

Computerized Content Analysis of TripAdvisor Reviews: A Case Study of a Street Food Restaurant With One Michelin Star

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Abstract – Online review platform is a digital communication for reviewers to communicate with future customers. TripAdvisor reviews of a Thai street food restaurant were examined in the periods of before (2012-2017) and after (2018-2023) being awarded one Michelin Star. Two digital tools were employed: Web Scraper and KH Coder. Positive aspects of the reviews were found. Most of the reviews rose from 4 bubble ratings at 42.53% during 2012-2017 to 5 bubble ratings at 42.43% during 2018-2023. Frequent words and co-occurrence network highlighted the signature dishes of the restaurant and quality of food as well as pinpointed the need for a table reservation and the waiting time. The findings are significant to the customer service experience, specifically pertaining to dining and table assistance. Future studies can expand to multiple online restaurant reviews or a nation's cuisine using computerized content analysis.

Keywords – Content analysis, frequent words, Michelin Star, Thai street food, TripAdvisor reviews.

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1. Introduction

Street foods as defined by Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations are 'ready-to-eat foods and beverages prepared and/or sold by vendors or hawkers especially in the streets and other similar places' [1]. Street food is an essentially urban activity which offers less expensive meals [2], a part of everyday life among local people [3] and plays an important role in developing countries to meet food demand among urban dwellers [4]. Street food at night markets attract visitors due to its liveliness and color as well as food authenticity [5], and street food tour can be regarded as a food adventure with live entertainments [6].

However, street food also presents risk and can cause health problems [2]. Study [7] pointed out that cleanliness influenced perceived healthiness, and the perception of healthiness positively influenced the perception of product quality. Moreover, cleanliness and orderliness are important for stalls [3].

Street food and hawkers are characteristic of many Asia cities [8], particularly in Southeast Asian countries [3] especially in Penang, Malaysia; Singapore; Bangkok, Thailand; and Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam as best street food cities in the world [9], [10], [11].

Michelin Guide introduced the street food category and started to give a star to street food stalls in 2016. According to [12], one Michelin star indicates high quality cooking and worth a stop. The first two Michelin-starred food stalls are Hong Kong soya sauce and chicken rice noodle and Hill Street Tai Hwa Pork Noodle in Singapore. Study [8] pointed out that those recommended street food stalls encountered 'a Michelin effect' such as early food shortage and longer queue for diners from around 45 minutes to 2-3 hours whereas the positive outcomes by Michelin are the increase in sale and customer awareness as well as becoming tourist attractions.

Thailand has been considered as one of major dining destinations in Asia by Michelin Guide [13]. Raan Jay Fai was announced as the third street food restaurant with a Michelin star in 2018. Since then, the restaurant which serves mainly work-cooked seafood dishes has become extremely busy [14]. On The Must-Try Dishes at Jay Fai page of Michelin Guide [13], four dishes are recommended:

1. Kai Jeaw Poo or crab omelet, the famous signature dish,

2. Phad Kee Mao Talay or drunken noodle, which is stir-fried flat rice noodles with fresh seafood, basil leaves, fresh chilis, hot and spicy sauce,

3. Tom Yum, which is spicy and sour soup with jumbo prawns, galangal, kaffir lime leaves, and lemongrass,

4. Poo Phad Phong Karee or crab yellow curry sauce, which is stir-fried lump crab meat with eggs, onions, and Chinese celery in creamy yellow curry sauce.

Electronic word of mouth (eWOM) an online platforms is a place where customers get information on certain services and products. Paper [15] pointed out that eWOM had been seen as a reliable source because people who gave word of mouth were not paid and they provided the actual experience, and customers tended to believe and rely on online reviews before making decisions in a positive or negative way. For [16], eWOM is perceived as credible and trustworthy, and it is a social network for consumers to share their experiences with observations and feedback. Social media; therefore, is a source of text data [17].

