon				
when there were not many people about.				
			1	
The Imam saw from a distance a young lady				
drawing water from the well.		1		

Perhaps she thought there was no one about  so her head was not covered.  The Imam saw her tresses in their full silken	1	
	1 1	
The Imam saw her tresses in their full silken	1	
glory.	1	
The white of her skin on her bare throat was		
blinding.	1	
The Imam stopped in his tracks,	1	
	1	
He ran trembling to his hut, panting and		
breathless.	1	
He took a drink of water	1	
and [he] reflected upon the event.	1	
Who could that beautiful creature be?	1	
"I love her,"	1	
he said to himself.	1	
"I love her	1	
and I shall make her mine.	1	
I want no one else,"	1	
he vowed.	1	
He felt his head.	1	
It was throbbing as hard as his heart,	1	
[It was throbbing]as hot and feverish as his		
passion.	1	
Then he learnt that the object of his ardour		
was the daughter of the Sheikh himself.	1	
The Imam kept the burning secret to		
himself.	1	
Even his housemates never knew of this love.		
	1	
The Imam's behaviour was nothing but		
exemplary.	1	
His manners were extremely correct,		
especially to the ladies.	1	
He was punctilious in the performance of		
his duties.	1	
If the Imam was consumed with love, the		
Sheikh was the last person to know.	1	
The Sheikh thought that the Imam stayed for		
the love of the Deen.	1	
It is true that as the years passed the		
Imam grew to love the Deen and the		
Sheikh,	1	
but so too did his love for the Sheikh's		
daughter grow.	1	

In the Imam's final year, the Sheikh was				
entrusting more and more of his duties to				
his model pupil, the Imam.			1	
The Imam was conducting kulliyahs,				
performing prayers		1		
and sometimes [he]even paying courtesy				
calls on the Sheikh's behalf.		1		
He is grooming me to take his place and to				
be his son-in-law,			1	
thought the Imam.		1		
How full of hope he was!		1		
How sweet were the days as they passed for				
the Imam!			1	
How he patiently waited for the day when				
the Sheikh would broach the subject to him				
the shellin would broadly the subject to limit		1		
but it was not to be.			1	
The Sheikh did broach the subject of his				
daughter to him			1	
but [The Sheikh] only to invite him to his				
daughter's wedding to a cousin.			4	
The Imam was shattered.		4	1	
		1		
His world crashed around him.		1		
Pattani was nothing but a cauldron of				
smouldering embers.			1	
The Imam packed his books		1		
and [The Iman] bade good-bye to his				
Sheikh.		1		
He was really very fond of the old man		1		
and [he was] also very grateful for the				
tutelage,		1		
but he had to go.		1		
The Sheikh begged him to stay to look after				
his mosque for him,			1	
but the Imam gently refused.		1		
If it were not for the agony of having to see				
his beloved as somebody else's wife, he				
would have stayed.		1		
The Imam came home grieving to Kelantan.				
_		1		
His mother understood the grieving			1	
and in a few months [she] found him Cik				
Yam.			1	
Cik Yam, though no raving beauty, was an				
accomplished cook as well as being modest				
and extremely virtuous.	1			
·		<u> </u>		

She had been an obedient		1			
and [she had been an ]excellent wife,		1			
but she was not the Sheikh's daughter.		1			
The Imam had been happy with Cik Yam			1		
and gradually as he grew older			1		
the hurt had eased.				1	
He had not thought again of the Sheikh's					
daughter for a long time			1		
that is, until that morning, when, by the fate of					
God, Cik Gu Leh had dragged him to					
Mariah's kedai merpati				1	
"Oh Mariah"					
sighed the Imam.			1		
"Why do you have to be so like her my	1				
long-lost love, the Passion of My Youth?					
Oh Mariah,					
why do you have to look like her from your	1				
toes right up to your eyebrows!					
It's a test.				1	
By Allah!					
It's a test."				1	
The Imam became very frightened.			1		
He left the table,			1		
[he] took his ablutions			1		
and [he] quickly went to the mosque.			1		
"Let me find refuge there,"			1		
he though.			1		
"Save me, O God."			1		
What had his Sheikh always said in times					
like this?				1	
He quickly recollected.			1		
Abase Yourself to the One You Love.			1		
Passion is Not Easy.				1	
Indeed, passion is not easy.				1	
"I have dispensed with thee, O Passion			1		
I have divorced thee thrice."			1		
The Imam kept repeating this litany as if in					
prayer.			1		
After the afternoon prayer the Imam stayed					
long in prostration.			1		
He dallied in the mosque.			1		
He came out			1		
but [he] went in again.			1		
Finally he went in			1		

and [he] fell into a troubled sleep,			
1			
something which he had never done before.			
The days passed		1	
The days passed.		1	
Things appeared normal.		1	
The Imam was punctual in his prayers and			
diligent in his duties,		1	
but his heart was in turmoil.		1	
He remembered a verse from his Pattani			
days		1	
0			
lady of excess who strips away my acts of	1		
devotion in every state.			
There is no kindness in my wound		1	
Either it is by abasement		1	
and it is attached to passion,		1	
or it is by might		1	
and it is attached to Kingdom		1	
If you're in your immunity, it protects us		1	
and if you're in the sea, you come in the			
boat.		1	
It was either from Fusus Al-Hakam, or the			
Knowledge of Man,		1	
the Imam could not be certain,		1	
but it certainly seemed apt now.		1	
The Imam tried to go home to Cik Yam			
after subuh prayers,		1	
but every time somehow, in spite of himself,			
he would be by Cik Gu Leh's side going to			
Mariah's for breakfast.		1	
Mariah saw nothing amiss.	1		
She treated the Imam with reverence and	1		
courtesy, befitting his station and stature.			
She served him the choicest morsels on her	1		
best cutlery.			
He was, after all, the village Imam.		1	
The Imam would take the <i>nasi</i>			
belauk without averting his gaze from the			
plate in accordance with the Quranic			
injunction for men to lower their gazes.		1	
He would tremble slightly,		1	$\vdash$
but the men in the kedai merpati attributed		_	
that to extreme modesty.		1	
"The Imam is an extremely modest man,"		1	
thought the other men,		1	
mought the other men,			

(([baia] and another the common of					
"[he is] not used to the company of					
women."			1		
Every time he took the <i>nasi belauk</i> from					
Mariah			1		
he would feel a pang of guilt, remembering					
his wife's <i>nasi belauk</i> under the <i>tudung saji</i> .					
			1		
"Forgive me, oh God, for men are weak,"			1		
supplicated the Imam silently,					
spooning <i>nasi belauk</i> into his mouth.			1		
After the nasi belauk the Imam would still					
tarry, nursing a cup of coffee with Cik Gu					
Leh.			1		
At least, that was how it looked on the					
surface.				1	
That was the time the Imam would use to					
steal long lingering glances at Mariah.			1		
			1		
His heart ached with the pent-up longing for					
the Sheikh's daughter.			1		
Oh Mariah!					
Things would never be the same again for					
the Imam.				1	
He spent the nights in supplication, asking					
God for succour.			1		
He was frightened of the emotions stirred					
up by his unintentional meeting with					
Mariah.			1		
It was too colossal for him to handle.			1		
And yet hefelt elated.			1		
He believed it was fated, a part of a grand					
design by God to heal his heart;			1		
but [is it] on the account of a woman?	1				
Can a beautiful alluring woman be a part of a					
healing process?				1	
It seemed so profane to the Imam.			1		
But why should a woman be more profane					
than a man?				4	
				1	
Did not the Prophet himself say that three					
things are pleasing to him, prayers, women					
and perfume?				1	
There you are!			1		
[there are] Proof, exoneration for the Imam.			1	1	
He felt resolved to do what he had to do.			1	-	
Cik Gu Leh would be his emissary.		+		1	
The Imam chose the occasion well.			1	т_	
The infam chose the occasion well.			1		

It had to be on a Thursday might the eye of				
It had to be on a Thursday night, the eve of Friday.			4	
,			1	
After prayers and long supplication, the Imam went to his bedroom.		4		
		1		
Cik Yam was sitting on the bed waiting for him to finish.				
	1	4		
He knelt by the bed		1		
and [he] kissed Cik Yam's hands.		1		
Cik Yam was surprised by this reverent show of affection				
	1			
but [she]did not say anything.	1			
Cik Yam waited.	1			
The Imam kissed Cik Yam's knees		1		
and then [he] placed his head on Cik Yam's				
lap.		1		
Cik Yam stroked his head lovingly.	1			
Immediately as if released by a valve the				
Imam's hot tears fell on Cik Yam's sarong.				
		1		
Cik Yam felt the hot tears on her skin	1			
as it seeped through the sarong.			1	
Cik Yam lifted the Imam's head	1			
and [she] looked at him questioningly.	1			
Fifteen years of marital bliss had left its mark.			1	
Love and understanding shone through Cik			-	
Yam's also tear-filled eyes.			1	
"Tell me what grieves you, my husband,	1			
and I will make it better for you,"	1			
Cik Yam whispered to the Imam.	1			
At these words the Imam felt himself choke,				
,		1		
but he steeled himself.		1		
He told Cik Yam of his unrequited love for				
the Sheikh's daughter.		1		
He told Cik Yam of his pain and longing.		1		
He then told Cik Yam of Mariah,		1		
how he had fought his emotions		1		
and how he had lost.		1		
He begged Cik Yam's forgiveness,		1		
[he] kissed the hem of Cik Yam's sarong		1		
and [he] asked for her permission to take		1		
Mariah as his second wife!		1		
Cik Yam jumped up as if struck by a bolt of		1		
lightning.				
noncoming.	1			

Can that dreaded thing most forced by we man				
Can that dreaded thing most feared by women be real, happening to her?				
, II	1			
Please God,				
let it not be true,			1	
she prayed.	1			
Why couldn't it have happened to that lazy				
Cik Gu Nab, who couldn't even fry an egg				
properly?			1	
Why her?	1			
[Why]The loving devoted wife, the model				
housewife?	1			
Why [The loving devoted wife, the model				
housewife]?	1			
Why [The loving devoted wife, the model				
housewife]?	1			
Despair and humiliation all came	1			
and [all]passed through Cik Yam's heart.	1			
She threw herself on the bed	1			
and [she] wept piteously.	1			
"O wretched,				
wretched self!"				
By then Cik Yam was racked by despairing				
sobs	1			
The Imam tried to hold her,		1		
but she pushed him away.	1			
Finally the Imam managed to capture her in				
his embrace		1		
and [he] placated her with promises of his				
love and continuing devotion.		1		
"I love you		1		
and [I] will always love you, Yam.		1		
Nothing can change that.			1	
I will always be your husband.		1		
I will care for you, Yam"		1		
he said in between kisses on Cik Yam's				
forehead, hands and finally, in the final act				
of submission, on Cik Yam's feet.		1		
Thus the night passed			1	
and in the morning with the first rays of				
sunlight, Cik Yam said "Yes" to the Imam's				
request, on condition of equality.				
The Imam had breakfast at home with Cik	<del>                                     </del>			
Yam		1		
and he himself spooned the nasi belauk into				
Cik Yam's mouth.		1		
Cir. Taill 5 models		1		

Three days after this event, the whole town of					
Molo was rife with speculations.				1	
Word got around the village that the Imam					
was taking a second wife,	1			1	
and that person was none other than Mariah!	1				
"Isn't that rather odd?"				1	
gossiped the villagers.				1	
"The Imam and Cik Yam have been married					
for fifteen years			1		
and Cik Yam is a model of virtue."		1			
"Then of course Cik Yam is childless,"		1			
voices trailed away.				1	
The men in the village were all excitedly					
handling this issue in their own ways.				1	
They had all at some time or other in their					
lives fantasised about having second wives,					
				1	
but sadly, neither their wives nor their					
budgets were accommodating enough.				1	
Cik Yam became a paragon of virtue.		1			
Women wondered how she could have					
easily succumbed to the whole					
arrangement.				1	
The men, on the other hand, wondered what					
Quranic ayats the Imam blew on Cik Yam's					
face to subdue her.				1	
Perhaps he knew something they didn't.			1		
It was difficult for everyone to agree upon					
one common reason.				1	
There was, however, something that					
everybody definitely agreed upon				1	
and that was Cik Yam would certainly be					
found sheltering in the shade of the					
Umbrella of Siti Fatimah (the Prophet's					
daughter) on the Day of Judgement.		1			
"Mashallah!"					
they all whispered reverently in awe of Cik					
Yam's virtue and steadfastness;				1	
would that they were as strong as Cik Yam!				1	
But what of Mariah, the object of all this	1				
commotion?					
She continued, serenely unaffected, with	1				
hernasi belauk selling until the very day she					
married the Imam.					

True all a contract of			I	1	
When Cik Gu Leh, the Imam's emissary, came					
to her house asking for her hand,				1	
she had been surprised, to say the least.	1				
The Imam was not on her list of prospective					
suitor.			1		
Initially, she had thought Cik Gu Leh had	1				
come on his own behalf:					
Cik Gu Leh had been most partial to her					
nasi .				1	
Cik Gu Nab had even begun sending					
threatening messages.				1	
But Cik Gu Leh had come for the Imam.				1	
Mariah only dithered for a day,	1				
then [she] said "Yes".	1				
The Imam was the man to marry, if she					
would ever wish to marry.			1		
A man of religion would be the only person					
worth marrying after all those years of self-					
imposed celibacy.			1		
She wondered why the Imam had ever	1				
considered marrying her.					
Cik Yam was a model wife.		1			
Mariah was, in fact, slightly in awe of the	1				
pious Cik Yam.					
Mariah felt like a harlot in her short	1				
orange <i>kebaya</i> , sitting beside the robed Cik					
Yam.					
Cik Yam had been kind to her		1			
and [Cik Yam] allayed her fears.		1			
Truly Cik Yam was an angel, to willingly					
share her husband with her, Mariah the					
blousy lady, untutored in religion, in fact					
untutored in everything except <i>nasi</i>					
belauk selling!		1			
"It's all Allah's decree,"				1	
sighed Mariah.	1				
"So be it."				1	
	1			1	
Mariah's wedding surpassed even her own expectations.					
'					
Her relatives, in deference to the stature of					
the new husband-to-be, organised the wedding with particular zealousness.				4	
	1			1	
She took out her savings from <i>nasi</i>	1				
belauk selling					
and [she] prepared a bridal chamber	1				
grander than that of her first wedding.					

In an uncharacteristic show of flamboyance and	1			
extravagance, Mariah had her wedding				
finery tailored in Kota Bharu, no less.				
Her first husband had not been an Imam,			1	
there had been no need for such fuss.			1	
Guests streamed into the house compound				
from sunrise till sundown, heaping				
compliments upon her and congratulating				
her.			1	
"Well,				
at least they harbour no ill feelings towards				
me,"			1	
she noted.	1			
After the isha' prayers, with the guests finally	1			
departed, she sighed with obvious relief				
that it was all over.				
Mariah found herself alone in the bridal	1			
chamber,				
ready to again [she] begin life anew as a	1			
married woman.				
The Imam saluted at the door,		1		
and she replied, giving him permission to	1			
enter.				
The Imam was dressed in a whitejubah and				
white serban,		1		
[The Iman was] looking resplendent.		1		
Mariah noticed that the serban was held in	1			
place with the ends fashionably tied back.				
She suddenly realised how physically	1			
attractive the Imam was: tall, well-built				
and with measured movements.				
Mariah quickly averted her eyes from his	1			
piercing gaze				
and [she] looked demurely at her hennaed	1			
hand.				
He came forward,		1		
[he] took Mariah's hand in his own		1		
and [he] kissed it fervently and long,		<del>-  </del>		
inhaling the heady scent of Mariah's Tabu				
perfume.		1		
His eyes closed,		1		
his dream realised,		1		
the Imam managed a hoarse		1		
"Thank you, God, for Your Bounty,"		<del>-  </del>		
before Mariah's perfume completely				
enveloped him and his senses.				
enverspea min ana ma acriaca.	1			

	69	81	164	183	
·					

Mariah	The Imam							Cik	Yaı	m			Mariah				
Stage 3 Analysis	existent	Carrier	Sayer	Senser	Behaver	Actor	existent	carrier	Sayer	Senser	Behaver	Actor	carrier	sayer	Senser	Behaver	Actor
It was seven in the morning on a typical day in the small village town of Molo.																	
The main trunk road from Pasir Puteh to Kota Bharu was already choked with the bicycle traffic from school children winding their way to the three main schools in the village.																	
The hub of activity was now the market square where men congregate to have breakfast.																	
Breakfast could be the various nasi, roti canai, or the myriad Kelantan breakfast tepung.																	
That particular morning, though, most of the men were not eating their breakfast																	
but instead their gaze was fixed on the main entrance to the square.																	
Seven a.m. was a bit late for breakfast;																	
already the first slant of sunlight was filtering through the eaves of the blinds in the market.																	
The men were getting restless.  They were definitely waiting for something to appear.																	
Very soon after, however; there was much excitement.																	
All eyes were transfixed on a figure coming through the entrance.																	
It was the figure of a woman.  She was delicately balancing two huge basins on her head, her hips swaying gaily to and fro with the rhythm of the balancing.													1				1
That particular gyrating seemed to mesmerise the men															1		

