

An Appraisal Perspective on Attitudinal Analysis of the Language of Tourism in English Travel Blogs about Iraq

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Abstract

This study presents an appraisal perspective in the field of discourse analysis studies. It delves into the evaluative language used in selected English travel blogs. The language of tourism in these blogs plays a crucial role in influencing the perceptions of the destination. Thus, if it is not effectively employed, it can negatively affect the representation of the country, thereby influencing the tourism industry and diminishing its appeal. A mixed methods approach is used to analyse five travel blogs about Iraq. The analysis is based on the Attitude system by Martin and White (2004). The study seeks to answer the question of whether Iraqi tourism evaluated positively or negatively in travel blogs. It aims to identify the ways that Iraqi tourism is evaluated through the lens of attitude while also providing insights into the explicit and implicit evaluations. The study can raise public awareness about the power of language in shaping attitudes towards travel destinations as well as providing a new perspective on the interactions between discourse analysis and tourism studies. The study concludes that Iraq is predominantly represented positively via inscriptions of attitude. Thereupon, the attitude framework can be used as a robust model for identifying the structure of the texts. Finally, future researchers in such related topics should consider the broader socio-cultural and historical contexts shaping the language and representations found in travel magazine content. Understand how political, economic, and social factors may influence the framing and interpretation of the texts.

Keywords: Affect, appraisal, appreciation, attitude, Iraq, judgement, tourism, travel blogs.

1. Introduction

Over the past few decades, Iraq has faced political instability and conflict, leading to a decline in tourism and acting as commercial unattractiveness to the country's tourism. Turbulence, political instability, wars, and security concerns have affected the country's appeal as a travel destination. The flow of international tourists has been limited, thus, affecting the growth of the tourism sector. Nonetheless, Iraq remains an interesting and popular destination for a select group of travel lovers, especially the archaeological tourist. In this regard, the Iraqi government has initiated projects to restore and protect archaeological sites and museums, aiming to showcase the country's rich history and cultural diversity.

In the present, Iraq's tourism industry holds a delicate balance between the desire to showcase the historical attractions of the country and the challenge of strategic safety that has remained a significant issue. Thus, the country can restore its position as an appealing destination for tourists interested in exploring the treasures of antiquity and experiencing its vibrant contemporary culture. While it is true that the challenges facing the development of tourism in Iraq are numerous and substantial, the desire to restore the cultural and historical attractions, in addition to the resilience of its people, provides glimpses of the future and a hope for the revival of the oriental charm of the country. As peace and stability gradually return to the region, it would significantly ease the development of the country's tourism industry and rewrite the page in the success story of its tourism revival.

The language of tourism used in travel blogs plays a pivotal role in shaping the country's perspective as a tourist destination. Travel blogs have become a compelling platform, with many bloggers painting a vivid picture of travelling to different parts of the world. Thus, The way a destination is portrayed through language can greatly influence its appeal to others, so the destination is reached in the way how it is written and told by travel bloggers, making it alluring and attractive to others. The characteristics of touristic language have the ability to sway and manipulate the minds of the readers and tourists alike. However, the issue of tourism is in some ways challenging due to the fact that the emergence of tourism in Iraq is a contemporary phenomenon shaped by the security challenges the country has faced in recent years. Consequently, it is regarded as a dual imperative—a challenge that the nation confronts as well as a symbolic representation of its recovery from past adversities.

Situated within the domain of discourse analysis, this study embarks on a journey to uncover the linguistic nuances and representations of language written in travel blogs. The study explores diverse linguistic strategies utilised in travel blogs to portray Iraq as a complex and multifaceted destination. Apparently, numerous studies have examined the representation of Iraq in different media discourse, but no linguistic study focuses on the linguistic representation of Iraq as a travel destination in online travel blogs. The “representation” is explored from a descriptive and functional approach rather than a critical one. This study fills that gap by offering a discourse analysis that uncovers how language is strategically used to evaluate the destination, revealing both explicit and implicit attitudes.