TripAdvisor is a website of global accommodations, hotels, restaurants, and tourist attractions. The site seems to be a one-stop solution as people worldwide check and read the reviews on TripAdvisor before making decisions and going to the actual places. According to TripAdvisor [18], it is the world's largest guidance platform and helps hundreds of million people each month and had more than 1 billion reviews and opinions as of the beginning of 2023. Reviews as preferences, complaints, suggestions, and expectations either positive or negative are essential for tentative customers as well as business providers. According to study [19], TripAdvisor is the most popular review platform, especially for both users and researchers.

For customers, an online review is a digital communication platform that the reviewers use to communicate to the future customers by sharing their attitudes, experience, and feeling [20], [21], [22]. Users of review platforms rely on information excluding the bias of the reviewers [19]. For the business sector, customers' reviews help business to understand their likes and dislikes, to serve them accordingly, and to improve the service.

Paper [20] explained that online reviews were suitable for a data source in research due to data availability, simplicity of data collection as a nonintrusive source without direct interaction with human subjects, and computer software assistance in data analysis. Personal information of online reviewers is not always available as the online platforms often grant anonymity rights for the users.

The study aims to explore the communication aspects and to analyze the contents in the online reviews; therefore, there are two research questions as follows:

Q1: What are communication aspects of TripAdvisor reviews on Raan Jay Fai in the periods of before and after One Michelin Star Award?

Q2: What are the most frequent words in reviews and how do they communicate?

2. Literature Review

Research studies of reviews of hotels, restaurants, markets, and street food have been conducted in different places.

In Macau, authors of the study [23] analyzed 614 TripAdvisor reviews in English language on 22 restaurants and found positive overall customer satisfaction. However, expensive restaurants appeared with higher negative comments than less expensive restaurants. The researchers pointed out that product quality, uniqueness and the knowledgeable, passionate, and amicable qualities of the restaurants were keys to success in the competitive market. Customers' reviews were bases for comparison. Study [24] also found positive comments (80.6%) on TripAdvisor reviews of 98 restaurants in Turkey. Taste was the most mentioned factor in positive comments while price was the most mentioned factor in negative comments. Most mentioned factors in comments were taste, price, attitude and behavior of the employee, view, food and beverage quality, cleanliness, punctuality, employee care, and Covid-19 safety measures. The top three frequently used words in the comments were 'service', 'taste', and 'price'. Notably, poor English proficiency of service staff was also found in negative comments.

Positive customer reviews were also found in Thailand. Paper [21] examined TripAdvisor restaurant reviews in Bangkok between 2017 to 2021. Positive comments were found most (85%) followed by neutral reviews (13%), and negative reviews (2%). The top five most frequent words were 'food', 'good', 'great', 'nice', and 'love'. Adjective words 'good', 'great', and 'nice' are the positive qualifying adjectives indicating appraisive aspect [26].

According to [27], Thai street foods are unique and authentic for tourists as they can taste the foods on-site. Cleanliness and hygiene aspects of street foods were perceived by tourists travelling with a local guide as the local guides had tried the foods first prior to the food tour visit. Author of study [6] analyzed 556 TripAdvisor reviews on street food tour in Bangkok. Only reviews in English language were collected. The data had 21,923 tokens and 2,666 word types for analysis. Top ten frequent words were 'food', 'tour', 'guide', 'Bangkok', 'great', 'tuk tuk', 'recommend', 'experience', 'Thai', and 'time' respectively. The researchers concluded that positive street food tours led to tourist satisfaction to re-visit the destination, re-join the street food tours, and recommend to others.

Paper [19] analyzed TripAdvisor reviews of attractions in Phuket, Thailand. Five categories of attractions were found: beaches, islands, markets, temples, and pedestrian streets. The market category had two dimensions: food and shops. In food dimension, positive terms are 'fresh' and 'Thai' while negative term is 'seafood'. In shops dimension, positive terms are 'local' and 'bargain' while negative term is 'price'. Here, the researchers explained that tourists were not happy with overly expensive food sold in markets.