	_	I	T .	I					I	 1
and [That particular gyrating]										
glued them to their places.										1
There was much to mesmerise as										
far as Mariah was concerned,									1	
for that was the name of the lady										
with the two basins on her head.								1		
Mariah was a nasi seller in Molo,										
in fact the nasi seller in Molo.								1		
Every morning at seven sharp she										
would walk past the market										
entrance into the village square										1
and [she]mesmerise the men with										
her swaying hips as well as										
her nasi: nasi kerabu, nasi										
belauk and nasi dagang.										1
Rumour had it (started by women										
folk) that her nasi weren't much to										
crow about,										
but it was a combination of										
Mariah's swaying as well as her										
easy smile that made all the men										
flock to the village square.								1		
Many a nasi belauk breakfast										
remained cold										
and [many a nasi belauk										
breakfast]uneaten in the houses										
as men ignored their wives'										
cooking										
and [men] paid tribute to Mariah's										
instead.										
Mariah also had another asset.										1
She was without a husband.								1		
Note that I didn't say either										
divorced or widowed.										
It would not have mattered either										
way in Kelantan.										
The most important thing was she										
was not with a husband.										
This was not to imply that she was										
not decorous in her manners										
but men seem to want to										
partake of her nasi more because										
of her unmarried state.			L							
Mariah had been married once,								1		

but her husband had passed away										一
soon after.										
There had been many suitors after										一
her husband's untimely demise,										
but Mariah had seemed singularly										$\neg$
uninterested.								1		
Rumour too (also spread by the										$\neg$
womenfolk) had it that it was our										
Mariah who drove her husband to										
an early grave.										
This rumour was never										$\Box$
corroborated by medical evidence,										
so we will never be able to confirm										
this allegation.										
Fifteen years after her husband's										
death, which would make her										
fortyish,										1
Mariah would easily pass for a										
beauty in her late twenties.										1
Mariah was tall							1			
and [she was]well-proportioned							1			
and [Mariah] moved gracefully.										1
No,										
[she did ]not gracefully										1
but [she moved]sensuously.										1
Her face was unlined,							1			
her complexion fair							1			
and her very dark, very black eyes										
appeared to glow.								1		
Mariah always had on a										
short kebaya which accentuated										
her well-proportioned curves.										1
As a concession to propriety she										
used to cover her head and part of										
her torso with akain lepas, a two-										
metre traditional head and body										
cover much favoured by the working womenfolk of Kelantan.										
										1
The Kota Bharu Nickies [prefer										
either a sliver of a scarf or go bare-										
headed],									_	<b></b>
or the more modern women prefer										
either a sliver of a scarf or go bare-										
headed,										$\Box$

but in Molo one does not go about													
without a kain lepas.													
To do so would be to incur the													
wrath of the village Imam, who was													
the guardian of modesty and													
propriety and enforcer of stringent													
mores.													
On that particular morning, the													
Imam was with the men,		1											
[the men was] falling on													
Mariah's nasi belauk with much													
relish.													
His wife's own nasi belauk was													
still waiting for him on his kitchen													
table under the tudung saji,										1			
[the nasi belauk was]getting very													
cold indeed.													
The Imam's wife was pottering													
about in her spotless kitchen,										1			
[The Iman's wife was] muttering													
about the Imam's lateness for													
breakfast.								1					
The Imam liked his nasi belauk				1									
and his wife took great care in its													
preparation.										1			
Her culinary skills were not her													
only attribute;							1						
her housekeeping was also a													
model to be followed by other													
womenfolk in the village.							1						
One could always call at the													
Imam's house at any time of the													
day, guaranteed to be greeted by													
a well-turned-out wife, hot													
tepung and fragrant surroundings.													
The Imam's wife was somewhat													
assisted in this respect by not													
having grubby children who would													
mess things up.										1			
It was the only flaw in an otherwise													
perfect marriage.													
<u>.                                    </u>	I	<u> </u>	I	<u> </u>	I	I							

Ou a mada a mada a unha a alla d		I										
Quarrelsome couples who called												
at the Imam's place for arbitration												
would be sobered by the domestic												
serenity of the Imam's abode.												
They would all gape enviously at												
the surroundings												
and [they] forget to quarrel.												
They would listen attentively to the												
Imam's sermon and exhortations												
to peace, hang their heads in												
Ishame												
and [they would]make new												
resolutions,												
but promptly quarrel again as soon												
as they got home.												
Their own domestic atmospheres												
were just not congenial enough for												
peace.												
But enough said about the Imam's												
exemplary household,												
more important events were												
unfolding.	-											
As the Imam's wife was vigorously												
scrubbing at an already spotless												
sink, there were salutations from												
the front door.									1			
It was a delegation of womenfolk												
from the village headed by Cik Gu												
Nab, one of the local women												
leaders.												
She was a teacher at a local												
primary school.												
Cik Yam wiped her hands									1			
									1			
and [Cik Yam] bade the visitors in.												
- · · ·	<u> </u>	<u> </u>					1					
They were unexpected	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>								
but [they were] not unwelcome.	<u> </u>	<u> </u>										
Cik Gu Nab made small talk for a												
while, commenting first on Cik												
Yam's exquisitely												
appliquédsafrah before launching												
into the matter at hand.												
The matter at hand turned out to												
be none other than Mariah.												
"Cik Yam,"	$\vdash$											
OIN TAITI,	<u> </u>											

began Cik Gu Nab, trying to put the matter across as delicately as possible,										
we mean our sisters no harm,										$\dashv$
in fact we are very happy if each										_
one of us goes about doing her										
own thing.										
As we often say, each woman to	1									$\dashv$
their own rizq.										
•										
In fact, we feel very bad about										
having to come to you.										
We don't like to backbite our own										
sister"										
Cik Gu Nab cleared her throat										
and [Cik Gu Nab] looked at the										
others for assent.										
Having got it in the form of gravely										
nodding heads, Cik Gu Nab										
continued:										
"Cik Yam,										$\neg$
the problem now is that one of our										
own sisters is not doing her own										
thing at all,										
but instead [she's]meddling with										
other people's".										1
The Imam's wife Cik Yam listened										
attentively.						4				
						1				
"Who do you mean,										
Cik Gu Nab?"										
Cik Yam asked, "er,this										
troublemaker?", wondering what										
this meandering of Cik Gu Nab's										
was leading up to.					1					
Cik Gu Nab was known to favour a										
touch of melodrama										
and [Cik Gu Nab] to use it to										
maximum effect always.										
"Why										
Cik Yam,										
we mean Mariah, of course, the										$\neg$
nasi seller!										
Don't tell me you don't know what										$\neg$
she's been up to!"										
Cik Gu Nab looked peeved at Cik										
Yam's ignorance of important										
village matters.										
=	 I	ı .							 1	

What can Mariah possibly be up				l	1	1						
to,										4		
thought Cik Yam.	<u> </u>	-								1		
Mariah was apt to go around in her								1				
short and loud kebaya,										_		
	<u> </u>									_1		$\vdash$
but she was always properly										_		
covered by her kain lepas.	<u> </u>									1		
If she hadn't been so, the Imam would have reminded Cik Yam to												
										_		
pay her a visit.	<u> </u>									1		
So it couldn't have been the kain												
lepas.	<u> </u>											
"No,												ļ
I don't know,	<u> </u>											
Cik Gu Nab.												
What has she been up to?"										1		
Cik Yam smiled sweetly.									1			
Cik Yam knew about most village												
matters,								1				
but not quick enough, it would												
seem.								1				
She was always too busy with												
housework to gossip.							1					
Besides, it was not considered												
proper for the Imam's wife to be												
caught gossiping.							1					
"Cik Yam,"												
continued Cik Gu Nab,												
"Mariah has been enticing our												
men to abandon their homes for												
herkedai merpati.												1
You know												
her nasi cannot be that special.										1		. ————————————————————————————————————
Why,												
I am sure for one she cannot beat												
your nasi belauk."												
(Cik Yam readily agreed).								1				$\equiv$
"But why do all these men seem				t				_				
hell-bent on eating breakfast at her												
place?												
I reckon,		T		T								
I mean		t		t								
we reckon she has		f		f								
put something in her nasi."												
Cik Gu Nab paused for breath.	$\vdash$											
"I can't believe that,	<u> </u>		<del>                                     </del>	1				1				
rodii tochove that,	Щ	1	1	1				T				

Cik Gu Nab!	Ī				l	Ī							
God forbid!"													
Cik Yam considered her next													
words carefully.								1					
"We cannot accuse Mariah of								_					
something so grave without any													
concrete evidence.													
That's terribly unfair [to her],										1			
you know,													
Cik Gu Nab.													
Perhaps that 'something' you													
alleged she put in the nasi is just													
plain skill,													
Allah knows."													
Cik Gu Nab started.													
She felt she was being													$\dashv$
reproached.													
She did not like this allusion to her													$\neg \uparrow$
cooking skills either.													
Certainly, it was not her forte,													
still Cik Yam was being very													
malicious, she thought.							1						
"I didn't say 'it' enticed all the men,							_						
Cik Yam.													
My Cik Gu Leh (Cik Gu Nab's													
husband), for instance, would													
never dream of having breakfast													
anywhere but at home.													
Some men do get easily enticed,													
some don't.													
Speaking of which, I saw the													
sainted Tok Imam himself having													
breakfast at Mariah's"													
Having delivered this stinging													
repartee, Cik Gu Nab stood and													
left in a huff.													
In a pointed rebuff, she did not													
even say a proper farewell.													
Cik Yam went a deep shade of													
crimson.								1					
Cik Gu Nab's last retort was as													
good as a slap on the face.													
Cik Yam, incidentally, was a													
seasoned politician.							1						
The words stung her, surely,													
but she did not flinch.								1					
		_	_	_	_	_					-	_	

She was unnerved,						1				<u> </u>		
but she quickly regained enough												
composure to smile at the rest of												
the delegates,									1			
[she] served them her									1			
beautiful tepung									1			
and [she] indulged in the social									1			
niceties required.												
-								1				
Replete with Cik												
Yam's tepung and fortified with the												
latest gossip, the ladies then left.												
Only then did Cik Yam sit down to												
think of a way to settle the issue												
with the Imam.									1			
He was not going to escape												
unscathed, that she was going to												
make sure of!					1							
The Imam went about his usual					Ī							
business					1							ļ
and [The Iman] came home at												
12:30 to have his lunch.					1							
Cik Yam was there to greet him;						1						
she took of his kuffiyah									1			
and [she]gave him a												
cleansarong to change into.									1			
The Imam looked at his wife with												
obvious pride.				1								
There was not a living man in Molo												
who did not envy him for having												
such a devoted wife.												
But then, quick as lightning, as												
always he would look around at												
his empty house				1								
and [he would] let out a sigh.			1									
Why couldn't his wife bear children												
like other women?		L							1			
Some women, it seemed, have the												
fecundity of rabbits, but not his												
wife.		L										
Like all men of his generation, it												
never occurred to him he could be												
the culprit in his wife's supposed												
inability to bear children.												

As for as he was someowed					I						I	
As far as he was concerned,												
bearing children was a woman's												
job and if she didn't there was				1								
something wrong with her.									1			
Fertility had nothing to do with												
men.												
"Is lunch ready, Yam?"												
asked the Imam.			1									
"Why,												
yes,												
Abang.												
I am sure for one she cannot beat												
your nasi belauk."							1					
replied Cik Yam.							1					
The Imam picked up the tudung												
saji for his lunch,					1							
but much to his surprise it turned												
out to be the morning's nasi												
belauk.												
He was stunned into silence for a												
good few minutes.				1								
Cik Yam took the opportunity to												
confront him.							1					
"I thought you would still like to	1											
finish off my nasi belauk after you												
breakfasted at Mariah's.								1				
After all, I have to prove that	1							_				
my nasi belauk is still edible												
compared to												
Mariah's especially since the												
whole village saw you eating												
away, behaving as if your wife has												
never prepared nasi belauk for												
you!									1			
And Abang,									1			
I had to learn of it through	$\vdash$	$\vdash$										
someone else too!"								1				
Cik Yam threw the tudung saji on								-				
the floor, narrowly missing the												
Imam's foot,									1			
then [she]ran sobbing to their	I	I							_			
bedroom.									1			
What the hell is happening,												
thought the Imam.				1								
urought the main.				$\perp$								

How did she know I had breakfast at Mariah's.							1				
It must have been one of the											
womenfolk.											
"Oh women!											
They are so impossible;											
why do they have to go around											
making life difficult for men?											
[This]Beats the hell out of me,"											
muttered the Imam in vexation.		1									
It was the only time he had ever											
gone to Mariah's.					1						
And he had done so only at that											
Cik Gu Leh' insistence.					1						
Cik Gu Leh had been extolling the											
virtues of Mariah's nasi belauk,											
but really Cik Gu Leh is no											
authority on the subject											
as his wife Cik Gu Nab, as											
everybody knew, was a hopeless											
cook.											
The Imam begged to be excused,		1									
but Cik Gu Leh was most											
persistent.											
So finally, the Imam relented.			1								
The nasi belauk was, as he had											
expected, passable, but no more.											
It did not surprise him in the least.											
The thing that did surprise him was											
Mariah herself.									1		
At the thought of Mariah the Imam											
smiled dreamily to himself.				1							
What a woman she is!									1		
The Imam became transported to											
another time, his youth					1						
When the Imam was a young man											
of fifteen his father had voiced his											
wish for his son to be sent to											
Pattani in Southern Thailand to											
learn under the tutelage of a well-											
known Sheikh.	1										
His father had spent a few years											
there himself											

but [his father]had not progressed											
very much.											
He had always nursed a secret											
ambition for his son to be the											
scholar he could not be											
and in doing so [he] exculpate											
himself.											
The Imam had protested, full of											
other plans.			1								
He had no stamina for the arduous											
task of being a scholar.					1						
He feigned indelicate health,					1						
but his father had decreed.											
The Imam, under protest and											
under duress, was sent to Pattani.											
					1						
The Imam was miserable in											_
Pattani, moping for his mother and											
his friends rather than studying.											
		1									
But Allah is great		1									-
and the Imam's misery was soon		1									
alleviated.		١,									
		1									-
One day when he had been in											
Pattani about three month, the											
Imam took his water pot to go to											
the communal well for his											
ablutions.					1						
It was around two or three in the											
afternoon when there were not											
many people about.											
The Imam saw from a distance a											
young lady drawing water from the											
well.				1							
Perhaps she thought there was no											
one about											
so her head was not covered.											
The Imam saw her tresses in their											
full silken glory.				1							
The white of her skin on her bare											
throat was blinding.											
The Imam stopped in his tracks,					1						
then[he] took full flight.					1						
He ran trembling to his hut,											
panting and breathless.					1						
He took a drink of water	-	$\vdash$			1						$\dashv$
I TO LOOK & CHITIK OF WALE					Т						

and [he] reflected upon the event.	1										$\neg$
and [ne] remedied apon the event.				1							
Who could that beautiful creature											
be?											
"I love her,"				1							
he said to himself.			1								
"I love her				1							
and I shall make her mine.					1						
I want no one else,"				1							
he vowed.			1								
He felt his head.				1							
It was throbbing as hard as his											
heart,					1						
[It was throbbing]as hot and											
feverish as his passion.					1						
Then he learnt that the object of											
his ardour was the daughter of the											
Sheikh himself.				1							
The Imam kept the burning secret											
to himself.					1						
Even his housemates never knew											
of this love.											
The Imam's behaviour was											
nothing but exemplary.		1									
His manners were extremely											
correct, especially to the ladies.		1									
He was punctilious in the											
performance of his duties.		1									
If the Imam was consumed with											
love, the Sheikh was the last											
person to know.											
The Sheikh thought that the Imam											
stayed for the love of the Deen.											
It is true that as the years passed											
the Imam grew to love the Deen											
and the Sheikh,				1							
but so too did his love for the											
Sheikh's daughter grow.				1							
In the Imam's final year, the Sheikh											
was entrusting more and more of											
his duties to his model pupil, the											
lmam.											
The Imam was											1
conducting kulliyahs, performing											
prayers					1						

and sometimes [he]even paying										
courtesy calls on the Sheikh's										
behalf.				1						
He is grooming me to take his										
place and to be his son-in-law,										
thought the Imam.			1							
How full of hope he was!	1									
How sweet were the days as they										
passed for the Imam!										
How he patiently waited for the										
day when the Sheikh would										
broach the subject to him				1						
but it was not to be.										
The Sheikh did broach the subject										
of his daughter to him										
but [The Sheikh] only to invite him										
to his daughter's wedding to a										
cousin.	1									
The Imam was shattered.				1						
His world crashed around him.				1						
Pattani was nothing but a cauldron										
of smouldering embers.										
The Imam packed his books				1						
and [The Iman] bade good-bye to										
his Sheikh.		1								
He was really very fond of the old										
man	1									
and [he was] also very grateful for										
the tutelage,	1									
but he had to go.				1						
The Sheikh begged him to stay to										
look after his mosque for him,										
but the Imam gently refused.			1							
If it were not for the agony of										
having to see his beloved as										
somebody else's wife, he would										
have stayed.				1						
The Imam came home grieving to										
Kelantan.				1						
His mother understood the										
grieving										
and in a few months [she] found										
him Cik Yam.										