However, the study can offer valuable insights and contributions. Firstly, it provides a new perspective on the interactions between discourse analysis and tourism studies. Secondly, the study can develop the field of discourse analysis, particularly in the context of travel blogs as a new genre. Thirdly, it could redress negative stereotypes and shape the perceptions of the country as an appealing destination. Finally, the study's findings and conclusions can raise public awareness about the power of language in shaping perceptions and attitudes towards travel destinations.

According to the research problem, the study proposes the following questions:

1. To what extent is Iraqi tourism evaluated positively or negatively in travel blogs? How is this evaluation realised through inscribed and invoked attitudes?

2. Do the writers of travel blogs rely on emotional resources to represent Iraq as a travel destination?
3. How can the elements of tourism be seen through the lens of Judgement?
4. How can aspects Iraqi tourism be manifested through the resources of Appreciation?

Based on the provided research questions, the study aims to:

1. Assess the evaluative language used in travel blogs, considering whether the country is predominantly portrayed positively or negatively through inscription or invocation.
2. Analyse the resources of Affect and determine their percentage from the overall attitude results.
3. Find out the common subcategory of Judgement and their role in reflecting social practices and cultural norms.
4. Figure out the common subcategory of Appreciation and justify its frequent use in the data.

The study also proposes several hypotheses:

1. The study hypothesises that Iraq is predominantly represented positively in travel blogs through the inscription of attitude, reflecting the potential allure of the country as a tourist destination.
2. The study suggests that travel bloggers use the emotional resources of Affect less than the other resources of Judgement and Appreciation
3. The study speculates that the elements of tourism are commonly expressed through Propriety and Tenacity of Judgment.
4. The bloggers rely heavily on the resources of valuation of appreciation to echo the richness of Iraq as a travel destination.

2. Literature Review

2.1 The language of Tourism

The language of tourism has a rich historical evolution that parallels the development of travel and tourism itself. Tourism dates back to ancient civilisations such as the Greeks and Romans. In these early times, travel was often motivated by pilgrimage, trade, or exploration rather than leisure. During the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, the concept of leisure travel emerged among the European nobility. The 18th century saw the emergence of the "Grand Tour," a traditional trip to continental Europe undertaken by young European aristocrats. This period gave rise to more structured and descriptive travel writing, setting the stage for developing a more formal language of tourism. The 19th century was marked by the Industrial Revolution, which brought significant changes in transportation and communication. This led to the popularisation of leisure travel among the middle class. Guidebooks and travelogues became increasingly

common, and the language used in these publications became more standardised. However, in the 20th century, the tourism industry increased, making mass tourism accessible to a broader range of people. This era witnessed the rise of advertising and marketing in tourism, shaping the language used to promote destinations and experiences.

With the advent of the internet and digital media in the 20th century and beyond, the language of tourism evolved further. Online travel agencies and user-generated content on platforms like travel blogs and social media influencers have influenced how destinations are described and marketed. But in recent years, there has been a shift towards more responsible and sustainable tourism. The language of tourism has evolved from practical communication in ancient times to a sophisticated and multifaceted field encompassing marketing, advertising, cultural sensitivity, and sustainability.

However, the connection between language and tourism has garnered significant interest from scholars such as MacCannell (1976) and Urry (1990). They assert that the language tourism establishments use plays a pivotal role in shaping and defining the experiences and perceptions of the travel destination. Both scholars concur that the language guides tourists regarding what they should anticipate seeing before their journey.. Boyer and Viallon, in their examination of tourism communication (1994), argue that a place becomes attractive to tourists not solely due to its inherent characteristics but mainly because of the persuasive power of language.

Notably, Graham Dann (1996) was the first scholar to conduct an extensive sociolinguistic investigation into language usage in tourist textbooks. He discerns distinctive features that define tourism as a form of language used for social regulation or social control. Dann also suggests categorising tourism media using a three-stage model of the tourism process (pre-trip, during the trip, and post-trip). This method identifies how language in this media serves specific purposes and influences people differently depending on the phase of their journey.