TripAdvisor reviews on local market in Phuket were conducted in more detail by study [3]. Five key terms with positive valence were found: 'food', 'night', 'great', 'local', and 'visit'. The term 'food' was mentioned most in the reviews, it showed that tourists enjoyed their food experiences at the local market. The positive valence of the term 'local' showed that tourists found local markets as good places to interact with local people, witness the local lifestyle, and taste the local taste of Thai food. Five key terms with negative valence were 'price', 'stall', 'buy', 'market, and 'seafood'. The term 'price' was mentioned most, especially with 'seafood'. The researchers explained that the price of seafood should be affordable and reasonable for the tourists. The terms 'stall' and 'market' were related as tourists explained that shops and stalls sold similar or the same things and lost the local touches. They were disappointed with markets in Phuket when comparing to their experience in other local markets in Thailand.

Work [28] explored tourists' comments in travel guidance platform and found four factors representing the high expectations of tourists: food, price, crowdedness, and hygiene. Food was found related to hygiene in the comments and the expressions were mostly negative. Words found in the food category were 'delicious', 'unpalatable', and 'spicy'.

Significantly, the word 'price' was found in most of the related research studies in different places: Turkey [24], Thailand [19], [3], and Malaysia [28]. This finding shows the fact that customers are really concerned about prices.

Street food and hygiene were explored in Penang, Malaysia. According to the study [4], hawkers were concerned only with the taste of the food to attract customers and were less concerned with hygiene. Perceptions of hygiene were different between local customers and tourists. Tourists were positive on hygiene issues as they dine at the restaurants with better service and facilities such as toilets while local customers were negative on the issues as they usually go to local stalls.

3. Methodology

Secondary data of TripAdvisor reviews available online for everyone was used in the present research study. The data do not pertain to the scope of human-related research; therefore, consent from subjects as well as ethical approval are not required [29]. A computer-based approach was employed to collect, analyze, and interpret the data.

3.1. Data Collection

TripAdvisor reviews on Raan Jay Fai restaurant as shown in Figure 1 were used in the research study. All online reviews in English language over 12 years since the beginning in 2012 to 2023 were retrieved by using Web Scrapper. The review page shows information of the reviewer, bubble ratings from 1 (terrible) to 5 (excellent), review title, review content, and date of visit respectively as shown in Figure 2. Data was stored in CSV file for further word frequency analysis as well as content analysis.

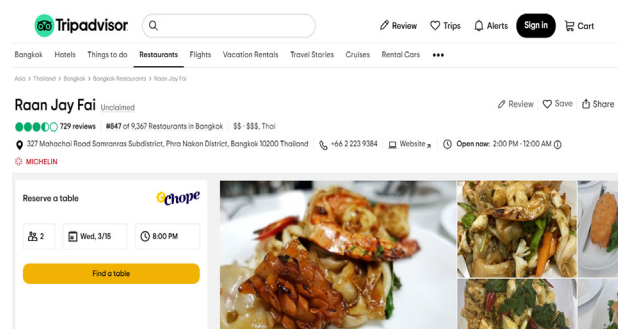


Figure 1. An image of TripAdvisor Review page



Figure 2. Example of a review

3.2. Data Analytical Tools

There are two digital tools, namely Web Scraper and KH Coder employed in the study.

Web Scraper, which is a free browser extension on Google Chrome, was employed to collect online data of TripAdvisor reviews page instead of collecting the data manually. This scraping tool can help to extract online reviews in a shorter time for further analysis. It can scrap multiple pages, extract data from dynamic web sites with multiple levels of navigation, and export data in CSV or XLSX formats from the browser.

KH Coder is a free text mining software to extract words from data for word frequency, co-occurrence network analysis, and keywords in contexts [30]. The software helps remove English stop words (such as ‘a’, ‘an’, and ‘the’), prepositions, conjunctions, and set of common words with little information for content analysis. Word retrieval is also performed for the original forms, such as ‘tell’, ‘tells’, ‘telling’, and ‘told’. Moreover, the tool can illustrate the data in figures.

Therefore, a computer-based approach which can easily generate statistics was employed to explore the aspects, word frequency as well as the incidences of words in the reviews [17].

3.3. Data Processing

To answer the first research question, classification of custom reviews created by [31] was employed. The customer reviews were divided into two groups, positive and negative. Bubble ratings of 4 (very good) and 5 (excellent) are classified as positive while bubble ratings of 1(terrible), 2 (poor), and 3 (average) are classified as negative.