Cile Vana thau ah na rawin a	1									$\neg$
Cik Yam, though no raving										
beauty, was an accomplished										
cook as well as being modest and										
extremely virtuous.					1					
She had been an obedient					1					
and [she had been an ]excellent										
wife,					1					
but she was not the Sheikh's										
daughter.					1					
The Imam had been happy with										
Cik Yam	1									
and gradually as he grew older				1						
the hurt had eased.										
He had not thought again of the										
Sheikh's daughter for a long										
time			1							
that is, until that morning, when, by										
the fate of God, Cik Gu Leh had										
dragged him to Mariah's kedai										
merpati										
"Oh Mariah"										$\neg$
sighed the Imam.		1								
"Why do you have to be so like										
her my long-lost love, the										
Passion of My Youth?								1		
Oh Mariah,										$\neg$
why do you have to look like her										$\neg$
from your toes right up to your										
eyebrows!									1	
It's a test.										一
By Allah!										一
It's a test."										$\neg$
The Imam became very										$\overline{}$
frightened.				1						
He left the table,				1						
[he] took his ablutions				1						$\overline{}$
and [he] quickly went to the										$\overline{}$
mosque.				1						
"Let me find refuge there,"				1						
he though.			1	_						$\dashv$
"Save me, O God."			-	1						$\dashv$
What had his Sheikh always said										$\dashv$
in times like this?										
He quickly recollected.			1							$\dashv$
Abase Yourself to the One You			┝┷							$\dashv$
Love.				1						
	]			Т						

Passion is Not Easy.												
Indeed, passion is not easy.												
"I have dispensed with thee, O												
Passion						1						
I have divorced thee thrice."						1						
						1						
The Imam kept repeating this litany												
as if in prayer.						1						
After the afternoon prayer the												
Imam stayed long in prostration.						1						$\vdash$
He dallied in the mosque.						1						$\square$
He came out						1						Щ
but [he] went in again.						1						Ш
Finally he went in						1						Щ
and [he] fell into a troubled sleep,												
something which he had never												
done before.						1						Щ
The days passed.												
Things appeared normal.												
The Imam was punctual in his												
prayers and diligent in his duties,		1										
but his heart was in turmoil.		1										
He remembered a verse from his												
Pattani days				1								
0												
lady of excess who strips away my												
acts of devotion in every state.												1
There is no kindness in my wound												
	1											
Either it is by abasement		1										
and it is attached to passion,		1										
or it is by might		1										
and it is attached to Kingdom		1										
If you're in your immunity, it												
protects us		1										
and if you're in the sea, you come												
in the boat.		1										
It was either from Fusus Al-Hakam,												$\sqcap$
or the Knowledge of Man,												
		1										
the Imam could not be certain,		1										$\sqcap$
but it certainly seemed apt now.					1							$\sqcap$
The Imam tried to go home to Cik												$\sqcap$
Yam after subuhprayers,						1						
. , ,	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>			-						

but every time somehow, in spite											
of himself, he would be by Cik Gu											
Leh's side going to Mariah's for											
breakfast.		1									
Mariah saw nothing amiss.						1					
She treated the Imam with											
reverence and courtesy, befitting											
his station and stature.											1
She served him the choicest											
morsels on her best cutlery.											1
He was, after all, the village Imam.											
		1									
The Imam would take the nasi											
belauk without averting his gaze											
from the plate in accordance with											
the Quranic injunction for men to											
lower their gazes.					1						
He would tremble slightly,					1						
but the men in the kedai merpati											
attributed that to extreme modesty.											
"The Imam is an extremely modest											
man,"		1									
thought the other men,											
"[he is] not used to the company of											
women."		1									
Every time he took the nasi											
belauk from Mariah					1						
he would feel a pang of guilt,											
remembering his wife's nasi											
belauk under the tudung saji.				1							
"Forgive me, oh God, for men are											
weak,"			1								
supplicated the Imam silently,											
spooning nasi belauk into his											
mouth.			1								
After the nasi belauk the Imam											
would still tarry, nursing a cup of											
coffee with Cik Gu Leh.					1						
At least, that was how it looked on											
the surface.	L										
That was the time the Imam would											
use to steal long lingering glances											
at Mariah.				1							

His boart asked with the popt up	l										
His heart ached with the pent-up											
longing for the Sheikh's daughter.											
					1						
Oh Mariah!											
Things would never be the same											
again for the Imam.											
He spent the nights in											
supplication, asking God for											
succour.					1						
He was frightened of the emotions											
stirred up by his unintentional											
meeting with Mariah.											
l l				4							
				1							
It was too colossal for him to											
handle.		1									
And yet he felt elated.			1								
He believed it was fated, a part of											
a grand design by God to heal his											
heart;			4								
,			1								
but [is it] on the account of a											
woman?									1		
Can a beautiful alluring woman be											
a part of a healing process?											
It seemed so profane to the Imam.											
li decinica de preiane le ure iniani.			4								
Dut why about dia ware an hairear			1								
But why should a woman be more											
profane than a man?											
Did not the Prophet himself say											
that three things are pleasing to											
him, prayers, women and											
perfume?											
•	1										
There you are!	1										
[there are] Proof, exoneration for											
the Imam.	1										
He felt resolved to do what he had											
to do.			1								
Cik Gu Leh would be his emissary.											
l cin du zon would be the enhactary.											
The Imam chose the occasion	1										
well.					1						
It had to be on a Thursday night,											
the eve of Friday.											
After prayers and long											
supplication, the Imam went to his											
bedroom.					4						
Dodiooiii.					1						

City Vana was sitting on the had	П	I											
Cik Yam was sitting on the bed waiting for him to finish.										_			
	$\vdash$									1			
He knelt by the bed	$\vdash$				1								
and [he] kissed Cik Yam's hands.					1								
Cik Yam was surprised by this reverent show of affection													
									1				
but [she]did not say anything.							1						
Cik Yam waited.										1			
The Imam kissed Cik Yam's knees					1								
and then [he] placed his head on													
Cik Yam's lap.					1								
Cik Yam stroked his head													
lovingly.										1			
Immediately as if released by a													
valve the Imam's hot tears fell on													,
Cik Yam's sarong.					1								
Cik Yam felt the hot tears on her													
skin								1					
as it seeped through the sarong.													
Cik Yam lifted the Imam's head										1			
and [she] looked at him													
questioningly.								1					
Fifteen years of marital bliss had													
left its mark.													
Love and understanding shone													
through Cik Yam's also tear-filled													1
eyes.													1
"Tell me what grieves you, my													1
husband,							1						
and I will make it better for you,"										1			
Cik Yam whispered to the Imam.							1						
At these words the Imam felt													i
himself choke,				1									
but he steeled himself.					1								
He told Cik Yam of his unrequited													1
love for the Sheikh's daughter.			1										
He told Cik Yam of his pain and													
longing.			1										
He then told Cik Yam of Mariah,			1										
how he had fought his emotions					1								
and how he had lost.					1								
He begged Cik Yam's forgiveness,			1		 								
<u></u>	ш		_								 <u> </u>	<u> </u>	

[halkinged the hom of Cik	1	I						T .		
[he] kissed the hem of Cik Yam's sarong										
	-		1							
and [he] asked for her permission to take Mariah as his second wife!										
	1									
Cik Yam jumped up as if struck by										
a bolt of lightning.							1			
Can that dreaded thing most										
feared by women be real,										
happening to her?							1			
Please God,										
let it not be true,										
she prayed.					1					
Why couldn't it have happened to										
that lazy Cik Gu Nab, who couldn't										
even fry an egg properly?										
M/s h O					_					
Why her?					1					
[Why]The loving devoted wife, the model housewife?										
					1					
Why [The loving devoted wife, the										
model housewife]?					1					
Why [The loving devoted wife, the										
model housewife]?					1					
Despair and humiliation all came						1				
and [all]passed through Cik Yam's										
heart.						1				
She threw herself on the bed							1			
and [she] wept piteously.						1				
"O wretched,										
wretched self!"										
By then Cik Yam was racked by										
despairing sobs							1			
The Imam tried to hold her,			1							
but she pushed him away.							1			
Finally the Imam managed to										
capture her in his embrace			1							
and [he] placated her with										
promises of his love and										
continuing devotion.			1							
"I love you		1								
and [l] will always love you, Yam.		1								
Nothing can change that.										
I will always be your husband.	1									
I will care for you, Yam"			1							

	1	1	1								
he said in between kisses on											
Cik Yam's forehead, hands and											
finally, in the final act of											
submission, on Cik Yam's feet.		1									
Thus the night passed											
and in the morning with the first											
rays of sunlight, Cik Yam said											
"Yes" to the Imam's request, on											
condition of equality.						1					
The Imam had breakfast at home											
with Cik Yam				1							
and he himself spooned the nasi											
belauk into Cik Yam's mouth.				1							
Three days after this event, the											
whole town of Molo was rife with											
speculations.											
Word got around the village that											
the Imam was taking a second											
wife,											
and that person was none other											
than Mariah!									1		
"Isn't that rather odd?"											
gossiped the villagers.											
"The Imam and Cik Yam have											
been married for fifteen years	1										
and Cik Yam is a model of virtue."					1						
"Then of course Cik Yam is											
childless,"					1						
voices trailed away.											
The men in the village were all											
excitedly handling this issue in											
their own ways.											
They had all at some time or other											
in their lives fantasised about											
having second wives,											
but sadly, neither their wives nor											
their budgets were											
accommodating enough.											
Cik Yam became a paragon of											
virtue.								1			
Women wondered how she could											
have easily succumbed to the											
whole arrangement.											

The men, on the other hand,	l										
wondered what Quranic ayats the											
Imam blew on Cik Yam's face to											
subdue her.											
	-										
Perhaps he knew something they											
didn't.			1								
It was difficult for everyone to											
agree upon one common reason.											
There was, however, something											
that everybody definitely agreed											
upon											
and that was Cik Yam would											
certainly be found sheltering in the											
shade of the Umbrella of Siti											
Fatimah (the Prophet's daughter)											
on the Day of Judgement.							1				
"Mashallah!"							_				
they all whispered reverently in											
lawe of Cik Yam's virtue and											
steadfastness;											
would that they were as strong as											
Cik Yam!											
But what of Mariah, the object of all this commotion?								_			
								1			
She continued, serenely											
unaffected, with hernasi											
belauk selling until the very day											
she married the Imam.											1
When Cik Gu Leh, the Imam's											
emissary, came to her house											
asking for her hand,											
she had been surprised, to say the											
least.										1	
The Imam was not on her list of											
prospective suitor.	1										
Initially, she had thought Cik Gu	ĺ										
Leh had come on his own behalf:										1	
Cik Gu Leh had been most partial	1										
to her nasi.											
Cik Gu Nab had even begun											
sending threatening messages.											
But Cik Gu Leh had come for the	$\vdash$										
Ilmam.											
Mariah only dithered for a day,											1
	$\vdash$	<del>                                     </del>							_		1
then [she] said "Yes".									1		j

The Imam was the man to marry, if											
she would ever wish to marry.	1		ļ								
A man of religion would be the											1
only person worth marrying after											1
all those years of self-imposed											
celibacy.	1										
She wondered why the Imam had											1
ever considered marrying her.										1	
Cik Yam was a model wife.					1						
Mariah was, in fact, slightly in awe											
of the pious Cik Yam.								1			
Mariah felt like a harlot in her short											
orange kebaya, sitting beside the											
robed Cik Yam.										1	
Cik Yam had been kind to her					1						
and [Cik Yam] allayed her fears.							1				
Truly Cik Yam was an angel, to											
willingly share her husband with											
her, Mariah the blousy lady,											1
untutored in religion, in fact											
untutored in everything											1
except nasi belauk selling!					1						1
"It's all Allah's decree,"											
sighed Mariah.									1		
"So be it."											
Mariah's wedding surpassed even											1
her own expectations.											1
Her relatives, in deference to the											
stature of the new husband-to-be,											
organised the wedding with											
particular zealousness.											
She took out her savings from nasi											
belauk selling											1
and [she] prepared a bridal											
chamber grander than that of her											
first wedding.											1
In an uncharacteristic show of											1
flamboyance and extravagance,											
Mariah had her wedding finery											
tailored in Kota Bharu, no less.											1
Her first husband had not been an											
lmam,			L								
there had been no need for such											
fuss.											
		_		 	 	 					 

Guests streamed into the house										$\Box$
compound from sunrise till										ı
sundown, heaping compliments										1
upon her and congratulating her.										
"Well,										$\dashv$
at least they harbour no ill feelings										
towards me,"										ı
she noted.									1	
After the isha' prayers, with the										
guests finally departed, she sighed										
with obvious relief that it was all										i
over.								1		
Mariah found herself alone in the										
bridal chamber,									1	
ready to again [she] begin life										
anew as a married woman.										1
The Imam saluted at the door,		1								
and she replied, giving him										
permission to enter.								1		
The Imam was dressed in a										
whitejubah and white serban,				1						
[The Iman was] looking										
resplendent.			1							
Mariah noticed that										
the serban was held in place with										1
the ends fashionably tied back.									1	
She suddenly realised how										
physically attractive the Imam was:										
tall, well-built and with measured										
movements.									1	
Mariah quickly averted her eyes										
from his piercing gaze										1
and [she] looked demurely at her										
hennaed hand.									1	
He came forward,				1						
[he] took Mariah's hand in his own										
				1						
and [he] kissed it fervently and										
long, inhaling the heady scent of										
Mariah's Tabu perfume.				1						
His eyes closed,				1						
his dream realised,	<u> </u>		1							
the Imam managed a hoarse	<u> </u>	1								
"Thank you, God, for Your										
Bounty,"										

before Mariah's perfume completely enveloped him and his senses.														1
	32	18	34	5	74	18	15	14	6	29	24	4	14	26

And She Became an Angel			Dec.			Wh	-int.		Y/N	l-int.	E.in	np.			
Stage 1 Analysis	Opical	Marked Interpersonal	Unmarked Topical	Unmarked Textual	Unmarked Interpersona			onal				•	ation	nse	clause
	Marked Topical	Marked	Unmarke	Unmarke	Unmarke	Topical	Textual	Interpersonal	Topical	Textual	Topical	Textual	exclamination	minor clause	Fronted ß clause
One day, Mandak looks up from the mashed chilli, onions and garlic mix she is pounding in the old <i>batu</i> lesong that she had inherited from her mother,	1														
and [she] decides that she wants to like in the movies on television she watched when she was young;				1											
exactly like those in foreign books of devotion she had seen when while attending primary school run by missionaries – all white-robed, with white feathered wings spreading serenely; that kind of angel.		1													
Mandak is not a woman given to impulsive, life-changing decisions.			1												
she does not think very deeply about anything either,			1												
for how could she when she has a family and household to run, and chickens to care for?							1								
This is a new thought;		$ldsymbol{ldsymbol{ldsymbol{eta}}}$	1												
one she cannot ignore .	1		1												
The thought ignites a very strange feeling somewhere deep in her chest.															
It feels warm,			1												
and [it] keeps growing until she becomes breathless.				1											
The mashed garlic in the mortar looks like outspread angel wings.			1												
She sits on the floor and toys with the condiments with her fingers.			1												
She begins tracing the garlic wings in	the	mo	1												
Then she looks up.	<u> </u>		1	_1											
She is fed up with cooking. She has done nothing	_		1												$\vdash\vdash$
but [she] take care of her husband her entire married life.				1											

She heard on the radio the other day that a woman should have something of her own, something outside her marriage that she can be proud of, something that's all hers.  They have no children; they just never had any.  But they were not the type to fret and despair over it, to see bomohs and bidans, to facilitate conception.  What a waste of time and money [it is]. If she could be just one thing in her life, it would be hat; [it would be hat; [it would be] an angel.  She stops mashing the condiments and [she] gingerly scoops the mush into a saucer of and [she] hides it all under the bed in their room.  Then, she goes to her pillows and [she] pingerly were] white feathers, of the condition of the life, were] yellow from age, of the pillow fro				1		I	I	I	I	I	I		I		$\overline{}$
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It has been a while	they had shared.		L									L			
since they laughed themselves silly.				1											
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He is brought back to reality by a drifting	20 f	faat	1		T		Ι	Ι	l				
He blinks a few times	ig i	Lat	1										
				1									
and [he] sees another feather floating by in front of his face.				_									
_ *			1										
He stares at Mandak who is stuffing			1										
feathers back into a pillow.													
He gapes at the dull and yellowed			1										
feathers all over the room: on their													
bed, on her lap, everywhere.													
Mandak is on all fours: a woman on a	mis	sio											
She grunts			1										
as she creeps all over the room to				1									
retrieve feathers from under the old													
cupboard													
		1		1									
and [she creeps all over the room to													
retrieve feathers from] under the bed,													
and [she] sighs				1									
as she inspects one.				1									
Finally, the pillow is full.					1								
Mandak puts it on the floor			1										
and [she] hurries towards the only				1									
mirror in the room.													
She looks at her bewildered			1										
husband,													
[she was] unsurprised by his			1										
presence.													
"I'm going to become an angel,			1										
and there are not enough feathers for				1									
me to make wings."													
lpeng's jaw drops.			1										
"What [is it]?"						1							
He stares at his wife.			1										
	1												
The next morning, Ipeng watches his													
wife, suddenly spry, chasing the hens													
and roosters in their compound.													
There are already five naked hens		1	1										
and one naked roosters walking													
about in the yard,													
the birds [were] looking ashamed of			1										
their nudity, with goose pimples on													
their skin to prove their													
embarrassment.													
"Mandak												1	
Manaak			]									Т	

what do you plan to do with those					1							
poor chickens?"												
"[Do you want to] Eat them."								1				
"Eh?											1	
We have too many naked chickens,			1									
we can't eat them all.			1									
If we do, we'll start clucking like them s	800	n.										1
Besides, this is cruel."				1								
She does not reply,			1									
and the chickens continue to squawk.				1								
He goes back to the bedroom			1									
and [he] sits on the mattress.				1								
This is awful.			1									
He cannot bear to watch the birds			1									
being humiliated like this.												
lpeng is mystified.			1									
He secretly checks his wife's batik			1									
sanitary towels to see if it's that time												
of the month.												
He finds them folded neatly at the			1									
back of the wardrobe,												
			1									
[they are] still smelling faintly of soap.			_									
They have been washed.			1									
			1									
He discretely drops by at the village shaman's hut to ask what he can do												
about the situation,				4								
but [he] receives no direct answer.				1								
"You're the husband,			1									
you should know,"			1									
the shaman huffs.			1									
				1								
When they are lying in bed one night,												
he asks her if she has stopped			1									
having her periods.												
She makes an irritated noise, not			1									
unlike the squawks from their												
feathered friends.												
At dinner she complains.	1											
He looks at Mandak with interest,			1									
for his wife has never been one to				1								
complain												
or [for his wife has never been one				1								
to]whine.				•								
-			1									
She has been angry before,	-		_			-	<del>                                     </del>	-	-	-		
[she has been] frustrated yes,	-		1	1		-	<del>                                     </del>	-	-	-	$\vdash$	
but never has she complained.				1								

		_		T	_	 	_	_	1	1	
As they eat their dinner of two chickens,				1							
she petulantly tells him how difficult it			1								
is to obtain virgin-white feathers from											
the birds.											
			1								
"A feather is a feather,"			1								
he says.	-		1								
"[ A feather is ]Not for angel wings,"			1								
she retorts			1								
as she tears at the roast chicken				1							
and [she] nibbles the frayed meat.				1							
"Why do you want to be an angel?					1						
When you die,				1							
you'll become one."			1								
"Why must I wait until I die?"					1						
	1		1								
She looks at him, not comprehending											
his seeming stupidity.											
It's true,			1								
			1								
she does not need to wait											
until she dies to become an angel,				1							
he muses,			1								
but it is a preposterous idea for a				1							
woman in this kampong.											
How on earth did she get inspired by						1					
such a Western idea?											
He belches.			1								
He thinks of the naked hens and			1								
roosters waiting for their plumage to											
grow back.											
0			1								
He groans –											
there are enough naked chickens in			1								
the yard for them to eat for months –											
morning, noon and night.											
Mandak stops her jaunts to friends'			1								
homes,											
[she is]deciding she has no time to			1								
waste on gossip.											
l goodp:			1								
She has also abandoned her monthly			-								
trips to Kuala Terengganu with Ipeng,		$\vdash$									
something they have been doing for y	4 T		1								
[There is] No more shopping	1		1								
and [there is no more]browsing in				1							
Pasar Payang for her, either.		L									
She's on a mission.			1								
She feels time is short,			1								
	-	•									