Contemporary culture emphasises examining the features of modern media discourse, the messages highlighted within media text, and, in the context of this study, the connection of modern media discourse to tourism. Consequently, portraying the destination through media tourism may impact other people's perceptions of it and influence their opinions, attitudes and perspectives since people are influenced by what they read, hear, observe, or perceive (Kane and Greendorfer, 1995, p.122). The utilisation of lexical words in tourism language is resounding and highly evaluative since the language of tourism is highly selective and creative. Ali (2016) demonstrates that the language of tourism praises the optimistic features of the product or service offered. Dann (1996), on the other hand, maintains that "tourism has a discourse of its own" (p.2). People often use expressions such as "language of music," "music language," or "dance language", and so on. They may not be fully aware of the meaning of these expressions, but there are standard sets of grammatical rules, lexical vocabularies, structure, codes, symbols, etc., belonging to each category. According to Dann (1996), the language of tourism operates in a similar language. Hence, Gotti (2006) states that the tourism language is considered a 'specialised discourse' with all general language's lexical, phonetic, morphosyntactic and textual resources.

Thus, this interaction between discourse and touristic language provides a deeper insight into the effects of representation on tourists' perceptions of the destinations. Accordingly, language, discourse, and tourism are deeply interconnected since language is the medium through which discourse is constructed. On the other hand, tourism is discursively and rhetorically organised, arranged, put into action, and enacted via language and other symbolic or communicative practices. Thus, tourism is an industry heavily influenced by the discourse surrounding it. (Caldwell et al., 2016). According to Coakley (2009), Language, as used in tourism media, is considered a form of discourse media communication that tries to mediate between individuals and their societies by providing information and knowledge about events, institutions, and people (cited in Lee, 2013, p.19). Thus, discourse, as a form of language and communication, is not considered an abstract system but rather a dynamic stream of information and knowledge of human beings. As a result, the language of tourism is not just an abstract system but a combination of shared knowledge and experiences between people based on their memories of what they encounter and their knowledge. This reveals that people use language to accomplish its functions of communication, interchange information, deliver their experiences, or express their feelings. (Johnston, 2002).

2.2 Iraq as a Travel Destination

Iraq, a country with a deep-rooted history and cultural legacy, has been historically recognised as a destination with immense tourism potential. Despite this, Iraq has encountered various obstacles that have hindered its appeal as a tourist destination. In the years preceding the Gulf Wars of 1991 and 2003, Iraq boasted diverse attractions that drew travellers from around the world. The ancient city of Babylon, the ziggurat of Ur, and the historic sites of Samarra were just a few examples of the country's wealth of archaeological treasures. Moreover, the stunning natural scenery of Iraq, with its picturesque landscapes bordering the Tigris and Euphrates rivers, provided visitors with awe-inspiring views and chances for outdoor exploration. However, the region's onset of conflict and instability significantly dampened Iraq's appeal as a tourist destination. The Gulf Wars, followed by the Iraq-Iran War, then the occupation of the country in 2003, as well as the internal conflicts and civil war of 2006-2007, led to the widespread destruction of infrastructure, cultural heritage sites, and public amenities.

Moreover, the emergence of extremist groups such as the Islamic State further exacerbated security concerns, deterring tourists and crippling the tourism industry. Despite these challenges, efforts have been made in recent years to revive Iraq's tourism sector. The Iraqi government has invested in reconstruction projects to restore key heritage sites and improve tourism infrastructure. Additionally, initiatives to promote cultural tourism and showcase Iraq's rich history have been launched, including heritage festivals, archaeological exhibitions, and guided tours. While progress has been made, Iraq continues to grapple with security concerns and perceptions of instability, which hinder its full potential as a tourist destination. However, with ongoing efforts to enhance security, rebuild infrastructure, and promote cultural tourism, there is a tangible development in the country to emerge again as a sought-after destination for travellers seeking to explore its ancient wonders and vibrant culture.

2.3 Appraisal Theory

Appraisal theory is located within the framework of SFL. It emerged as a result of a research project conducted by a group of researchers led by Professor James Martin and White and their colleagues in the 1990s and 2000s at the University of Sydney (see Iedema, Feez, & White, 1993; Martin & White, 2005). Martin (2003) states that “at about this time, a group of functional linguists in Sydney began work on developing a comprehensive framework for analysing evaluation in discourse” (p.171). Hatem (2023) asserts that the Evaluation theory is essentially situated within the framework of systematic functional linguistic.