For the second research question, data of descriptive reviews were processed by HK Coder for word frequency, co-occurrence network analysis, and key words in contexts [31].

4. Results

The results are discussed according to the two research questions.

Q1: What aspects of TripAdvisor reviews on Raan Jay Fai are in the periods of before and after One Michelin Star Award?

Of 736 reviews on Rann Jay Fai at the beginning of June 2023, only 521 reviews in English were used in the study as shown in Figure 3.

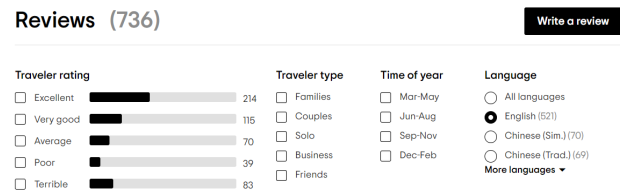


Figure 3. Total number of reviews and number of reviews in English

Bubble ratings of TripAdvisor reviews were used to classify positive and negative comments. Overall, a positive aspect of the reviews was found. Negative reviews (bubble ratings 1-3) are at 192 (36.86%) while positive reviews (bubble ratings 4-5) are at 329 (63.14%). Positive aspect as excellent is the most rated (214/521 = 41.07%). Table 1 shows the customer reviews in bubble ratings 1-5.

Table 1. Customer reviews and aspects of ratings

Aspects	Negative			Positive		Total
	1	2	3	4	5	
Ratings	83	39	70	115	214	521
No.	83	39	70	115	214	521
%	15.93	7.49	13.44	22.07	41.07	100

Reviews on Raan Jay Fai during 2012-2017 are 87 while reviews after one Michelin Star award during 2018-2023 are 436. Positive aspects were found in both periods of before and after one Michelin Star award: 2012-2017 (66/87=75.86%) and 2018-2023 (265/436 = 60.78%). The findings show the increasing of positive aspect after the award of one Michelin Star from 4 bubble rating to 5 bubble rating. During 2012-2017, 4 bubble rating (very good) was mostly found (42.53%) while during 2018-2023, 5 bubble rating (excellent) was mostly found (42.43%). Bubble ratings before and after one Michelin Star award are shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Bubble ratings before and after One Michelin Star Award

Aspects	Negative			Positive		Total
	1	2	3	4	5	
2012-2017	10.34 %	5.75 %	8.05 %	42.53 %	33.33 %	100%
2028-2023	16.97 %	7.8 %	14.4 %	18.35 %	42.43 %	100%

Q2: What are the most frequent words in the reviews and how do they communicate?

KH Coder, a text mining software, was employed to analyze the descriptive review data. There were three steps in the content analysis: 1) word frequency 2) co-occurrence networks of words 3) key words in context. The software found 27,769 tokens or number of words and 2,752 word types from the reviews. However, words in use are 10,092 tokens and 2,260 word types for analysis.

a) *Word frequency analysis*

To start the content analysis, the most frequency words in the reviews were needed as word frequency represents the key aspects of the reviews [6]. The software screen of the top 16 most frequent words is shown in Figure 4.

#	Word	POS / Conj.	Frequency
1	food	Noun	268
2	wait	Verb	254
3	crab	Noun	191
4	hour	Noun	158
5	Fai	ProperNoun	130
6	restaurant	Noun	118
7	place	Noun	115
8	Jay	ProperNoun	111
9	omelette	Noun	110
10	reservation	Noun	105
11	time	Noun	104
12	good	Adj	91
13	make	Verb	87
14	eat	Verb	83
15	table	Noun	82
16	try	Verb	82

Figure 4. List of the most 16 frequent words presented by KH Coder

Apart from the proper nouns of the restaurant name 'Jay Fai', the other top frequent words are 'food', 'wait', 'crab', 'hour', 'restaurant', 'place', 'omelet', 'reservation', 'time', 'good', 'make', 'eat', 'table', and 'try' respectively. The finding of the word 'food' as the most frequent word is in line with previous research studies [3], [6], [25], [28] as well as the positive qualifying adjective 'good' [25]. [26].

b) *Co-occurrence networks of words*

To further the analysis, the co-occurrence network of major words was generated to indicate the relationship of the connecting words as illustrated in Figure 5.