	ī	1 1		Π.	1		1	1	1	ı	ı -	ı	1	
and [she] wishes that she had				1										
thought of this														
when she was younger.				1										
It is too difficult to chase stupid			1											
chickens at her age.														
She gives up on virgin-white down,			1											
and [she] decides to make do with				1										
whatever she can pluck from the														
birds.														
Her friends, Kak Tom [miss her].	1													
and Kak Kam [miss her]				1										
They wonder at her air of serenity at th	e n	narl	1											
They nudge			1											
and [they] whisper,				1										
"Has she had a spell cast on her?"									1					
Mandak, however, has been enlighter	ed	,	1											
and she has no time for a couple of				1										
nosey housewives.														
One night, while the moon is hiding	1													
its pockmarked face behind a														
coconut tree,														
lpeng turns over to hold his wife.			1											
The embrace saddens him;			1											
he realises how old they are.			1											
His, once strong, arm has been			1											
reduced to a wizened branch.														
Mandak too has aged;			1											
the skin on her arm is dry,			1											
and [the skin] hangs like smoked mean	t.			1										
He listens to her breathing	Ī		1											
and [he] wonders who'd be the first to	go.			1										
"Why [do you want to become an ange	_					1								
he asks.	Ι		1											
"Some women sell nasi dagang			1											
and [some women selling] curry puffs.				1										
Some become mistresses."			1											
"And [why do you want to become an a	ang	el?	]"				1							
"I simply want to become an angel."	Ĭ		1											
"You do realise we don't have those							1							
kind of angels in our religion?														
We have different ones, malaikats.			1											
And, they have wings of light, not feath	ers	S.		1										
I can hardly imagine Jibrael looking			1											
like one of those"														
"God knows what's in my heart,"			1											$\neg$
she says			1											
and [she] turns away from him,				1										
· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·	-									-	-		_	

and [she] blows out the kerosene nigh	t-la	mn		1	1			1	1			
Every day she picks at the ticks and m	_	l										
while he worries over her mental	1			1								
health,				_								
and [he] becomes jealous of her new	L nas	sin	l	1								
	_		1									
She begins stitching the feathers onto			_									
bamboo poles with rattan vine.	1											
Over and over she loops them in a	1											
basic pattern to keep the feathers												
together securely.			4									
She blesses every stitch with a			1									
whispered prayer												
as she bends over												
and [she] makes her wings.				1								
Sometimes, bamboo splinters pierce	1											
her rough, callused fingers,												
and dots of blood weep onto the feath	ers			1								
He can only hope.			1									
lpeng comes home after a hard day.			1									
He has been at the village square the	ent	ire	1									
[he has been] working on a new			1									
surau .												
He scratches the back of his neck,			1									
[he] wipes off the grime he has			1									
collected over the day,												
[he] sucks on salty finger			1									
and [he] climbs the rickety steps to his	ho	use		1								
He goes to the kitchen to cook a simple	e m	nea	1									
Since the day his wife decided to				1								
become an angel,												
he has had to cook for them.			1									
It is not too bad, the cooking.			1									
He can manage it.			1									
There are times he fancies himself to			1									
be quite the chef.												
"Mmmm, sedap sungguh aku masok r	ie,"										1	
he would cluck.	ĺ		1									
He finishes cooking the rice,	1	1	1									
pounding the <i>sambal</i> and frying the												
fish,												
and [he] sits down to eat,	t			1								
when suddenly Mandak appears	t			1								
wearing a white tunic and the most												
peculiar looking wings on her back.												
lpeng gapes.	1		1									
Some food drops from his mouth.			1									
The wings have been sewn carefully,	1		1							$\vdash$		
Line wings have been sewin carefully,	<u> </u>	]						<u> </u>	<u> </u>			

	I	1	I			ı			1		1	
but every feather is of a different size,				1								
colour and age:												
Mandak makes a patchy-looking ange	<u>.  </u>		1									
She certainly does not resemble any			1									
of those white, Christian angels she												
talks so much about.												
"Are you planning to go out in that?"							1					
he asks, after a while.			1									
"Yes.											1	
I am a pretty angel,			1									
yes?"											1	
"I think we need to talk."			1									
"There is nothing to say.			1									
I have said enough."			1									
She gets up,			1									
[she] walks back to their room			1									
and [she] draws the door-curtain.			_	1								
lpeng smokes much that night.			1									
He sits on a upturned terracotta vase			1									
in the garden, one leg up and the			_									
other hanging over his seat.												
This is not a situation he has anticipate			1									
<b>'</b>	<del>z</del> u. T		1									
To have a wife who wants to become			1									
an angel, is one thing.	<u> </u>											
He could tolerate that as long as she			1									
confines her activities to the home,												
but now she says she wants to go out.				1								
We are Malays,			1									
he thinks, such a thing would be			1									
unbecoming, not to mention syirik.												
How is he going to explain this to his					1							
frineds and his family?												
How is he going to tell them that					1							
Mandak wants to fly?												
He could lock her up.			1									
The could lock her up.			1									
lle sould be that two of bushand not			1									
He could be that type of husband, not												
allow his wife to do what she wants,	├	<del>                                     </del>										
but he has always prided himself on				1								
not being one of them.	<u> </u>	1										
Heee,	<u> </u>	1									1	
it is hard to be a laki sometimes.	_	_	1									
So, how now?	<u> </u>					1						
Is he to let his wife flap about all over							1					
the village												
								1				
and [is he to let his wife] be mocked?												
										-		

He looks up,			1										
and [he] sees that the light in his room	is (	วท		1									
Is she not asleep yet?	i i	J		_					1				
He peers through the open window to			1										
see her admiring her angel-self in the													
mirror.													
He sighs.			1										
Mandak has never been one to			1										
gossip													
or [Mandak has never been one]cause	e tro	oub	le	1									
She has a good heart.			1	_									
I will let Allah decide our fate,			1										
he resolves.			1										
She starts by making excursions at			1										
night													
when everyone is in bed.				1									
lpeng does not know when she			1										
leaves the house,													
for when he sleeps he's like a dead				1									
man.				_									
Initially, she ventures only a few					1								
yards out of their compound.					-								
She hunches over,			1										
[she is] using the trees for cover,			1										
				1									
and [she] waves her wings gently over the top of the fence.				_									
She crouches under the house			1										
				1									
and [she] hides behind the pillars if she hears someone walking past.				_									
Mandak finds it fun;			1										
it reminds her of her childhood,			1										
[she is] playing hide and seek.			1										
Then, she becomes bolder.				1									
One night, she climbs a rambutan	1												
tree that overhangs from her friend's	-												
house.													
When a cloud floats by,				1									
she tears a hole in it			1										
and [she] peeks through it.				1									
She sees her friend weeping	H		1	_									
and [she] hears her pleas to God:			_	1									
what has she done wrong that her						1							
husband should want to marry													
another?													
Her husband has left the house,			1										
[her husband is] muttering,			1										
"All I want is a child.			1										
			_		<b>.</b>	<b>.</b>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>		<u> </u>	<b>.</b>		

That's all.			1								
All I"			_							1	
She nods,			1								
[she is] understanding.			1								
On another night, she climbs to the	1										
top of a shed											
and [she] sees the imam and his				1							
colleagues performing the midnight											
prayers at the mosque.											
Their chants calm her.			1								
She sees a ray of light behind the line of worshipping men			1								
and [she] knows that djinns are											
praying alongside the congregation.				1							
Allah is wonderful;			1								
He has not just created Man,			1								
but [He has created] also all living											
beings, seen and unseen.				1				L			
One time, she spies on the home of											
the imam and his family.	1										
She blushes			1								
when she sees him and his wife											
making love.				1							
[How can it be]At their age?					1						
Eesh, eesh, eesh!										1	
Old people shouldn't do it anymore.			1								
Love-making is for the young.			1								
She covers her eyes with her wings			1								
and [she covers] her ears with her han	ds.			1							
Eesh										1	
[it is]all that lovey-dovey talk!			1								
Her explorations at night,											
eavesdropping and observing the											
kampong nightlife, leave her tired the											
next day.			1								
It becomes a chore for her to wake up											
at six for the dawn prayers.			1								
She prefers to lie in bed	-		1								
while Ipeng prostrates				1							
and [lpeng]whispers his											
supplications.				1							
"Why is it so difficult for you to pray not	<b>₩</b> ?"	l			1						
he asks her one morning.	_		1								
"I have been travelling."			1								$\dashv$
Then, she tells him.	1			1				_			
She tells him of the shooting star she											
saw the other night,			1								

10 2012 10 1	I				1	I	1	l	l			-1
and the witch's comet that was sent to												
someone's house.				1								
"The comet was big,			1									
so I guess the curse was heavy!"				1								
She now knows why Zaliha is always	so s	sad	1									
and [she] tells him he should go to												
the mosque for the midnight prayers,												
too.				1								
lpeng scratches his chin.			1									
"You have been travelling?"							1					
"Yes."											1	
"Have you have been spying, too?"							1					
"No,"											1	
she lies.			1									
"I'm sorry,			1									
Mandak;											1	
this is not acceptable.			1									
It is one thing for you to want to become	ne a	n a	1									
but it is another to go out alone at												
night without your husband's												
permission				1								
and, now, you are spying on people."				1								
Ipeng raises his voice.			1									
"I'm not spying!			1									
And don't shout at me!"										1		
lpeng does what he believes he has to	o do	).	1									
He pulls Mandak out of bed			1									
as she squeals.				1								
She does not kick			1									
or [she does not] bite him,				1								
but [she] keeps up her protests				1								
as he pulls her into the kitchen.				1								
"Where are you taking me?"					1	1						
"I'm locking you up."			1									
"No,											1	
no,											1	
no,	1				$\dagger$	1					1	$\exists$
don't lock me up, please.	1				$\dagger$	1			1			$\exists$
I am your wife,	1		1		1	1						$\exists$
what will people say,					1							
where are you taking me?"					1							
"This is for your own good,			1		1							
Mandak."	1				$\dagger$	1					1	$\exists$
She weeps all the way out of the												
house			1									
and [she weeps] into their backyard.	1			1	+	1		$\vdash$	$\vdash$			$\dashv$
She shudders			1		+	$\mathbf{I}$						
one shuuders			Т									

	1					1		1				
when he shoves her into the chicken				4								
coop.				1								
"Since you have such an affinity for				_								
feathers,				1								
this will be your home for a while."			1									
"Nooo."											1	
"Until you stop being an angel."				1								
"But I have to fly."				1								
"You can't fly.			1									
You look like a retarded chicken."			1									
He locks the coop,			1									
[he is] leaving his love with her												
clucking friends.			1									
The house becomes empty			1									
and [the house becomes] silent.				1								
He hears her weeping, almost mewing	<b>J</b> .		1									
His heart aches,			1									
but he is afraid of what she might do r	ex.	t.		1								
[Will she] Become Superwoman?							1					
[Will she] Swoop into other people's												
homes with her bedraggled chicken												
wings?							1					
He hopes his friends' wives do not												
get crazy notions			1									
when they stop bleeding one day.				1								
Hmmph.											1	
They might want to become lizards			1									
or [They might want to become] frogs.				1								
The chickens take no notice of their												
human roommate.			1									
They cluck			1									
and [they] crow,				1								
and [they] leave their droppings												
everywhere, as usual.				1								
They walk over her,			1									
and one flies up to perch on her head.			_	1								
One keeps pecking at a button on Mar		k's	1									
maybe it thinks it is a pearl of corn.				1								
She shoos it away,			1									
but it comes back, even more												
determined to eat the button.				1								
Day turns to night.			1								$\vdash$	
The birds sleep.			1		-		<del>                                     </del>		$\vdash$	$\vdash$	H	
Mandak is still awake,			1		+						$\vdash$	
[she is] lying next to three dozen											$\vdash$	
chickens.			1									
CHICKEHS.			Т			<u> </u>					ш	

	Γ							I	1		
She remembers what the imam once											
said: that everyone had angels by											
their sides.			1								
She asks the angel on her right, who											
records her good deeds,			1								
and [she asks] the angel on her left,											
who notes her sins,				1							
"Will I ever be like you?"							1				
she knows she never will.			1								
She is made of a man's rib on earth, n	ot li	ight	1								
In the village, a fire starts	1										
and [the fire] begins to eat a little groce	ery	stor	re.	1							
Plastic bottles of cooking oil melt,			1								
and the yellow slick fuels the fire.				1							
It climbs up			1								
and [it climbs] out of the store,				1							
and, "WHOOOOSHHHH," becomes ki	ing.			1							
"Api! Api!"	Ĭ									1	
Someone sees the fire			1								
and [someone] warns his neighbours.				1							
Old people, young ones, parents, the											
village transvestite, teachers:											
everyone comes out to help douse											
the flames.			1								
Ipeng hears the alarm			1								
and [he] runs out of the house.			_	1							
Mandak sees him			1								
and [she] calls out,				1							
"Hey,										1	
where are you going?"					1						
"There's a fire in the village.			1		_						
I must help them."			1								
She kicks the weak wood of the <i>reban</i>			1								
and a plank breaks.			_	1							
She kicks it some more.			1								
The wall of the chicken coop cracks.			1								
Her feathered friends cluck,			1								
[her feather friends] startled			1								
and [her feather friends] agitated.				1							
The rooster crows.			1								
She kicks			1								
and [she] pushes,				1							
	<del>                                     </del>										
and [she] soon escapes the coop,											
albeit with splinters in her back,				4							
ankles and the soles of her feet.	<u> </u>			1							
At the village, men and women form a											
Some throw buckets of water at the bu		(									
others throw sand to quench its fiery the	nırsi	[.	1								

Sweat rolls down the faces			1									
and [sweats roll down] backs of the			_									_
villagers.			1									
After an eternity, they manage to conta	1		Τ.									_
The grocery store still burns.			1									_
												_
On top of the roof of the store, they												
see what looks like a large hen "Alamo!"	1	-									4	
			1								1	_
lpeng gasps.			1									_
It is Mandak beating down the flames												
with her hands and,			1									
in the process, [she is] fanning the fire												
with her wings.	1											
A spark kisses a wing			1									
and soon Mandak is on fire.				1								
lpeng runs,			1									
[lpeng] pushes			1									
and [lpeng] climbs his way to the roof												
to rescue his wife.				1								
Mandak cries			1									
as she tries to beat out the flames on												
her wings.				1								
The crowd stops playing fireman			1									
and [the crowd] gape.				1								
They are amazed by the sight of												
Mandak in her feathers.			1									
Ipeng catches her,			1									
and she holds him.				1								
"Oh,											1	
it is too hot,			1									
husband.											1	
Maybe											1	
hooo											1	
there ishot, hot no such thing as												
heaven"			1									
"Hish!											1	
There is heaven.			1									
And you are an angel for trying to help	,,			1								$\dashv$
"Hmmm.											1	$\dashv$
l'Il be one bloody burnt angel by the												$\dashv$
time I get there."			1									
Crack!			1								1	$\dashv$
The roof gives way under Mandak,			1								1	$\dashv$
and she falls through the red and blace	k al	hve		1								$\dashv$
lpeng screams.	\ a	Jya	1									$\dashv$
His shouts wake the villagers from the	ir e	tun									$\vdash$	$\dashv$
They, too, scream		l 	1		-	$\vdash$		-	-			$\dashv$
inoy, too, soream		]	1							l		

and Manager Control of the Control o		\ <i>t</i>	1	_			1			1	
and [they] rush towards the store to sa	ve I	viar	ndak	1							
"Mandak!										1	
Mandak!"			4							1	
There is no answer.	ء ما د		1								
lpeng looks into the hole in the roof for	ne	r.	1								
All he sees is a wing,	1										
[a wing is] beating gently,			1								
as more fire-kisses catch the feathers.				1							
"Mandak!"										1	
"Ipeng!										1	
Come back,								1			
it's going to explode!"			1								
his friend, the headmaster, grabs him											
by his shorts.			1								
"My wife!"										1	
"She's dead!			1								
There's no use having two de"			1								
They feel a movement underneath,											
the start of an explosion.			1								
As Ipeng flies into the sky,				1							
he thinks he's going to choke from											
the smoke.			1								
There's nothing for him to grasp.			1								
Oh God,										1	
I am going to die,			1								
he thinks.			1								
He falls on a tree,			1								
[he] crashes through its branches,			1								
and [he] tumbles down to the grass,				1							
[he is] startling a sleeping goat.			1								
He hears voices,			1								
,											
and [he]sees some young men				1							
coming to help him.  He looks in the direction of the burning	1 Ot		1	1							
	í	ore	1								
In the morning, when all is settled	1										
and [all is] burnt black,				1							
he goes home.			1								
Mandak's funeral will be later.			1								
He has not cried yet.			1								
He sighs			1								
and [he] walks home.				1							
He trips over a stone			1								
and [he] stumbles.				1							
When he bends to adjust his											
footwear,				1							
he finds, stuck at the heel, a feather.	L		1				$L^{-}$		L		

He picks it up.			1												
It could be from any moulding hen,			1												
he thinks.			1												
He turns it over			1												
and [he] strokes its softness,				1											
then [he] lets it fall				1											
and [he] goes home.				1											
	21	1	282	130	3	15	5	1	9	2	2	1	1	35	2

And She Became an Angel			
Stage 2 Analysis			<u> </u>
Stage 2 Arialysis	Mandak	lpeng	social-cultura
One day, Mandak looks up from the mashed chilli, onions and garlic mix she is pounding in the old <i>batu lesong</i> that she had inherited from her mother,	1		
and [she] decides that she wants to like in the movies on television she watched when she was young;	1		
exactly like those in foreign books of devotion she had seen when while attending primary school run by missionaries – all white-robed, with white feathered wings spreading serenely; that kind of angel.	1		
Mandak is not a woman given to impulsive, life-changing decisions.	1		
she does not think very deeply about anything either,	1		
for how could she when she has a family and household to run, and chickens to care for?	1		
This is a new thought;			1
one she cannot ignore .	1		
The thought ignites a very strange feeling somewhere deep in her chest.	1		
It feels warm,			1
and [it] keeps growing until she becomes breathless.			1
The mashed garlic in the mortar looks like outspread angel wings.			1
She sits on the floor and toys with the condiments with her fingers.	1		
She begins tracing the garlic wings in the mo	1		
Then she looks up.	1		
She is fed up with cooking.	1		
She has done nothing	1		
but [she] take care of her husband her entire married life.	1		
She heard on the radio the other day that a			
woman should have something of her own,			
something outside her marriage that she			
can be proud of, something that's all hers.	1		