As mentioned in the previous sections, the process of meaning-making can significantly be divided into three broad modes, or what Halliday calls Metafunctions. The ideational metafunction is realised by the grammatical system of transitivity to assess the language that construes the world of experience. The interpersonal metafunction represents speakers' and writers' social enactment, roles, personas, and relationships. Finally, the textual metafunction refers to the coherent organisation of these ideational and interpersonal metafunctions in the texts appropriately. Since the view of language adopted by the architects of the appraisal framework is that of the SFL theory of Halliday and his associates, the evaluative meanings described by AT provide some of the mechanisms by which the interpersonal metafunction enacts; it mirrors the feelings and opinions of the writers or speakers.

Martin & White (2005) affirm that the appraisal framework refers to the interpersonal dimension, which concerns how the evaluation is established, amplified, targeted and sourced. It is the subjective presence of writers/speakers in the texts, their stances and their opinions. Martin (2000) declares that appraisal is an interpersonal matter that aims to accomplish a biased view to “elicit a response of solidarity from the addressee” (p.143). Thus, appraisal is an interpersonal relation between the writers and the readers since the functions of evaluation in language are to express the writer's value system, set a link between the writer and the reader, and organise discourse (Thompson & Huntson, 2006). The formulation of appraisal theory was aimed at broadening or enriching mainstream approaches to language assessment, certainty, commitment, and knowledge, as well as looking into how language is placed by the speaker/writer (Oteíza, 2017, p.457).

Martin and White (2005) define AT as the “subjective presence of writers/speakers in texts as they adopt positions towards both the material they present and those with whom they communicate” (p. 14). It is a theoretical model that explains how language is used to evaluate and select views, build textual subjectivities and self-images, and mediate interpersonal concerns in relationships and interactions. According to Martin & Rose (2003), an appraisal is an estimation of “the kinds of attitudes that are negotiated in a text, the strength of the feelings involved and how values are sourced, and readers are aligned” (As cited in Bock, 2007,p.74).

Ideally, the appraisal framework is based on the notion of stance, “which depends heavily on the idea that whenever speakers or writers say anything, they encode their points of view towards it” (Martin& White, 2005, P. 29). This stance, they add, comes from the writer's attitude and is linguistically expressed. According to Pankovsky (2013), this stance is oriented towards the reader/listener to urge him to share the writer's attitude. This appraisal framework “provides

analyses of those meanings by which texts convey positive or negative assessments” (White, 2015). Hamed (2020) demonstrates that “the appraisal framework provides an account of how speakers/writers position themselves as standing with or against certain issues or figures and the way this position is manifest in language” (p.10).

3. Methodology

This section provides details about the selected data and the analytical framework for analysing the representation of Iraq in travel blogs. It outlines the Attitude system of interpersonal meaning as a theoretical foundation. This synthesised model serves as a versatile toolkit for analysing the evaluative language in selected travel blogs.

3.1 Data Selection

The data considered for analysis is a specialised written discourse, namely, travel blogs. Travel blogs are a part of digital communication used by members of the blogosphere to exchange content and opinions. They provide a collaborative area for creating and exchanging discussions with others who may find it interesting or relevant. (Richardson 2009, Luzón 2013). They aim to provide the audience with an explanation of the destinations and the bloggers' experiences. According to this description, the audience can make the most of their experiences or just enjoy themselves by reading about the countries they wish to visit.