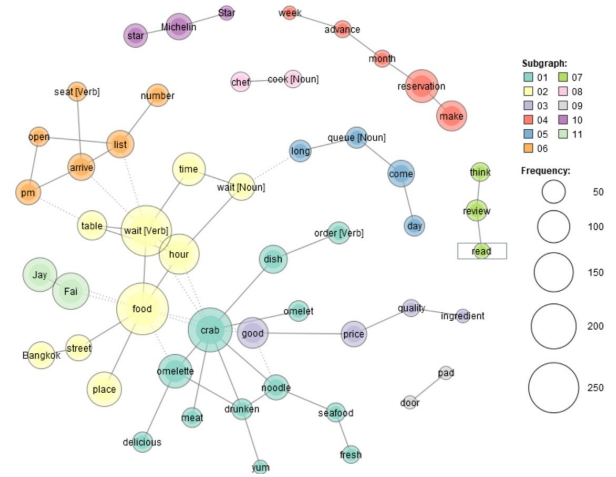


Figure 5. Co-occurrence network of words

Of the eleven subgraphs emerging from the co-occurrence network of words, the top 4 subgraphs show the word communities with the most frequency words.

Subgraph 01 comprises of two major words: 'crab' and 'omelette' or 'omelet'. Other related words are 'delicious', 'meat', 'dish', 'drunken', 'noodle', 'yum', 'order', 'seafood', and 'fresh'.

Subgraph 02 comprises of four major words: 'food', 'wait', 'hour', and 'place'. Other related words are 'Bangkok', 'street', 'table', and 'time'.

Subgraph 03 shows one major word 'good' and the related words are 'price', 'quality', and 'ingredient'.

Subgraph 04 indicates two major words: 'restaurant' and 'make'. The related words are 'month', 'advance', and 'week'.

c) *Key words in context*

Key words in context (KWIC) concordance were also generated to check how words appeared in the text data. Examples of the word 'food' in the contexts are shown in Figure 6.

Figure 6. Example of the contexts of the word 'food'

Key frequent words in the 4 subgraphs together with the contexts of the words were explained as follows:

Subgraph 01, the words are 'crab', 'omelette' or 'omelet', 'delicious', 'meat', 'dish', 'drunken', 'noodle', 'yum', 'order', 'seafood', and 'fresh'. This word community suggests the famous dishes 'crab omelet', 'drunken noodle', and 'Tom Yum' as recommended by Michelin Guide 2019 as well as the words of quality of ingredients 'fresh' which shows in the positive aspects of the food [19].

Examples of contexts:

- The drunken noodles and crab omelette were delicious. Best to get there around 11:30 to get on the list, even though they do not open until 13:30.

- Definitely a must try! Quality fresh ingredients and cooked by the boss herself. Seems she is famous for her egg coated crab but the other options were delicious as well. Worth a wait.

- Had a reservation so there was no wait. The food was good. Ordered crab curry, crab omelette, dry tomyum, drunken noodles, tom yum. Every dish was loaded with seafood and flavor. Crab omelette was definitely the group fav - drunken noodles was right behind it...

Subgraph 02, the words are 'food', 'wait', 'hour', 'place', 'Bangkok', 'street', 'table', and 'time'. The top frequent word 'food' is strongly related to the verb 'wait' as well as the nouns 'hour' and 'place'. This word community implies the street food in Bangkok as well as the waiting time at the restaurant.

Examples of contexts:

- The food is simply divine. Yes, you have to wait long, but it is worth it. Unfortunately for a while now they stopped making reservation, so you will have to wait, which means about 4 hours. ...

- Jay Fai runs one of the most celebrated Bangkok food places -LRB- News articles and celebrity pics on their walls would attest to it -RRB- so we had to try it on our last trip to Bangkok. ...