They have no children;		1	
they just never had any.		1	
But they were not the type to fret and			
despair over it, to see bomohs and bidans,			
to facilitate conception.		1	
What a waste of time and money [it is].			1
If she could be just one thing in her life, it			
would be that;	1		
[it would be] an angel.			1
She stops mashing the condiments	1		
and [she] gingerly scoops the mush into a sal	1		
and [she] hides it all under the bed in their ro	1		
Then, she goes to her pillows	1		
and [she]rips them.	1		
The once [they were] white feathers,			1
[they were] yellow from age,			1
[they] fall to the floor.			1
They look dead;			1
there's no more flight left in them.			1
She makes a face.	1		
She has work to do.	1		
lpeng, her husband of 37 years, comes			
home to a house devoid of the usual			
appetite-whetting aromas.		1	
Surely, the air cannot be lying;			1
there is no smell of cooked food.			1
He blinks.		1	
This weathered, skinny man, whose eyes			
roll about ceaselessly, squeaks a greeting,		1	
"Oh Mandak!			
Why have you not cooked today?	1		
And, where are you?"	1		
He shuffles towards the bedroom.		1	
When he enters it,		1	
he is reminded of their passion of language		1	
he is reminded of their passion of long ago,		1	
and [he is reminded of] the laughter they			
had shared.		1	
It has been a while			1
since they laughed themselves silly.		1	
He is brought back to reality by a drifting feath	ner.	1	
He blinks a few times		1	
and [he] sees another feather floating by in			
front of his face.		1	
He stares at Mandak who is stuffing feathers			
back into a pillow.		1	

He gapes at the dull and yellowed feathers			
all over the room: on their bed, on her lap,			
everywhere.		1	
Mandak is on all fours: a woman on a mission	1		
She grunts	1		
as she creeps all over the room to retrieve			
feathers from under the old cupboard	1		
and [she creeps all over the room to retrieve			
feathers from] under the bed,	1		
and [she] sighs	1		
as she inspects one.	1		
Finally, the pillow is full.			1
Mandak puts it on the floor	1		
and [she] hurries towards the only mirror in			
the room.	1		
She looks at her bewildered husband,	1		
[she was] unsurprised by his presence.	1		
"I'm going to become an angel,	1		
and there are not enough feathers for me to			
make wings."			1
lpeng's jaw drops.		1	
"What [is it]?"			1
He stares at his wife.		1	
The next morning, Ipeng watches his wife,			
suddenly spry, chasing the hens and			
roosters in their compound.		1	
There are already five naked hens and one			
naked roosters walking about in the yard,			1
the birds [were] looking ashamed of their			
nudity, with goose pimples on their skin to			
prove their embarrassment.			1
"Mandak			
what do you plan to do with those poor			
chickens?"	1		
"[Do you want to] Eat them."	1		
"Eh?			
We have too many naked chickens,		1	
we can't eat them all.		1	
If we do, we'll start clucking like them soon.		1	
Besides, this is cruel."			1
She does not reply,	1		
and the chickens continue to squawk.			1
He goes back to the bedroom		1	
and [he] sits on the mattress.		1	
This is awful.			1

He cannot bear to watch the birds being humiliated like this.		4	
humiliated like this.		4	
		1	
lpeng is mystified.		1	
He secretly checks his wife's batik sanitary			
towels to see if it's that time of the month.		1	
He finds them folded neatly at the back of			
the wardrobe,		1	
[they are] still smelling faintly of soap.			1
They have been washed.			1
He discretely drops by at the village			
shaman's hut to ask what he can do about			
the situation,		1	
but [he] receives no direct answer.		1	
"You're the husband,		1	
you should know,"		1	
the shaman huffs.		1	1
		1	
When they are lying in bed one night,		1	
periods.		1	
She makes an irritated noise, not unlike the			
squawks from their feathered friends.	1		
At dinner she complains.	1		
He looks at Mandak with interest,		1	
for his wife has never been one to complain	1		
or Ifor his wife has never been one tolwhine.	1		
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As they eat their diffiler of two chickers,			
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"Why must I wait until I die?"	1		
She looks at him, not comprehending his			
seeming stupidity.	1		
lt's true,			1
At dinner she complains.  He looks at Mandak with interest,  for his wife has never been one to complain  or [for his wife has never been one to]whine.  She has been angry before, [she has been] frustrated yes, but never has she complained.  As they eat their dinner of two chickens,  she petulantly tells him how difficult it is to obtain virgin-white feathers from the birds.  "A feather is a feather," he says.  "[ A feather is ]Not for angel wings," she retorts as she tears at the roast chicken and [she] nibbles the frayed meat.  "Why do you want to be an angel?  When you die, you'll become one."  "Why must I wait until I die?"  She looks at him, not comprehending his seeming stupidity.	1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1	1	

	_		
she does not need to wait	1		
until she dies to become an angel,	1		
he muses,		1	
but it is a preposterous idea for a woman in			
this kampong.			1
How on earth did she get inspired by such a			
Western idea?	1		
He belches.		1	
He thinks of the naked hens and roosters			
waiting for their plumage to grow back.		1	
He groans –		1	
there are enough naked chickens in the			
yard for them to eat for months – morning,			
noon and night.			1
Mandak stops her jaunts to friends' homes,	1		
[she is]deciding she has no time to waste on			
gossip.	1		
She has also abandoned her monthly trips			
to Kuala Terengganu with Ipeng,	1		
something they have been doing for years.		1	
[There is] No more shopping			1
and [there is no more]browsing in Pasar			
Payang for her, either.			1
She's on a mission.	1		
She feels time is short,	1		
and [she] wishes that she had thought of this	1		
when she was younger.	1		
It is too difficult to chase stupid chickens at			
her age.	1		
She gives up on virgin-white down,	1		
and [she] decides to make do with whatever			
she can pluck from the birds.	1		
Her friends, Kak Tom [miss her].			1
and Kak Kam [miss her]			1
They wonder at her air of serenity at the mar	ket.		1
They nudge			1
and [they] whisper,			1
"Has she had a spell cast on her?"	1		
Mandak, however, has been enlightened,	1		
and she has no time for a couple of nosey			
housewives.	1		
One night, while the moon is hiding its			
pockmarked face behind a coconut tree,			1
Inong turns over to hold his wife		ا ما	
Ipeng turns over to hold his wife. The embrace saddens him;		1	

he realises how old they are.		1	
His, once strong, arm has been reduced to a			
wizened branch.		1	
Mandak too has aged;	1		
the skin on her arm is dry,	1		
and [the skin] hangs like smoked meat.	1		
He listens to her breathing		1	
and [he] wonders who'd be the first to go.		1	
"Why [do you want to become an angel]?"	1		
he asks.		1	
"Some women sell nasi dagang			1
and [some women selling] curry puffs.			1
Some become mistresses."			1
"And [why do you want to become an angel?]	1		
"I simply want to become an angel."	1		
"You do realise we don't have those kind of			
angels in our religion?	1		
We have different ones, <i>malaikats</i> .		1	
And, they have wings of light, not feathers.			1
I can hardly imagine Jibrael looking like			
one of those"		1	
"God knows what's in my heart,"	1		
she says	1		
and [she] turns away from him,	1		
and [she] blows out the kerosene night-lamp.	1		
Every day she picks at the ticks and mites fro			
while he worries over her mental health,	-	1	
and [he] becomes jealous of her new passion		1	
	1.		
She begins stitching the feathers onto			
bamboo poles with rattan vine.	1		
Over and over she loops them in a basic			
pattern to keep the feathers together			
securely.	1		
She blesses every stitch with a whispered			
prayer	1		
as she bends over	1		
and [she] makes her wings.	1		
Sometimes, bamboo splinters pierce her			
rough, callused fingers,			1
and dots of blood weep onto the feathers.			1
He can only hope.		1	
Ipeng comes home after a hard day.		1	
He has been at the village square the entire v	veek	1	
[he has been] working on a new surau.		1	
He scratches the back of his neck,		1	
[he] wipes off the grime he has collected			
over the day,		1	
over the day,		1	

Interpretation is any limited and [he] climbs the rickety steps to his house.  He goes to the kitchen to cook a simple meal.  Since the day his wife decided to become an angel, he has had to cook for them.  It is not too bad, the cooking. He can manage it.  There are times he fancies himself to be quite the chef.  "Mmmm, sedap sungguh aku masok ne," he would cluck.  He finishes cooking the rice, pounding the sambal and frying the fish, and [he] sits down to eat, when suddenly Mandak appears wearing a white tunic and the most peculiar looking wings on her back.  Ipeng gapes.  Some food drops from his mouth. The wings have been sewn carefully, but every feather is of a different size, colour and age:  Mandak makes a patchy-looking angel.  She certainly does not resemble any of those white, Christian angels she talks so much about.  "Are you planning to go out in that?"  he asks, after a while.  "Yes.  I am a pretty angel, yes?"  "I think we need to talk."  "There is nothing to say.  I have said enough."  She gets up, [she] walks back to their room and [she] draws the door-curtain. I pleng smokes much that night.  He sits on a upturned terracotta vase in the garden, one leg up and the other hanging over his seat.  This is not a situation he has anticipated.  To have a wife who wants to become an angel, is one thing.  He could tolerate that as long as she confines her activities to the home,  1	The laught on cally finger		1	
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He could tolerate that as long as she	To have a wife who wants to become an			
·	angel, is one thing.		1	
confines her activities to the home,	He could tolerate that as long as she			
	confines her activities to the home,		1	

but now she says she wants to go out.	1		
We are Malays,		1	
•			
he thinks, such a thing would be unbecoming, not to mention syirik.		1	
		1	
How is he going to explain this to his frineds		4	
and his family?		1	
How is he going to tell them that Mandak			
wants to fly?		1	
He could lock her up.		1	
He could be that type of husband, not allow			
his wife to do what she wants,		1	
but he has always prided himself on not			
being one of them.		1	
Heee,			
it is hard to be a laki sometimes.			1
So, how now?			1
Is he to let his wife flap about all over the			
village		1	
and [is he to let his wife] be mocked?		1	
He looks up,		1	
and [he] sees that the light in his room is on.		1	
Is she not asleep yet?	1		
He peers through the open window to see			
her admiring her angel-self in the mirror.		1	
He sighs.		1	
Mandak has never been one to gossip	1		
or [Mandak has never been one]cause troubl	1		
She has a good heart.	1	1	
I will let Allah decide our fate,		1	
he resolves.	1	1	
She starts by making excursions at night	1		
when everyone is in bed.			1
lpeng does not know when she leaves the		4	
house,		1	
for when he sleeps he's like a dead man.		1	
Initially, she ventures only a few yards out of			
their compound.	1		
She hunches over,	1		
[she is] using the trees for cover,	1		
and [she] waves her wings gently over the			
top of the fence.	1		
She crouches under the house	1		
and [she] hides behind the pillars if she			
hears someone walking past.	1		
Mandak finds it fun;	1		

it reminds her of her childhood,	1	
[she is] playing hide and seek.	1	
Then, she becomes bolder.	1	
One night, she climbs a rambutan tree that		
overhangs from her friend's house.	1	
When a cloud floats by,		1
she tears a hole in it	1	
and [she] peeks through it.	1	
She sees her friend weeping	1	
and [she] hears her pleas to God:	1	
what has she done wrong that her husband		
should want to marry another?		1
Her husband has left the house,		1
[her husband is] muttering,		1
"All I want is a child.		1
That's all.		1
All I"		
She nods,	1	
[she is] understanding.	1	
On another night, she climbs to the top of a		
shed	1	
and [she] sees the imam and his colleagues		
performing the midnight prayers at the		
mosque.	1	
Their chants calm her.		1
She sees a ray of light behind the line of		
worshipping men	1	
and [she] knows that djinns are praying		
alongside the congregation.	1	
Allah is wonderful;		1
He has not just created Man,		1
but [He has created] also all living beings,		
seen and unseen.		1
One time, she spies on the home of the		
imam and his family.	1	
She blushes		
	1	
when she sees him and his wife making	4	
love.	1	
[How can it be]At their age?		1
Eesh, eesh, eesh!		
Old people shouldn't do it anymore.		1
Love-making is for the young.		1
She covers her eyes with her wings	1	
and [she covers] her ears with her hands.	1	
Eesh		4
[it is]all that lovey-dovey talk!		1

Llow overlandiana at night agvandranning		1	
Her explorations at night, eavesdropping			
and observing the kampong nightlife, leave	4		
her tired the next day.	1		
It becomes a chore for her to wake up at six			
for the dawn prayers.	1		
She prefers to lie in bed	1		
while Ipeng prostrates		1	
and [lpeng]whispers his supplications.		1	
"Why is it so difficult for you to pray now?"	1		
he asks her one morning.		1	
"I have been travelling."	1		
Then, she tells him.	1		
She tells him of the shooting star she saw			
the other night,	1		
and the witch's comet that was sent to			
someone's house.			1
"The comet was big,			1
so I guess the curse was heavy!"	1		
She now knows why Zaliha is always so sad,	1		
-	1		
and [she] tells him he should go to the			
mosque for the midnight prayers, too.	1		
Ipeng scratches his chin.		1	
"You have been travelling?"	1		
"Yes."			
"Have you have been spying, too?"	1		
"No,"			
she lies.	1		
"I'm sorry,		1	
Mandak;			
this is not acceptable.			1
It is one thing for you to want to become an a	1		
but it is another to go out alone at night			
without your husband's permission	1		
and, now, you are spying on people."	1		
lpeng raises his voice.		1	
"I'm not spying!	1		
And don't shout at me!"	1		
lpeng does what he believes he has to do.		1	
He pulls Mandak out of bed		1	
as she squeals.	1		
She does not kick	1		
or [she does not] bite him,	1		
but [she] keeps up her protests	1		
as he pulls her into the kitchen.		1	
"Where are you taking me?"		1	
"I'm locking you up."		1	
"No,			

no,			
no,			
don't lock me up, please.		1	
I am your wife,	1		
what will people say,			1
where are you taking me?"		1	1
, ,	1	1	
"This is for your own good, Mandak."	1		
	4		
She weeps all the way out of the house	1		
and [she weeps] into their backyard.	1		
She shudders	1		
when he shoves her into the chicken coop.		1	
"Since you have such an affinity for feathers	1		
"Since you have such an affinity for feathers,	1		
this will be your home for a while." "Nooo."	1		
	1		
"Until you stop being an angel."	1		
"But I have to fly."	1		
"You can't fly.	1		
You look like a retarded chicken."	1	4	
He locks the coop,		1	
[he is] leaving his love with her clucking			
friends.		1	
The house becomes empty			1
and [the house becomes] silent.			1
He hears her weeping, almost mewing.		1	
His heart aches,		1	
but he is afraid of what she might do next.		1	
[Will she] Become Superwoman?	1		
[Will she] Swoop into other people's homes with her bedraggled chicken wings?	1		
He hopes his friends' wives do not get crazy notions		1	
when they stop bleeding one day.			1
Hmmph.			
They might want to become lizards			1
or [They might want to become] frogs.			1
The chickens take no notice of their human roommate.			1
They cluck			1
and [they] crow,			1
and [they] leave their droppings			
everywhere, as usual.			1
They walk over her,			1
and one flies up to perch on her head.			1

One keeps pecking at a button on Mandak's	tunic:		1
maybe it thinks it is a pearl of corn.			1
She shoos it away,	1		
but it comes back, even more determined to			
eat the button.			1
Day turns to night.			1
The birds sleep.			1
Mandak is still awake.	1		
	_		
[she is] lying next to three dozen chickens.	1		
She remembers what the imam once said:			
that everyone had angels by their sides.	1		
She asks the angel on her right, who			
records her good deeds,	1		
and [she asks] the angel on her left, who			
notes her sins,	1		
"Will I ever be like you?"	1		
she knows she never will.	1		
She is made of a man's rib on earth, not light	1		
In the village, a fire starts			1
and [the fire] begins to eat a little grocery stor	e.		1
Plastic bottles of cooking oil melt,			1
and the yellow slick fuels the fire.			1
It climbs up			1
and [it climbs] out of the store,			1
and, "WHOOOOSHHHH," becomes king.			1
"Api! Api!"			
Someone sees the fire			1
and [someone] warns his neighbours.			1
Old people, young ones, parents, the village			
transvestite, teachers: everyone comes out			
to help douse the flames.			1
lpeng hears the alarm		1	
and [he] runs out of the house.		1	
Mandak sees him	1		
and [she] calls out,	1		
"Hey,			
where are you going?"		1	
"There's a fire in the village.			1
I must help them."		1	
She kicks the weak wood of the reban	1		
and a plank breaks.			1
She kicks it some more.	1		
The wall of the chicken coop cracks.			1
Her feathered friends cluck,			1
[her feather friends] startled			1
and [her feather friends] agitated.			1

The rooster crows. 1 She kicks 1 and [she] pushes, 1 and [she] soon escapes the coop, albeit with splinters in her back, ankles and the soles of her feet. 1 At the village, men and women form a water chain. 1 Some throw buckets of water at the burning store; others throw sand to quench its fiery thirst. 1 Sweat rolls down the faces 1 and [sweats roll down] backs of the villagers. 1 After an eternity, they manage to contain the fire. 1 The grocery store still burns. 1 On top of the roof of the store, they see what looks like a large hen 1 "Alamo!" 1 Ipeng gasps. 1 It is Mandak beating down the flames with her hands and, 1 in the process, [she is] fanning the fire with her wings. 1 A spark kisses a wing 1 and soon Mandak is on fire. 1 Ipeng Jushes 1 and [Ipeng] climbs his way to the roof to rescue his wife. 1 as she tries to beat out the flames on her wings. 1 The crowd stops playing fireman 1 and [the crowd] gape. 1 They are amazed by the sight of Mandak in her feathers. 1 Ipeng catches her, 1 and she holds him. 1 "Oh, 1 It is too hot, 1 husband. 1 Maybe 1 Hooo Hooo There is heaven. 1 And you are an angel for trying to help." 1	Th	I		4
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"Hish! 1	there ishot, hot no such thing as			
There is heaven.	heaven''			1
	"Hish!			
And you are an angel for trying to help." 1				1
	And you are an angel for trying to help."	1		

"Hmmm.			
I'll be one bloody burnt angel by the time I			
get there."	1		
Crack!			
The roof gives way under Mandak,			1
and she falls through the red and black abys	1		
Ipeng screams.		1	
His shouts wake the villagers from their stup	or.	1	
They, too, scream			1
and [they] rush towards the store to save Ma	ndak.		1
"Mandak!			
Mandak!"			
There is no answer.	1		
lpeng looks into the hole in the roof for her.		1	
All he sees is a wing,		1	
[a wing is] beating gently,			1
as more fire-kisses catch the feathers.			1
"Mandak!"			
"Ipeng!			
Come back,		1	
it's going to explode!"			1
his friend, the headmaster, grabs him by his			
shorts.			1
"My wife!"			
"She's dead!	1		
There's no use having two de"		1	
They feel a movement underneath, the start			
of an explosion.			1
As Ipeng flies into the sky,		1	
he thinks he's going to choke from the			
smoke.		1	
There's nothing for him to grasp.		1	
Oh God,			
I am going to die,		1	
he thinks.		1	
He falls on a tree,		1	
[he] crashes through its branches,		1	
and [he] tumbles down to the grass,		1	
[he is] startling a sleeping goat.		1	
He hears voices,		1	
and [he]sees some young men coming to			
help him.		1	
He looks in the direction of the burning store		1	
In the morning, when all is settled			1
and [all is] burnt black,			1
he goes home.		1	
Mandak's funeral will be later.	+		