Blogs and other digital genres are adaptable, allowing for significant modification of communication methods (Luzón 2013). This refers to the ease of incorporating, modifying, and deleting information during and after blogging, as well as the ability to host multiple digital genres on a single site. However, travel blogs might focus on exterior events such as places, sights, festivals, or ceremonies but can also reveal the blogger's own life through tales or feelings encountered on the journey. Bloggers' online identities often include professional and personal aspects, as evidenced by the intermixing of external issues and intimate data (Luzón, 2013). The data of analysis contains diverse travel blogs belonging to bloggers from different countries to enrich the analysis and incorporate various perspectives. The study investigates five English travel blogs with posts about Iraq. This study's sample was chosen on purpose, a technique known as non-probability sampling. The study depends on a purposeful sampling of specific instructive or representative data as follows:

- First Travel Blog: Voice of Guide: What You Need to Know Before Visiting Iraq. By Agnes Simigh, (June 1, 2022). <https://voiceofguides.com/what-you-need-to-know-before-visiting-iraq/>
- Second Travel Blog: Against the Compass: A Guide to Traveling in Iraq in 2024. By Joan Torres, (January 26, 2024). <https://againstthecompass.com/en/travel-iraq-federal/>
- Third Travel Blog: Adventures of Nicole: Iraq Travel Guide: Everything You Need to Know to Visit in 2024. By Nicole, (January, 2022). <https://adventuresofilnicki.com/iraq-travel-guide/>

- Fourth Travel Blog: Quit & Go Travel: Iraq Independent Travel Guide. How to Visit Iraq and Stay Safe. By Rowan. <https://www.quitandgotravel.com/2021/06/15/iraq-independent-travel-guide/>
- Fifth Travel Blog: Beyond the Bucketlist: The Best Iraq Travel Itinerary For 2024, (6 June 2022). <https://beyondthebucketlist.co/iraq-travel-itinerary/>
- 13 Beautiful + Famous Places In Iraq You Must Visit, (14 September 2022). <https://beyondthebucketlist.co/13-famous-places-in-iraq/>

3.2 Model of Analysis

Language is a tool used to convey the stance of the writer or speaker about individuals, objects or circumstances. In language, there are meanings related to opinions as instruments or resources for evaluation and appraisal. As a subtype of appraisal theory, attitude plays an important role in the expression of interpersonal meanings of language. It is one of the appraisal resources which makes a huge impact on interpersonal meanings of language. Attitude takes into consideration the evaluations that are negotiated in a text, the strength of the feelings and how values are sourced and readers aligned (Martin & Rose, 2003). It explores how language is used to evaluate or adopt stances and mainly to assess interpersonal relationships. Moreover, attitude investigates the mechanisms by which people, things, or feelings are viewed either positively or negatively by the speaker or writer. Painter (2003) defines attitude as a domain focused on the language expression of positive and negative evaluation. Thus, in considering attitude, the author concentrates on such interjections that may be interpreted as being indicative of the fact that at least one certain individual, object, situation, action, occurrence or state is regarded as positive or negative in one way or another.

Basically, the attitudinal meanings, according to Martin and White (2005), have three semantic areas. The first one represents the emotional resources of positive and negative assessment, labelled as (affect). The second is the evaluation of human behaviour based on ethical and moral values and conventionalised norms, labelled as (judgment). The last category of (appreciation) is concerned with the assessment of objects and natural phenomena in terms of their appearance or their social values. However, all these three broad categories are further divided into more delicate subsystems. The category of affect, for instance, is sub-classified into four categories of un/happiness, in/security, dis/satisfaction and dis/inclination. Meanwhile, judgment is divided into social sanction and social esteem. The last category of appreciation is further divided into three subsystems of reaction, composition and valuation. For a full account of these attitudinal categories and their subsystems, see Martin and White (2005, ch. 2). However, the attitude system can be construed through qualities, processes, comments and metaphors (Martin and White 2005, p.46).

Attitude is outlined by Thompson (2016, p.171) as a tool in which the core systems of evaluative choices are captured. Martin (2005) demonstrates that attitude is realised through the grammatical system such as adjectives (epithet), verbs (process), adverbs (comment adjunct), and grammatical metaphors such as nominalisation and modality. The attitude system presents an analytical framework to understand the evaluative language used to portray Iraq in travel

blogs. Being comprehensive and discourse-based, the attitude system acts well in answering the questions of this study.