- The place is very simple, clean, small and authentic Thai style. Be there in advance and take your time to understand that ... you have to wait! But it is really, really worth it!!! Very helpful, friendly, and professional staff...

Subgraph 03, the words are 'good', 'price', 'quality', and 'ingredient'. The words show that prices go with the good quality of ingredients. The word 'good' as one of the most frequent words is in line with [25], and the 'price' which was found as one of the most frequent words indicating negative aspect [19], [3], [28], [24]. Moreover, food quality was mentioned as one of the key variables on customers' perception [7]. Examples of reviews are as follows:

Examples of contexts:

- This place is popular for a reason! Ingredients used are good quality seafood. The crab omelette is as big as a burrito with pure crab meats inside. Super delicious!

- The food is between 'all right' to 'good'. Too strong on the flavour -LRB- salty -RRB-. Try it for the experience... if you are spending many days in Bangkok. Also, the price is higher than the food quality.

- Verry, verry good food. Long waiting and high prices... but worth it for sure. We had the omlett and some stir fried noodles with vegetables and it was extremely good. She Gas verry high prices for Bangkok but she is verry good.

Subgraph 04, the words are 'restaurant', 'make', 'month', 'advance', and 'week'. This word group emphasizes the time needed to reserve tables before going to the restaurant.

Examples of contexts:

- If you come to Thailand. Try to book the restaurant in advance, and just go there once. Jay Fai is the best representation of Thai street food.

- We ate at the restaurant after making a late afternoon reservation via their email address several months before our visit.

- To avoid the queues and to get your preferred time slot, you should book at least 2 weeks in advance. The crab omelette and drunken noodles are very good. Prices are higher than they should be but the quality is there. ...

5. Conclusion

The study made use of electronic word of mouth (eWOM) on online platforms to explore content analysis and word use. TripAdvisor reviews on the first Thai street food restaurant with one Michelin Star was investigated. Overall findings of the reviews from 2012 to 2023 show positive aspects with 4 bubble rating and 5 bubble rating at 63.14%. Positive aspects of the reviews were found in both periods of before (2012-2017) and after (2018-2023) one Michelin Star awarded in 2018. During 2012-2017, 4 bubble rating (very good) was mostly found (42.53%) while during 2018-2023, 5 bubble rating (excellent) was mostly found (42.43%).

The word 'food' as the top frequent word was in line with previous studies. Other most frequency words: 'wait', 'hour', 'place', 'reservation', 'time', 'make', 'eat', and 'table' indicated the waiting time for their tables and food. However, the frequent words 'crab', 'omelet', 'restaurant', and 'good' suggesting the signature dish of the restaurant were also found.

When co-occurrence network of words was examined, 4 subgraphs of top frequent words were found. Keywords in the contexts of the 4 subgraphs were examined for better understanding. Subgraph 01 shows word community suggesting popular dishes of the restaurant. Subgraph 02 discusses the Thai street food in Bangkok and the waiting time. Subgraph 03 shows customers' perceptions on good quality of ingredients and prices. Subgraph 04 emphasizes the need for a table reservation which implies the popularity of the restaurant.

Notably, the food at Raan Jay Fai restaurant had been mostly reviewed with positive communication aspects over the 12 years on TripAdvisor. The positive communication aspect of the reviews can be explained by the notion that food typically elicits positive emotions even with the products that are not well liked, negative emotions are sparingly used [32].

Frequent references to "waiting" highlight a specific negative aspect of the experience, making online reviews a reliable source of customer feedback.

Of the top 16 most frequent words, the words 'crab', 'omelet', and 'good' are considered as positive indicating the signature dish of the restaurant. On the other hand, the words 'wait', 'hour', and 'time' can be considered as negative showing the waiting time for the tables and food. Moreover, the word community of Subgraph 03 ('good', 'price', 'quality', and 'ingredient') means that customers have expected good quality of food ingredients for the price they pay.

Customer reviews are effective platforms providing information about products and services. Concrete reviews with details are perceived as trustworthy for future customers. Therefore, online reviews help to respond to the requirements of the customers. Further studies can be enlarged including multiple online reviews of the restaurants in a country or region.

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