He has not cried yet.		1	
He sighs		1	
and [he] walks home.		1	
He trips over a stone		1	
and [he] stumbles.		1	
When he bends to adjust his footwear,		1	
he finds, stuck at the heel, a feather.		1	
He picks it up.		1	
It could be from any moulding hen,			1
he thinks.		1	
He turns it over		1	
and [he] strokes its softness,		1	
then [he] lets it fall		1	
and [he] goes home.		1	
	193	154	129

And She Became an Angel		1	1	Ma	nda	k			lpe	ng	
Stage 3 Analysis	actor	carrier	senser	behaver	sayer	actor	carrier	senser	behaver	sayer	extent
One day, Mandak looks up from the mashed chilli, onions and garlic mix she is pounding in the old batu lesong that she had inherited from her mother,	1										
and [she] decides that she wants to like in the movies on television she watched when she was young;			1								
exactly like those in foreign books of devotion she had seen when while attending primary school run by missionaries – all white-robed, with white feathered wings spreading serenely; that kind of angel			1								
angel.  Mandak is not a woman given to impulsive, life-											
changing decisions.		1									
she does not think very deeply about anything either,			1								
for how could she when she has a family and household to run, and chickens to care for? This is a new thought;	1										
one she cannot ignore .				1							
The thought ignites a very strange feeling somewhere deep in her chest. It feels warm,			1								
and [it] keeps growing until she becomes breathless.											
The mashed garlic in the mortar looks like outspread angel wings.											
She sits on the floor and toys with the condiments with her fingers.	1										
She begins tracing the garlic wings in the mortar.	1										
Then she looks up.			1								
She is fed up with cooking. She has done nothing	1										
but [she] take care of her husband her entire married life.	1										
She heard on the radio the other day that a woman should have something of her own, something outside her marriage that she can be proud of,											
something that's all hers. They have no children;			1				1				
they just never had any.							1				
•		-	-			-	-				

But they were not the type to fret and despair over it, to see bomohs and bidans, to facilitate conception. 1 What a waste of time and money [it is]. If she could be just one thing in her life, it would be that: 1 [it would be] an angel. She stops mashing the condiments 1 1 and [she] gingerly scoops the mush into a saucer 1 and [she] hides it all under the bed in their room. 1 Then, she goes to her pillows 1 and [she]rips them. The once [they were] white feathers, [they were] yellow from age, [they] fall to the floor. They look dead; there's no more flight left in them. She makes a face. 1 1 She has work to do. lpeng, her husband of 37 years, comes home to a house devoid of the usual appetite-whetting aromas. 1 Surely, the air cannot be lying; there is no smell of cooked food. He blinks. 1 This weathered, skinny man, whose eyes roll about ceaselessly, squeaks a greeting, 1 "Oh ... Mandak! Why have you not cooked today? 1 And, where are you?" 1 He shuffles towards the bedroom. 1 1 When he enters it. 1 he is reminded of their passion of long ago, and [he is reminded of] the laughter they had shared. 1 It has been a while since they laughed themselves silly. 1 He is brought back to reality by a drifting feather. 1 He blinks a few times 1 and [he] sees another feather floating by in front of his face. 1 He stares at Mandak who is stuffing feathers back into a pillow. 1 He gapes at the dull and yellowed feathers all over the room: on their bed, on her lap, everywhere. 1 Mandak is on all fours: a woman on a mission. 1

She grunts

as she creeps all over the room to retrieve feathers from under the old cupboard 1 and [she creeps all over the room to retrieve feathers from] under the bed, 1 and [she] sighs 1 1 as she inspects one. Finally, the pillow is full. 1 Mandak puts it on the floor and [she] hurries towards the only mirror in the room. 1 She looks at her bewildered husband, 1 [she was] unsurprised by his presence. 1 "I'm going to become an angel, and there are not enough feathers for me to make winas." Ipeng's jaw drops. 1 "What [is it]?" He stares at his wife. 1 The next morning, Ipeng watches his wife, suddenly spry, chasing the hens and roosters in their compound. 1 There are already five naked hens and one naked roosters walking about in the yard, the birds [were] looking ashamed of their nudity, with goose pimples on their skin to prove their embarrassment. "Mandak ... what do you plan to do with those poor chickens?" 1 "[Do you want to] Eat them." 1 "Eh? We have too many naked chickens. 1 we can't eat them all. 1 If we do, we'll start clucking like them soon. 1 Besides, this is cruel." She does not reply, 1 and the chickens continue to squawk. He goes back to the bedroom 1 and [he] sits on the mattress. 1 This is awful. He cannot bear to watch the birds being humiliated like this. 1 1 Ipeng is mystified. He secretly checks his wife's batik sanitary towels to see if it's that time of the month. 1 He finds them folded neatly at the back of the wardrobe. 1 [they are] still smelling faintly of soap.

They have been washed. He discretely drops by at the village shaman's hut to ask what he can do about the situation. 1 1 but [he] receives no direct answer. "You're the husband, you should know." 1 the shaman huffs. When they are lying in bed one night, 1 he asks her if she has stopped having her periods. 1 She makes an irritated noise, not unlike the squawks from their feathered friends. 1 At dinner she complains. 1 He looks at Mandak with interest, 1 for his wife has never been one to complain 1 1 or [for his wife has never been one to]whine. She has been angry before, 1 [she has been] frustrated yes, 1 but never has she complained. 1 1 As they eat their dinner of two chickens, she petulantly tells him how difficult it is to obtain virgin-white feathers from the birds. 1 "A feather is a feather." he says. "[ A feather is ]Not for angel wings," she retorts 1 1 as she tears at the roast chicken 1 and [she] nibbles the frayed meat. "Why do you want to be an angel? 1 1 When you die, 1 you'll become one." "Why must I wait until I die?" 1 She looks at him, not comprehending his seeming stupidity. 1 It's true, she does not need to wait 1 until she dies to become an angel, 1 1 he muses, but it is a preposterous idea for a woman in this kampong. How on earth did she get inspired by such a Western idea? 1 He belches. 1 He thinks of the naked hens and roosters waiting for their plumage to grow back. 1 He groans -1 there are enough naked chickens in the yard for them to eat for months – morning, noon and night.

Mandak stops her jaunts to friends' homes, [she is]deciding she has no time to waste on gossip. She has also abandoned her monthly trips to Kuala Terengganu with Ipeng, 1 something they have been doing for years. 1 [There is] No more shopping and [there is no more]browsing in Pasar Payang for her, either. She's on a mission. 1 She feels time is short, 1 and [she] wishes that she had thought of this 1 when she was younger. 1 It is too difficult to chase stupid chickens at her age. 1 She gives up on virgin-white down, and [she] decides to make do with whatever she can pluck from the birds. 1 Her friends, Kak Tom [miss her]. and Kak Kam [miss her] They wonder at her air of serenity at the market. They nudge and [they] whisper, "Has she had a spell cast on her?" 1 Mandak, however, has been enlightened, 1 and she has no time for a couple of nosey housewives. 1 One night, while the moon is hiding its pockmarked face behind a coconut tree, lpeng turns over to hold his wife. 1 The embrace saddens him: 1 1 he realises how old they are. His, once strong, arm has been reduced to a wizened branch. 1 Mandak too has aged; 1 the skin on her arm is dry, 1 1 and [the skin] hangs like smoked meat. He listens to her breathing 1 and [he] wonders who'd be the first to go. 1 "Why [do you want to become an angel]?" he asks. 1 "Some women sell nasi dagang and [some women selling] curry puffs. Some become mistresses." "And [why do you want to become an angel?]" 1 "I simply want to become an angel."

"You do realise we don't have those kind of angels			_							
in our religion?			1		_					
We have different ones, <i>malaikats</i> .					1					
And, they have wings of light, not feathers.										
I can hardly imagine Jibrael looking like one of										
those"							1			
"God knows what's in my heart,"		1								
she says				1						
and [she] turns away from him,	1									
and [she] blows out the kerosene night-lamp.	1									
Every day she picks at the ticks and mites from the feat	1									
while he worries over her mental health,								1		
and [he] becomes jealous of her new passion.					1					
She begins stitching the feathers onto bamboo										
poles with rattan vine.	1									
Over and over she loops them in a basic pattern to										
keep the feathers together securely.	1									
She blesses every stitch with a whispered prayer	_			1						
as she bends over	1			_						
and [she] makes her wings.	1									
Sometimes, bamboo splinters pierce her rough,	Ť									
callused fingers,										
and dots of blood weep onto the feathers.										
He can only hope.								1		
lpeng comes home after a hard day.					1					
He has been at the village square the entire week with	th fr	ian	de			1				
[he has been] working on a new surau.		1611	us,		1					
He scratches the back of his neck,					1					
·					1					
[he] wipes off the grime he has collected over the										
day,					1					
[he] sucks on salty finger					1					
and [he] climbs the rickety steps to his house.					1					
He goes to the kitchen to cook a simple meal.					1					
Since the day his wife decided to become an angel,	1									
he has had to cook for them.					1					
It is not too bad, the cooking.										
He can manage it.					1					
There are times he fancies himself to be quite the										
chef.								1		
"Mmmm, sedap sungguh aku masok ne,"										
he would cluck.									1	
He finishes cooking the rice, pounding the sambal										
and frying the fish,	L				1					
and [he] sits down to eat,					1					
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when suddenly Mandak appears wearing a white tunic and the most peculiar looking wings on her back.
Ipeng gapes.
Some food drops from his mouth.
The wings have been sewn carefully,
but every feather is of a different size, colour and

Mandak makes a patchy-looking angel.

She certainly does not resemble any of those white, Christian angels she talks so much about.

"Are you planning to go out in that?"

he asks, after a while.

"Yes.

age:

I am a pretty angel, ves?"

"I think we need to talk."

"There is nothing to say.

I have said enough."

She gets up,

[she] walks back to their room and [she] draws the door-curtain.

Ipeng smokes much that night.

He sits on a upturned terracotta vase in the garden, one leg up and the other hanging over his seat. This is not a situation he has anticipated.

To have a wife who wants to become an angel, is one thing.

He could tolerate that as long as she confines her activities to the home,

but now she says she wants to go out.

We are Malays,

he thinks, such a thing would be unbecoming, not to mention syirik.

How is he going to explain this to his frineds and his family?

How is he going to tell them that Mandak wants to fly?

He could lock her up.

He could be that type of husband, not allow his wife to do what she wants,

but he has always prided himself on not being one of them.

Heee.

it is hard to be a laki sometimes.

So, how now?

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Is he to let his wife flap about all over the village and [is he to let his wife] be mocked? He looks up. and [he] sees that the light in his room is on. Is she not asleep yet? He peers through the open window to see her admiring her angel-self in the mirror. He sighs. Mandak has never been one to gossip or [Mandak has never been one]cause trouble. She has a good heart. I will let Allah decide our fate, he resolves. She starts by making excursions at night when everyone is in bed. lpeng does not know when she leaves the house, for when he sleeps he's like a dead man. Initially, she ventures only a few yards out of their compound. She hunches over. [she is] using the trees for cover, and [she] waves her wings gently over the top of the fence. She crouches under the house and [she] hides behind the pillars if she hears someone walking past. Mandak finds it fun: it reminds her of her childhood, [she is] playing hide and seek. Then, she becomes bolder. One night, she climbs a rambutan tree that overhangs from her friend's house. When a cloud floats by, she tears a hole in it and [she] peeks through it. She sees her friend weeping and [she] hears her pleas to God: what has she done wrong that her husband should want to marry another? Her husband has left the house, [her husband is] muttering, "All I want is a child. That's all. All I ..." She nods, [she is] understanding. On another night, she climbs to the top of a shed

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and [she] sees the imam and his colleagues performing the midnight prayers at the mosque. 1 Their chants calm her. She sees a ray of light behind the line of worshipping men 1 and [she] knows that diinns are praying alongside the congregation. 1 Allah is wonderful; He has not just created Man, but [He has created] also all living beings, seen and unseen. One time, she spies on the home of the imam and his family. 1 She blushes 1 when she sees him and his wife making love. 1 [How can it be]At their age? Eesh, eesh, eesh! Old people shouldn't do it anymore. Love-making is for the young. She covers her eyes with her wings 1 and [she covers] her ears with her hands. Eesh ... [it is]all that lovey-dovey talk! Her explorations at night, eavesdropping and observing the kampong nightlife, leave her tired the next day. 1 It becomes a chore for her to wake up at six for the dawn prayers. 1 She prefers to lie in bed 1 while Ipeng prostrates 1 and [lpeng]whispers his supplications. 1 "Why is it so difficult for you to pray now?" 1 he asks her one morning. "I have been travelling." 1 Then, she tells him. 1 She tells him of the shooting star she saw the other 1 night, and the witch's comet that was sent to someone's house. "The comet was big, so I guess the curse was heavy!" 1 She now knows why Zaliha is always so sad, 1 and [she] tells him he should go to the mosque for the midnight prayers, too. 1 lpeng scratches his chin. 1 "You have been travelling?" 1

"Yes."

"Have you have been spying, too?" "No," she lies. 1 "I'm sorry, Mandak; this is not acceptable. It is one thing for you to want to become an angel, 1 but it is another to go out alone at night without your husband's permission 1 and, now, you are spying on people." 1 lpeng raises his voice. 1 "I'm not spying! 1 And don't shout at me!" 1 lpeng does what he believes he has to do. 1 He pulls Mandak out of bed 1 as she squeals. 1 1 She does not kick or [she does not] bite him, 1 1 but [she] keeps up her protests as he pulls her into the kitchen. 1 "Where are you taking me?" 1 "I'm locking you up." 1 "No, no, no, don't lock me up, please. 1 I am your wife, 1 what will people say, where are you taking me?" 1 1 "This is for your own good, Mandak." She weeps all the way out of the house 1 and [she weeps] into their backyard. 1 She shudders 1 when he shoves her into the chicken coop. 1 "Since you have such an affinity for feathers, 1 this will be your home for a while." 1 "Nooo." "Until you stop being an angel." 1 1 "But I have to fly." "You can't fly. 1 You look like a retarded chicken." 1 1 He locks the coop, [he is] leaving his love with her clucking friends. 1 The house becomes empty and [the house becomes] silent. He hears her weeping, almost mewing. 1 His heart aches.

but he is afraid of what she might do next. [Will she] Become Superwoman? 1 [Will she] Swoop into other people's homes with her bedraggled chicken wings? 1 He hopes his friends' wives do not get crazy notions 1 when they stop bleeding one day. Hmmph. They might want to become lizards or [They might want to become] frogs. The chickens take no notice of their human roommate. They cluck and [they] crow, and [they] leave their droppings everywhere, as usual. They walk over her, and one flies up to perch on her head. One keeps pecking at a button on Mandak's tunic; maybe it thinks it is a pearl of corn. She shoos it away, 1 but it comes back, even more determined to eat the button. Day turns to night. The birds sleep. Mandak is still awake, 1 [she is] lying next to three dozen chickens. 1 She remembers what the imam once said: that everyone had angels by their sides. 1 She asks the angel on her right, who records her good deeds, 1 and [she asks] the angel on her left, who notes her 1 1 sins, "Will I ever be like vou?" 1 she knows she never will. 1 She is made of a man's rib on earth, not light. 1 In the village, a fire starts and [the fire] begins to eat a little grocery store. Plastic bottles of cooking oil melt, and the yellow slick fuels the fire. It climbs up and [it climbs] out of the store. and, "WHOOOOSHHHH," becomes king. "Api! Api!" Someone sees the fire and [someone] warns his neighbours.

Old people, young ones, parents, the village transvestite, teachers: everyone comes out to help douse the flames. lpeng hears the alarm 1 and [he] runs out of the house. 1 Mandak sees him 1 and [she] calls out, 1 "Hey, where are you going?" 1 "There's a fire in the village. I must help them." 1 She kicks the weak wood of the reban 1 and a plank breaks. She kicks it some more. 1 The wall of the chicken coop cracks. Her feathered friends cluck, [her feather friends] startled and [her feather friends] agitated. The rooster crows. She kicks 1 and [she] pushes, 1 and [she] soon escapes the coop, albeit with splinters in her back, ankles and the soles of her feet. 1 At the village, men and women form a water chain. Some throw buckets of water at the burning store; others throw sand to quench its fiery thirst. Sweat rolls down the faces and [sweats roll down] backs of the villagers. After an eternity, they manage to contain the fire. The grocery store still burns. On top of the roof of the store, they see what looks like a large hen "Alamo!" 1 lpeng gasps. It is Mandak beating down the flames with her hands and, 1 in the process, [she is] fanning the fire with her 1 wings. A spark kisses a wing and soon Mandak is on fire. 1 1 lpeng runs, [lpeng] pushes 1 and [lpeng] climbs his way to the roof to rescue his wife. 1 Mandak cries 1 as she tries to beat out the flames on her wings. 1

The crowd stops playing fireman and [the crowd] gape. They are amazed by the sight of Mandak in her feathers. lpeng catches her, and she holds him. 1 "Oh, it is too hot, husband. Maybe... hooo... there is...hot, hot... no such thing as heaven..." "Hish! There is heaven. And you are an angel for trying to help." 1 "Hmmm I'll be one bloody burnt angel by the time I get there." 1 Crack! The roof gives way under Mandak, and she falls through the red and black abyss. 1 lpeng screams. 1 His shouts wake the villagers from their stupor. They, too, scream and [they] rush towards the store to save Mandak. "Mandak! Mandak!" There is no answer. 1 lpeng looks into the hole in the roof for her. 1 All he sees is a wing, [a wing is] beating gently, as more fire-kisses catch the feathers. "Mandak!" "lpeng! Come back, 1 it's going to explode!" his friend, the headmaster, grabs him by his shorts. "My wife!" "She's dead! 1 There's no use having two de ..." 1 They feel a movement underneath, the start of an explosion. As Ipeng flies into the sky, 1 he thinks he's going to choke from the smoke. 1 There's nothing for him to grasp. 1 Oh God. I am going to die, 1

he thinks.
He falls on a tree,
[he] crashes through its branches,
and [he] tumbles down to the grass,
[he is] startling a sleeping goat.
He hears voices,

and [he]sees some young men coming to help him. He looks in the direction of the burning store. In the morning, when all is settled and [all is] burnt black, he goes home. Mandak's funeral will be later. He has not cried yet. He sighs and [he] walks home. He trips over a stone and [he] stumbles. When he bends to adjust his footwear, he finds, stuck at the heel, a feather. He picks it up. It could be from any moulding hen, he thinks. He turns it over and [he] strokes its softness,

then [he] lets it fall and [he] goes home.