The first category of the attitudinal system is Affect. Thompson (2004, p.76) mentions that attitude is the most natural way to express feelings towards certain things. These feelings are divided into positive and negative affect. Martin and White (2005) demonstrate that negative affect can occur when the speakers want to express anger, anxiety, boredom and the like, while positive emotions are conspicuous when the speakers wish to express joy, confidence, excitement or the like. However, the evaluation of affect is fundamentally linked to some human subject which makes his emotional response. Thus, affect is highly subjective since the speakers or writers reflect their own emotional state, therefore, personalising and shaping the text. However, Affect construes emotion, canonically in the grammatical frame, I feel (very) 'x.'

(1) "I feel very happy/sad"

The effectual positioning may be indicated by verbs of emotion, such as mental processes:

(2) "I hate chocolate"

Or attributive relational processes with the adjective of emotion as an attribute:

(3) "She is proud of her achievements"

Or nominalisation, such as:

(4) "His fear was obvious to all"

The emotional responses of affect are classified into three categories, each expressing positive or negative feelings. The first category is un/happiness, which is related to the emotional state of the heart, such as joy, sadness, love, hate, or happiness. This variable is likely to come first to mind when thinking about emotions (Martin and Rose, 2003, p.57). The following example is taken from Ataei's (2019) analysis of the language of emotions in the "Twilight" Novel:

(5) "That only made him laugh harder" [inscribed happiness] (Ataei, 2019, p.13)

The second category is in/security, which expresses the emotions related to eco-social well-being, peace, anxiety, confidence or trust (Martin and White, 2005, p. 49).

(6) "And surprisingly, there are very accepting of British comedians!" (Ertyas, 2011, p.68)

The final category is dis/satisfaction. It covers feelings related to displeasure, curiosity, respect, etc.

(7) "I hope that the disappointment was not too apparent in my voice" [inscribed dissatisfaction] (Ataei, 2019, p. 11)

The second category of attitude system is Judgement. It has been seen as a tool for referencing the positive and negative evaluation of human behaviour. This evaluation is based on a set of conventional norms and institutional values. It is considered as the way people value the appraised character or events positively or negatively (Martin and Rose, 2003). Essentially, under the category of judgement, the central role of language is to condemn or applaud, criticise

or praise towards behaviour, actions, deeds, beliefs or even motivations of humans. Thus, Judgment construes attitudes about character, designed to sanction or proscribe behaviour; canonically, in the grammatical frame, It was 'x' of/for them to do that:

(8) "It was kind /cruel of him to do that"

Martin (1995) observed that judgment is frequently expressed adjectivally (unfair/fair, competent/incompetent), while it can also be expressed through nominalised forms (best behaviour, remarkable achievement) and prepositional phrases (in order, in shape).

However, rules of behaviour may be codified in the culture via the system of judgement. Judgement involves assessing human behaviour that has either been upheld or breached by reference to the systems of legality/illegality, morality/immorality or politeness/impoliteness. That is to say, such kind of judgement asserts that a specific set of moral values, legal rules or religious regulations are at issue. This is reflected by utilising various terms such as lewd, immoral, innocent, cruel, honest, etc. Thus, social sanction is arguably codified in writing as edicts, decrees, rules, regulations and laws about how to behave as surveilled by church and state with penalties and punishments as levers against those not complying with the code. Sharing values in this area underpins civic duty and religious observances. Social sanction consists of Veracity (truthful, honest, credible) and Propriety (moral, ethical, polite, respectful).

(9) "This man Ramadan is a crowded" [-veracity] (Saldina, 2019, p.101)

(10) "Tariq Ramadan is the most respected man in the Muslim community" [+propriety] (Saldina, 2019, p.99)

(11) President Rodrigo Duterte is monitoring the disaster response from his home in Davao city, a presidential spokesman said" [+propriety] (Prastikawatia, 2021, p132)

On the other hand, values of judgement can mirror the esteem of the community as either lowering or raising the judgement of persons. Social esteem is frequently conveyed in oral culture in talks, gossip, jokes and different stories, each of which is invariably characteristic of different noteworthy functions, and humour was mostly found to perform a great function (Eggins & Slade 1997). The exchange of such values is vital in this aspect for the formation of social networks, friendships and other related social relations within the society. This is accomplished via the assessment of Normality (conventional, traditional, etc.), Capacity (competence, skilled, stupid, powerful, brilliant, etc.) and Tenacity of psychological disposition (cowardly, obstinate, zealous, determined, stubborn, committed, etc). These values of judgement arguably do not carry the same legal, religious or moral implications as the first one and do not have the same social weight. Thus, the negative values of this set, for example, will not typically make someone get a trouble with law enforcement agencies but rather make someone lower in the estimation of his social environment.