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A Subtle Degree of Restraint	Dec.			Wh-int.				Y/N-i	int.					
Stage 1 Analysis						ked								
	Marked Topical	Textual + Marked	Unmarked Topical	Textual	Interpersonal	Textual +Inter + Unmarke	Topical	Textual	Topical	Textual	Topical	minor clause	Textual + Fronted	Fronted ß clause
ON ENTERING the restaurant, she saw it.	1													
[There was] A large fuchsia orb that occupied the room with its gaudy hue,			1											
[It was] holding a generous spay of elegant brown willow twigs.			1											
The vase was probably imported from Vietnam, with a cracked lacquered surface intended to lend it an antique effect.			1											
All through lunch, her eyes strayed to its bulbous presence.	1													
Everything else in the restaurant faded in subservience.			1											
The delicate, lithe backs of the dining chairs [faded in subservience],			1											
the demureness of the cream carpet [faded in subservience],			1											
the jade-coloured chopstick rests that perched four, sometimes six, to a table [faded in subservience].	4		1											
Until that day, nothing had stood out.	1													
Now, the vase colonised the room. "So how come you still don't have babies?"							-	1						
Badariah asked.			1					1						
Elena had not expected this, especially not from the childhood friend who wasn't even married.			1											
After high school, Badariah had gone to college	1													
and [she]pursued a successful career in the United States.				1										
Now she was back after a ten-year absence														
The last time they saw each other,	1													
they were eighteen.			1											
Elena remembered the moment well.			1											
They shared a thirty-scop sundae in Swensen's,			1											

their ashablair laughter (weel faming their		l			ı						I	$\neg$
their schoolgirl laughter [was] fanning their												
indulgence.			1									
"Maybe it just isn't time yet,"				1								
Elena said.			1									
"Tak ada rezeki ."										1		
[There is] No luck.			1									
Except it didn't just mean luck in Malay.				1								
It was a combination of thingsdestiny,												
fate, a blessing from God.			1									
But fate alone was never enough.				1								
One had to put in some effort.			1									
Just like she did to secure a husband.	1											
Azman would never have given her a												
second glance if she looked like her old												
selfplump and soft around the middle,												
ruled by her appetite and her tongue.			1									
"Are you going to eat that?"								1				
Badariah reached across the table.			1									
Elena didn't have to reply.			1									
The <i>unagi</i> was already in pieces,			1									
its neat, uneaten half [was] pried apart by												
Badariah's deftly held chopsticks.			1									
												_
Elena no longer noticed her own ravenous	1											
hunger.												_
The bitter taste of bile that constantly hung												
in the back of her mouth was often masked												
with sugar-free mints.			1									
The sour festering of the walls of her												
empty stomach had travelled up her spine,			1									
The sour festering of the walls of her												
empty stomach was]permanently pinching												
her face into a pain expression.			1									
Those looking thought she was a harried												
woman			1									
when in fact she was just plain married, a												
lady of leisure who had little to do with her												
days except fill them to her fancy.						1						
Fancy, she now knew, was a dangerous thi	1											
It led to thoughts of cream horns and yard-												
long beer towers, fat dripping from ribs												
barbequed with honey, birthday cakes and												
babies.			1									
Babies.										1		$\dashv$
The plump, doughy ones with big pools for												$\dashv$
leyes looked good enough to eat.			1									
[Babies were] Slow-roasted on a			1									$\dashv$
[Danies Metel Slow-Ingsted oil a			Т									

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until all their cuteness[were] caramelised											
into gooey skins encasing juicy, tender											
meat.				1							
She imagined they tasted like lamb, only											
sweeter.			1								
But the thought of subjecting herself once											
more to the assault of slimming centres											
was enough to keep her fancies at bay,				1							
even if the whims sometimes kicked their				_							
heels against the echoing chambers of her											
stomach.										1	
					-	-	-			1	
Before the wedding, between graduating											
from college and meeting Azman, her life											
was a disappearing act.	1										
[It was]An erasing of her superfluous kilos											
that were steamed, massaged and freeze-											
dried off her bones.			1								
The Iron Chefs of human bodies presided											
over her,			1								
[The Iron Chefs of human bodies was]											
poaching her belly in rare herbs,			1								
The Iron Chefs of human bodies was											
sloughing the puckered skin of her thighs			1								
until the cellulite retreated in terror,			_	1							
[the cellulite was] binding the peasantry of				_							
her waggling upper arms in searing linen											
ribbons			1								
so they emerged dainty		1		1	-	-	<del> </del>				
and [they emerged] taut				1							
when she raised her hand to wave.	-			1		-					
(there had been six in all), her uncorsetted											
waist did not expand to its former liberal											
self,		1									
[her uncorsetted waist was] restrained by											
her throat that constricted against all											
manner of deliciousness.			1								
She forgot the taste of real food,			1								
her tongue easily pacified with the insipid											
mulch of power juices in the morning,			1								
[her tongue easily pacified with] Jewish	ĺ										
crackers			1								
and [her tongue easily pacified with]	t				$\top$	1	1				
canned tuna for lunch,				1							
[her tongue easily pacified with]a snack of	$\vdash$	1			+	+	1	1	-		
an apple			1								
Lan apple	<u> </u>		1					1			

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or [her tongue easily pacified with] a handful of nuts in between.				1							
The only time she ate with her husband was at dinner,	1										
when she would have a few frugal	₩=										
spoonfuls of brown rice and minute											
helpings of yogurt-based curries, lean											
chicken breasts or vegetables flash-fried				١.							
				1							
mentioned the absence of food on her											
plate.											1
Talk turned,			1								
instead, [Talk turned] to bigger things.				1							
How his secretary was going on maternity											
leave,						1					
[how was] the Chinese contractor's Rolex											
(real, not fake),						1					
[how was] the Government,						1					
cows						1					
and [how were] chickens							1				
and [how were] goats in front of the State											
Secretariat							1				
and how the Indonesians were planning to											
invade Malaysia with machetes							1				
and [how the Indonesians were planning											
to invade Malaysia with] bamboo spears.							1				
•	1										
Later, as they both stretched limbs around pillows		1									
'											
and [they] claimed their own piece of the				١,							
shared duvet,				1							
he kissed her goodnight,			1								
sometimes a hand [was] brushing her											
breast,	1										
[he was] murmuring,			1								
"Sleep well, mother of my children-to-be."									1		
Then, even though he slumbered with his											
face turned to her,				1							
he draped his arm around a soft, yielding											
pillow,			1								
[his] fingers digging gently into its pliant											
depths,			1								
[his fingers] pulling it closer to his chest.			1								
"So, do you even want babies?"								1			
Badariah wiped her generous lips.		İ	1	İ							
mochi,		l	1								
[she was] hesitating between the green											
and the white.			1								
and the firmer	<u> </u>	<u> </u>		<u> </u>							

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	Elena mentally calculated how much												
======================================	Badariah weighed.			1									

[She is]Pushing eighty kilos probably,		1		1					
[Elena was] judging from the spillage of									
thighs over the edges of the delicate		4							
dining chair.		1							
Almost twice the size of Elena, whose own									
limbs stayed neatly within the boundaries									
of her seat.	1								
[There is]No extra flesh oozing over the lip									
of the chair's bottom.		1							
[There is]No deep lines on the back of her									
thighs where the wood cut into her skin.		1							
She wanted to grab the chair from beneath									
Badariah,		1							
[She] wanted to ]force her to stand up.		1							
Instead, she said,			1						
"Skinny women have babies all the time.		1	_						
[you] Look at all those supermodels."		1							
Badariah cackled.		1							
Darling,								1	
again.		1						_	
Nobody stays thin		1							
		Т	1		-				
when they're pregnant.		1			-				
It'd be like starving your baby!"		1							
Elena wanted to pick up the vase		1	1						
and [Elena wanted to]hurl it against a wall.			1						
She would buy the restaurant a									
replacement.		1							
[It is]A tall, slim crystal receptacle that									
shimmered light from its bevelled edges,		1							
[it was] matching the willowy reach or its									
contents.		1							
She wished she could heave her friend									
out the window.		1							
The glass would shatter with a spectacular									
crash.		1							
"You can never eat too much if you're		1							
pregnant,"		1							
Badariah muttered,		1							
[she was] reaching for the last <i>mochi</i> .	_	Τ							
Lips together, she stretched her lower jaw,	1			_					
places where her tongue rolled around									
her mouth.		1		_					
Elena watched her friend chew,		1							
[she was] imagining the soft elasticity of									
the white ball in her own mouth,		1							
its pliant dough sticking to the teeth.		1							

T- 1 - 6 - 1 - 1 - 1	I							T .	Ī	Ι		
The crunch of finely ground peanuts												
bursting salty amidst the sweetness.			1									
She wanted that last mochi.			1									
But Badariah had devoured it without												
asking.				1								
"Azman likes those, too."			1									
Elena swallowed,			1									
her saliva sour from the cups of green tea.			1									
first,			1									
[Do] you know?"								1				
Badariah said,			1									
[her eyes] staring at the now empty plate.			1									
"That way you get to eat what you like												
best, as much as you want.	1											
That was why dessert always came at the												
end of a meal,			1									
Elena thought.			1									
[It is] A means for convention to force a												
subtle degree of restraint.			1									
Badariah erupted into a coughing fit,			1									
[she was] banging her chest.			1									
"Oh, God,"											1	
she sheezed.			1									
"Mochi,											1	
stuck											1	
II need the toilet."			1									
She stumbled towards the washroom,			1									
[she was]waving an arm behind her back,			1									
[she was]signalling for her friend not to follow.			1									
When Badariah reappeared,				1								
her eyes were blood-shot.			1									
nose.			1									
She sipped a warm cup of tea, cradling it												
between both hands.			1									
"[is it ] One <i>mochi</i> too many?"								1				
asked Elena.	1							_				
Badariah stared into her teacup.			1									
Then lifting her gaze, [she]said,		1										
"I'm pregnant.			1									$\dashv$
He's Malay.		-	1		$\vdash$	-						$\dashv$
·	-							4	-			$\dashv$
[Do you] Fancy that?"	-					_		1	-			$\dashv$
All these years, Elena assumed Badariah didn't have a love life.	1											
[It is because] The protective instinct of												
men who felt threatened by a woman												
larger than them.			1									
	L	-			-						-	

Malaysian men were modestly built, unlike									
the monstrous American football players.		1							
But somehow, Badariah had managed.			1						
Elena felt a hunger build,		1							
[it was] gnawing the pit of her stomach.		1							
"But when[did you marry?"]						1			
who married you?"					1				
Badariah leaned back in her chair.		1							
She drew in a long breath, nostrils									
narrowing.		1							
"You silly bitch,"								1	
she said with a wry smile.		1							
"Not everyone has to starve themselves to									
get a man.		1							
Mine actually likes me this way."		1							
She rose,		1							
[she was] tossing a clutch of ringgit on the									
table.		1							
"That should take care of the whole lot.		1							
After all, you hardly touched your food."	1								
Alone, Elena beckoned the waiter.	1								
She ordered another plate of <i>mochis</i> .	_	1							
[It was]A trio to rotund, bite-sized spheres.		1							
[They are] Green, white and pink.		1							
All hers.		1							
By the time she finished them it was 4pm.	1								
The waiters were on their break.	_	1							
Only the brazen vase stood watch.				1					
Elena left the cash on the table		1		_					
and [she] walked towards the restaurant's		_							
entrance.			1						
The florid, pinkish vessel loomed steadfast			_						
in her path.		1							
She reached out		1							
and [she] pushed it with the palm of her			4						
hand.			1						
It rocked left,		1							
[it rocked] right,		1	4						
and then [it]settled on its flat base.		1	1						
The willow were askew,		1							
[it] bunched now on one side.		1							
She tried again,		1							
[she was] giving the vase a shove.		1							
This time, it tipped,	1								$\dashv$
[it was] scattering its contents across the		_							
table.		1							
It rolled around,		1							

[it was] bumping over the willow stalks, its														
empty mouth a hollow black 'O'.			1											
She gave it one final push.			1											
It spun off the table			1											
and [it]careened across the carpeted floor.				1										
Elena opened the restaurant door.			1											
She watched the orb roll out into the														
sunlight, down the gravel path that cut														
through the Zen garden, past the swaying														
bamboos,			1											
finally [it was] settling beneath a bush.					1									
In the gloom of the undergrowth, the vase														
looked less menacing.	1													
Elena wiped her palms down the front of														
her blouse.			1											
Hitching her handbag strap higher on her														
slim shoulder, she walked towards her car.														
	25	3	162	28	2	1	7	6	7	1	1	10	1	1

A Subtle Degree of Restraint				
Stage 2 Analysis				-al
,	Elena	Badariah	Azman	Social Cultural
ON ENTERING the restaurant, she saw it.	1			
[There was] A large fuchsia orb that occupied the room with its gaudy hue,				1
[It was] holding a generous spay of elegant brown willow twigs.				1
The vase was probably imported from Vietnam, with a cracked lacquered surface intended to lend it an antique effect.				1
All through lunch, her eyes strayed to its bulbous presence.	1			
Everything else in the restaurant faded in subservience.				1
The delicate, lithe backs of the dining chairs [faded in subservience],				1
the demureness of the cream carpet [faded in				
subservience],				1
the jade-coloured chopstick rests that perched				
four, sometimes six, to a table [faded in				
subservience].				1
Until that day, nothing had stood out.				1
Now, the vase colonised the room.				1
"So how come you still don't have babies?"	1			
Badariah asked.		1		
Elena had not expected this, especially not from				
the childhood friend who wasn't even married.	1			
After high school, Badariah had gone to college		1		
and [she]pursued a successful career in the United States.		1		
Now she was back after a ten-year absence.		1		
The last time they saw each other,	1			
they were eighteen.	1			
Elena remembered the moment well.	1			
They shared a thirty-scop sundae in Swensen's,	1			
their schoolgirl laughter [was] fanning their				
indulgence.	1			
"Maybe it just isn't time yet,"				1
Elena said.	1			
"Tak ada rezeki ."				
[There is] No luck.				1
Except it didn't just mean luck in Malay.				1

It was a combination of thingsdestiny, fate, a				
blessing from God.				1
But fate alone was never enough.				1
One had to put in some effort.  Just like she did to secure a husband.	1			
	1			
Azman would never have given her a second				
glance if she looked like her old selfplump and				
soft around the middle, ruled by her appetite and			1	
her tongue. "Are you going to eat that?"	1		1	
Badariah reached across the table.	Т	1		
	1			
Elena didn't have to reply.				
The <i>unagi</i> was already in pieces,				1
its neat, uneaten half [was] pried apart by				
Badariah's deftly held chopsticks.				1
By now, two years into her marriage, Elena no				
longer noticed her own ravenous hunger.	1			
The bitter taste of bile that constantly hung in the				
back of her mouth was often masked with sugar-				
free mints.				1
The sour festering of the walls of her empty				
stomach had travelled up her spine,				1
[The sour festering of the walls of her empty				
stomach was]permanently pinching her face into				
a pain expression.				1
Those looking thought she was a harried woman	1			
when in fact she was just plain married, a lady of				
leisure who had little to do with her days except				
fill them to her fancy.	1			
Fancy, she now knew, was a dangerous thing.	1			
It led to thoughts of cream horns and yard-long				
beer towers, fat dripping from ribs barbequed				
with honey, birthday cakes and babies.				1
Babies.				
The plump, doughy ones with big pools for eyes				
looked good enough to eat.				1
[Babies were] Slow-roasted on a rotisserie,				1
until all their cuteness[were] caramelised into				
gooey skins encasing juicy, tender meat.				1
She imagined they tasted like lamb, only				
sweeter.	1			
But the thought of subjecting herself once more				
to the assault of slimming centres was enough to				
keep her fancies at bay,	1			
recop ner landies at bay,	1			

even if the whims sometimes kicked their heels			
against the echoing chambers of her stomach.	1		
Before the wedding, between graduating from			
college and meeting Azman, her life was a	1		
disappearing act.	1		
[It was]An erasing of her superfluous kilos that			
were steamed, massaged and freeze-dried off			
her bones.	1		
The Iron Chefs of human bodies presided over			
her,			1
[The Iron Chefs of human bodies was] poaching			
her belly in rare herbs,			1
[The Iron Chefs of human bodies was] sloughing			
the puckered skin of her thighs			1
until the cellulite retreated in terror,			1
[the cellulite was] binding the peasantry of her			
waggling upper arms in searing linen ribbons			1
so they emerged dainty			1
and [they emerged] taut			1
when she raised her hand to wave.	1		
Even after the last wedding reception (there had			
been six in all), her uncorsetted waist did not			
expand to its former liberal self,	1		
[her uncorsetted waist was] restrained by her			
throat that constricted against all manner of			
deliciousness.	1		
She forgot the taste of real food,	1		
her tongue easily pacified with the insipid mulch			
of power juices in the morning,	1		
[her tongue easily pacified with] Jewish crackers			
	1		
and [her tongue easily pacified with] canned tuna			
for lunch,	1		
[her tongue easily pacified with]a snack of an			
apple	1		
or [her tongue easily pacified with] a handful of			
nuts in between.	1		
The only time she ate with her husband was at			
dinner,	1		
when she would have a few frugal spoonfuls of			
brown rice and minute helpings of yogurt-based			
curries, lean chicken breasts or vegetables flash-			
fried in water instead of oil.	1		
If Azman noticed anything, he never mentioned			
the absence of food on her plate.		1	
Talk turned,			1

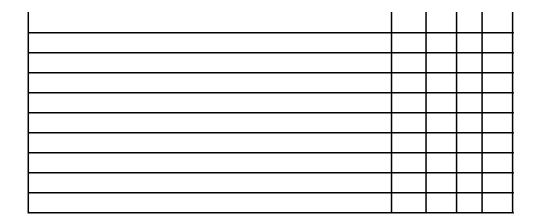
instead, [Talk turned] to bigger things.				1
mateau, [raik tumeu] to bigger tilligs.				T
How his secretary was going on maternity leave,				1
[how was] the Chinese contractor's Rolex (real,				
not fake),				1
[how was] the Government,				1
[how was]the protestors who unloaded cows				1
and [how were] chickens				1
and [how were] goats in front of the State				
Secretariat				1
and how the Indonesians were planning to				
invade Malaysia with machetes				1
and [how the Indonesians were planning to				
invade Malaysia with] bamboo spears.				1
Later, as they both stretched limbs around				
pillows			1	
and [they] claimed their own piece of the shared				
duvet,			1	
he kissed her goodnight,			1	
sometimes a hand [was] brushing her breast,			1	
[he was] murmuring,			1	
"Sleep well, mother of my children-to-be."	1			
Then, even though he slumbered with his face				
turned to her,			1	
he draped his arm around a soft, yielding pillow,			1	
[his] fingers digging gently into its pliant depths,			1	
[his fingers] pulling it closer to his chest.			1	
"So, do you even want babies?"	1			
Badariah wiped her generous lips.		1		
Her trunk-like hand reached out for a mochi,		1		
[she was] hesitating between the green and the				
white.		1		
"Some tea would be good with that,"				1
Elena said	1			
and [she]summoned a waiter with her practised				
wave.	1			
"Sure, thanks.				
Food's good.				1
[It is a]Nice restaurant,"				1
Badariah said,		1		
[she was] munching her mochi.		1		
She had decided on the green one.		1		
"I know,"	1			
Elena, head turned,	1			
[her head was] a slight tilt backwards,	1			

"It used to be nicer."  Badariah frowned. "How so?"  "Itis]The decor.  I don't know why they put that thing in the middle of the room."  "What [is it]?  [Is it] The vase?  I think it's lovely!  Don't you like it?  It's so"  Vulgar,"  Elena interrupted.  "It's too round."  The word fell out of her mouth like a giant marble,  [it was] clacking onto the table,  [it was] clinking against Badariah's teacup.  "Maybe that's why I like it."  Badariah laughed,  [her] eyebrows raised,  [she was] patting the soft bulge of her belly.  "I'm a skinny girl in a bodacious body.  [I am] Just like that vase.  I niside, I'm thin.  Did you]See those willows?"  "You know."  Badariah continued in a whisper,  "they say that sometimes you can't be too skinny if you want to have babies."  Elena mentally calculated how much Badariah weighed.  [She is]Pushing eighty kilos probably,  [Elena was] judging from the spillage of thighs over the edges of the delicate dining chair.  Almost twice the size of Elena, whose own limbs stayed neatly within the boundaries of her seat.		1 . [		
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[There is]No extra flesh oozing over the lip of the	stayed neatry within the boundaries of her seat.			
ı		1		
chair's bottom.	chair's bottom.		1	
[There is]No deep lines on the back of her thighs	[There is]No deep lines on the back of her thighs			
where the wood cut into her skin.	where the wood cut into her skin.		1	
She wanted to grab the chair from beneath	She wanted to grab the chair from beneath			
Badariah, 1		1		
[She] wanted to ]force her to stand up.	[She] wanted to ]force her to stand up.	1		
Instead, she said,		-		

"Skinny women have babies all the time.				1
[you] Look at all those supermodels."		1		
Badariah cackled.		1		
Darling,				
they pay people to make them skinny again.				1
Nobody stays thin				1
when they're pregnant.				1
It'd be like starving your baby!"				1
Elena wanted to pick up the vase	1			
and [Elena wanted to]hurl it against a wall.	1			
She would buy the restaurant a replacement.	1			
[It is]A tall, slim crystal receptacle that shimmered				
light from its bevelled edges,				1
[it was] matching the willowy reach or its				
contents.				1
She wished she could heave her friend out the				
window.	1			
willdow.				
The globe would shotter with a spectacular areals				4
The glass would shatter with a spectacular crash.				1
"You can never eat too much if you're pregnant,"	1			
Badariah muttered,		1		
[she was] reaching for the last mochi.		1		
Lips together, she stretched her lower jaw,		1		
her face momentarily [was] bulging in places				
where her tongue rolled around her mouth.		1		
Elena watched her friend chew,	1			
[she was] imagining the soft elasticity of the				
white ball in her own mouth,	1			
its pliant dough sticking to the teeth.				1
The crunch of finely ground peanuts bursting				
salty amidst the sweetness.				1
She wanted that last <i>mochi</i> .	1			
But Badariah had devoured it without asking.		1		
"Azman likes those, too."			1	
Elena swallowed,	1			
her saliva sour from the cups of green tea.	1			
"I always think dessert should be eaten first,	1			
[Do] you know?"		1		
Badariah said,		1		
[her eyes] staring at the now empty plate.		1		
"That way you get to eat what you like best, as				
much as you want.		1		
That was why dessert always came at the end of				
a meal,				1
Elena thought.	1			

[It is] A means for convention to force a subtle			
degree of restraint.			1
Badariah erupted into a coughing fit,		1	
[she was] banging her chest.		1	
"Oh, God,"			
she sheezed.		1	
"Mochi,		_	
stuck			
II need the toilet."		1	
She stumbled towards the washroom,		1	
[she was]waving an arm behind her back,		1	
[she was]signalling for her friend not to follow.		1	
When Badariah reappeared,		1	
her eyes were blood-shot.		1	
A thin stream of mucus ran down her nose.			1
She sipped a warm cup of tea, cradling it			
between both hands.		1	
"[is it] One mochi too many?"			1
asked Elena.	1		
Badariah stared into her teacup.	_	1	
Then lifting her gaze, [she]said,		1	
"I'm pregnant.		1	
He's Malay.			1
,	1		
[Do you] Fancy that?"	1		
All these years, Elena assumed Badariah didn't			
have a love life.	1		
[It is because] The protective instinct of men who			
felt threatened by a woman larger than them.			1
Malaysian men were modestly built, unlike the			
monstrous American football players.			1
But somehow, Badariah had managed.		1	
Elena felt a hunger build,	1		
[it was] gnawing the pit of her stomach.	_		1
"But when[did you marry?"]		1	
who married you?"		1	
Badariah leaned back in her chair.		1	
She drew in a long breath, nostrils narrowing.		1	
"You silly bitch,"			
she said with a wry smile.		1	
"Not everyone has to starve themselves to get a			
man.			1
Mine actually likes me this way."		1	
She rose,		1	
[she was] tossing a clutch of ringgit on the table.		1	
"That should take care of the whole lot.			1
After all, you hardly touched your food."	1		
rater all, you hardly touched your lood.			

Alone, Elena beckoned the waiter.	1			
She ordered another plate of <i>mochis</i> .	1			
[It was]A trio to rotund, bite-sized spheres.				1
[They are] Green, white and pink.				1
All hers.	1			
By the time she finished them it was 4pm.	1			
The waiters were on their break.				1
Only the brazen vase stood watch.				1
Elena left the cash on the table	1			
and [she] walked towards the restaurant's				
entrance.	1			
The florid, pinkish vessel loomed steadfast in he	r			
path.				1
She reached out	1			
and [she] pushed it with the palm of her hand.	1			
It rocked left,				1
[it rocked] right,				1
and then [it]settled on its flat base.				1
The willow were askew,				1
[it] bunched now on one side.				1
She tried again,	1			
[she was] giving the vase a shove.	1			
This time, it tipped,				1
[it was] scattering its contents across the table.				1
It rolled around,				1
[it was] bumping over the willow stalks, its empty	/			
mouth a hollow black 'O'.				1
She gave it one final push.	1			
It spun off the table				1
and [it]careened across the carpeted floor.				1
Elena opened the restaurant door.	1			
She watched the orb roll out into the sunlight,				
down the gravel path that cut through the Zen				
garden, past the swaying bamboos,	1			
finally [it was] settling beneath a bush.	_			1
In the gloom of the undergrowth, the vase looked				
less menacing.	1			1
Elena wiped her palms down the front of her blouse.	1			
	_			
Hitching her handbag strap higher on her slim				
shoulder, she walked towards her car.	1	F 7	12	00
	86	5/	12	90



A Subtle Degree of Restraint	Ele	na				Ва	radi	ah				Azı	mar	1	
Stage 3 Analysis	Actor	Senser	carrier	Sayer	Behaver	Actor	Senser	carrier	Sayer	Behaver	Extential	Actor	Senser	Sayer	Behaver
ON ENTERING the restaurant, she saw it		1													
[There was] A large fuchsia orb that															
occupied the room with its gaudy hue,															
[It was] holding a generous spay of															
elegant brown willow twigs.															
The vase was probably imported from Vietnam, with a cracked lacquered surface intended to lend it an antique effect.															
All through lunch, her eyes strayed to its bulbous presence.		1													
Everything else in the restaurant faded in subservience.															
The delicate, lithe backs of the dining chairs [faded in subservience],															
the demureness of the cream carpet [faded in subservience],															
the jade-coloured chopstick rests that perched four, sometimes six, to a table [faded in subservience].															
Until that day, nothing had stood out.															
Now, the vase colonised the room.															
"So how come you still don't have babies	?"		1												
Badariah asked.									1						
Elena had not expected this, especially not from the childhood friend who wasn't even married.					1										
After high school, Badariah had gone to college						1									
and [she]pursued a successful career in the United States.						1									
Now she was back after a ten-year abser	ice.	_						1							
The last time they saw each other,		1													
they were eighteen.			1												
Elena remembered the moment well.		1													
They shared a thirty-scop sundae in Swensen's,	1														
their schoolgirl laughter [was] fanning their indulgence.			1												
"Maybe it just isn't time yet,"															
Elena said.				1											
"Tak ada rezeki ."															
[There is] No luck.															

Except it didn't just mean luck in Malay.											
It was a combination of thingsdestiny,											
fate, a blessing from God.											
But fate alone was never enough.											
One had to put in some effort.											
Just like she did to secure a husband.	1										
Azman would never have given her a	┢═╢										
second glance if she looked like her old											
selfplump and soft around the middle,											
ruled by her appetite and her tongue.									1		
"Are you going to eat that?"	1								_		
Badariah reached across the table.						1					
Elena didn't have to reply.				1							
The <i>unagi</i> was already in pieces,				_							
its neat, uneaten half [was] pried apart											
by Badariah's deftly held chopsticks.											
By now, two years into her marriage,											
Elena no longer noticed her own											
ravenous hunger.		1									
The bitter taste of bile that constantly		_									
hung in the back of her mouth was often											
masked with sugar-free mints.											
The sour festering of the walls of her											
empty stomach had travelled up her											
spine,											
The sour festering of the walls of her											
empty stomach was]permanently											
pinching her face into a pain expression.											
Those looking thought she was a											
harried woman			1								
when in fact she was just plain married,											
a lady of leisure who had little to do with											
her days except fill them to her fancy.			1								
Fancy, she now knew, was a dangerous	thin	g.			1						
It led to thoughts of cream horns and											
yard-long beer towers, fat dripping from											
ribs barbequed with honey, birthday											
cakes and babies.											
Babies.											
The plump, doughy ones with big pools											
for eyes looked good enough to eat.											
[Babies were] Slow-roasted on a											
rotisserie,											

until all their outeness[wore]					I	l		I		Ī
until all their cuteness[were]										
caramelised into gooey skins encasing										
juicy, tender meat.										-
She imagined they tasted like lamb, only										
sweeter.				1						
But the thought of subjecting herself										
once more to the assault of slimming										
centres was enough to keep her fancies										
at bay,	1									
even if the whims sometimes kicked										
their heels against the echoing										
chambers of her stomach.	1									
Before the wedding, between										
graduating from college and meeting										
Azman, her life was a disappearing act.			1							
[It was]An erasing of her superfluous										
kilos that were steamed, massaged and										
freeze-dried off her bones.			1							
The Iron Chefs of human bodies			_							
presided over her,										
· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·										
[The Iron Chefs of human bodies was]										
poaching her belly in rare herbs,										
[The Iron Chefs of human bodies was]										
sloughing the puckered skin of her										
thighs										
until the cellulite retreated in terror,										
[the cellulite was] binding the peasantry										
of her waggling upper arms in searing										
linen ribbons										
so they emerged dainty										
and [they emerged] taut										
when she raised her hand to wave.	1									
Even after the last wedding reception										
(there had been six in all), her										
uncorsetted waist did not expand to its										
former liberal self,	1									
[her uncorsetted waist was] restrained										
by her throat that constricted against all										
manner of deliciousness.	1									
She forgot the taste of real food,		1								
her tongue easily pacified with the						İ		İ		
insipid mulch of power juices in the										
morning,	1									
[her tongue easily pacified with] Jewish	-									
crackers	1									
	Т									

	1	1		1	1	1	1				
and [her tongue easily pacified with]											
canned tuna for lunch,	1										
[her tongue easily pacified with]a snack											
of an apple	1										
or [her tongue easily pacified with] a											
handful of nuts in between.	1										
The only time she ate with her husband											
was at dinner,	1										
when she would have a few frugal											
spoonfuls of brown rice and minute											
helpings of yogurt-based curries, lean											
chicken breasts or vegetables flash-fried											
in water instead of oil.			1								
If Azman noticed anything, he never											
mentioned the absence of food on her											
plate.									1		
Talk turned,											
instead, [Talk turned] to bigger things.											
How his secretary was going on											
maternity leave,											
[how was] the Chinese contractor's											
Rolex (real, not fake),											
[how was] the Government,											
[how was]the protestors who unloaded											
cows											
and [how were] chickens											
and [how were] goats in front of the State											
Secretariat											
and how the Indonesians were planning											
to invade Malaysia with machetes											
and [how the Indonesians were											
planning to invade Malaysia with]											
bamboo spears.											
Later, as they both stretched limbs											
around pillows					<u> </u>			1			
and [they] claimed their own piece of the											
shared duvet,										1	
he kissed her goodnight,					<u> </u>						1
sometimes a hand [was] brushing her											
breast,					_			1			
[he was] murmuring,										1	
"Sleep well, mother of my children-to-be."	1				<u> </u>						
Then, even though he slumbered with											
his face turned to her,											1

he due ned bie euro europad e eeft													
he draped his arm around a soft,											1		
yielding pillow,											1		
[his] fingers digging gently into its pliant											_		
depths,											1		
[his fingers] pulling it closer to his chest.											1		
"So, do you even want babies?"		1											
Badariah wiped her generous lips.						1							
Her trunk-like hand reached out for a													
mochi ,						1							
[she was] hesitating between the green													
and the white.									1				
"Some tea would be good with that,"													
Elena said				1									
and [she]summoned a waiter with her													
practised wave.				1									
"Sure, thanks.													
Food's good.													
[It is a]Nice restaurant,"													
Badariah said,								1					
[she was] munching her mochi.						1							
She had decided on the green one.								1					
"I know,"					1			_					
Elena, head turned,	1				_								
[her head was] a slight tilt backwards,			1										
[she]watched the waiter return with a			_										
fresh pot.		1											
"It used to be nicer."		_											
Badariah frowned.									1				
"How so?"									_				
"[It is]The decor.													
I don't know why they put that thing in													
the middle of the room."					1								
"What [is it]?													
[Is it] The vase?													
I think it's lovely!							1						
Don't you like it?					1					<del>                                     </del>			
It's so"					Т								
Vulgar,"													
Elena interrupted.				1						-			
"It's too round."										-			
The word fell out of her mouth like a													
			1										
giant marble,			_1	4									
[it was] clacking onto the table,				1									
[it was] clinking against Badariah's				_									
teacup.				1					_				
"Maybe that's why I like it."									1				

Badariah laughed,									1			
[her] eyebrows raised,									1			
[she was] patting the soft bulge of her									_			
belly.					1							
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beneath Badariah,		1										
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					1							
When Badariah reappeared,					1		1					
her eyes were blood-shot.							1					
A thin stream of mucus ran down her												
nose.												
She sipped a warm cup of tea, cradling it												
between both hands.					1							
"[is it] One <i>mochi</i> too many?"												
asked Elena.			1									
Badariah stared into her teacup.						1						
Then lifting her gaze, [she]said,								1				
"I'm pregnant.							1					
He's Malay.												
[Do you] Fancy that?"				1								
All these years, Elena assumed												
Badariah didn't have a love life.				1								
[It is because] The protective instinct of												
men who felt threatened by a woman												
larger than them.												
Malaysian men were modestly built,												
unlike the monstrous American football												
players.												
But somehow, Badariah had managed.					1							
Elena felt a hunger build,		1			_							
[it was] gnawing the pit of her stomach.		_										
"But when[did you marry?"]					1							
who married you?"					1							
Badariah leaned back in her chair.					1							
She drew in a long breath, nostrils												
narrowing.					1							
"You silly bitch,"												
she said with a wry smile.								1				
"Not everyone has to starve themselves												
to get a man.												
									1			
Mine actually likes me this way."  She rose,					1							
·												
[she was] tossing a clutch of ringgit on					_							
the table.					1							
"That should take care of the whole lot.												
After all, you hardly touched your food."	1											
Alone, Elena beckoned the waiter.	1											
She ordered another plate of <i>mochis</i> .			1									
[It was]A trio to rotund, bite-sized spheres												
[They are] Green, white and pink.												

All hers.			1												
By the time she finished them it was 4pm.	1														
The waiters were on their break.															
Only the brazen vase stood watch.															
Elena left the cash on the table	1														
and [she] walked towards the															
restaurant's entrance.	1														
The florid, pinkish vessel loomed															
steadfast in her path.															
She reached out	1														
and [she] pushed it with the palm of her															
hand.	1														
It rocked left,															
[it rocked] right,															
and then [it]settled on its flat base.															
The willow were askew,															
[it] bunched now on one side.															
She tried again,	1														
[she was] giving the vase a shove.	1														
This time, it tipped,															
[it was] scattering its contents across the															
table.															
It rolled around,															
[it was] bumping over the willow stalks,															
its empty mouth a hollow black 'O'.															
She gave it one final push.	1														
It spun off the table															
and [it]careened across the carpeted															
floor.															
Elena opened the restaurant door.	1														
She watched the orb roll out into the															
sunlight, down the gravel path that cut															
through the Zen garden, past the															
swaying bamboos,		1													
finally [it was] settling beneath a bush.															
In the gloom of the undergrowth, the															
vase looked less menacing.															
Elena wiped her palms down the front of															
her blouse.	1														
Hitching her handbag strap higher on															
her slim shoulder, she walked towards															
her car.	1														
	33	21	11	11	10	26	5	6	9	9	2	6	1	2	3