(12) "It's a peculiar position for an American Progressive like Obama who considered Saul Alinsky a great influencer" [+normality] (Atalla, 2021, p.1288).

(13) “He believed and his policy reflected that this is a global threat from dozens of groups--not just Al Qaida or ISIS--that will stop at nothing to kill as many people as they can” [+tenacity, +capacity] (Atalla, 2021, p.1289).

Halliday (1994) presents the system of modalisation which reflects the grammatical parameters in distinguishing and organising judgement. For instance, normality is realised through usuality, as capacity is to ability, and tenacity is to inclination. While veracity is realised by probability, and finally, propriety mirrors obligation. Reasoning along these lines, we can position interpersonal grammar (mood and modality) and appraisal on a cline, with grammaticalised realisations at one end, lexicalised realisations at the other, and Halliday’s modality metaphors construing meaning in between (Martin 2000b).

The last system of attitude is related to evaluating things, natural phenomena, artefacts, processes and states of affairs instead of evaluating human behaviours. Thompson (2016) describes appreciation as “the realm of aesthetic assessments of products, performances, and naturally occurring phenomena” (p.171). Like other resources of attitude, the system of appreciation also expresses positive and negative evaluations. It construes attitude about texts, performance and natural phenomena that fit into frames such as I consider it ‘x’:

(14) “I consider it innovative/unimaginative”

Since appreciation refers to the phenomenon under evaluation and not to the human subject doing the evaluation, thus, appreciation shares with judgement the property of being oriented towards the appraised rather than the subjective appraiser. For example, the word “beautiful” in “a beautiful sunset” is perceived as a quality of the sunset rather than expressing the emotion of the appraiser. These values of appreciation are depicted as a quality inherited in the objects being described and, therefore, transferred from that appraiser. Thus, the evaluation is somewhat depersonalised and objective similar to the values of judgement, which are also less personalising, at least comparatively to values of affect.

Eggs & Slade (1997) state that appreciation resources are mostly expressed through adjectives, but nouns, verbs, and adverbs also have their uses to express appreciation patterns depending on specific linguistic contexts. These resources are also delivered at the clause level since, in some cases, mere words or phrases may not fully accomplish the function.

However, the appreciation consists of three main categories. They are reaction, composition, and valuation. According to Martin and White (2005, p. 57), reaction is oriented to interpersonal meaning since it deals with affection, including impact and quality. Impact involves the responses to things and how these things touch the person emotionally. Quality indicates how good or bad these things or natural phenomena are and whether the appraiser likes them. Thereupon, reaction deals with people's feelings towards things, whether these things are attractive, impressive, arresting, lovely, ugly, dramatic, and so on (Hu, 2005).

(15) “George Floyd’s death in Minneapolis has revived the Obama-era narrative that law-enforcement is endemically racist” [-reaction: impact] (Saleh & Al-Azzawi, 2023, p.10)

Composition examines the perception of proportionality and the description of form and structure. Martin and White (2005, p.57) mention that composition is related to textual meaning.

It explores the evaluation of the balance and complexity of things. Various lexical words indicate the composition, such as unified, simple, precise, symmetrical, intricate, harmonious, balanced, convoluted, etc.

(16) “Typhoon Goni is barrelling across the Philippines, bringing with it catastrophic, winds and rain” [-composition]

(17) “Goni - known as Rolly in the Philippines - is the most powerful storm to hit the country” [+Composition] (Prastikawatia, 2021, p133)

Likewise, valuation deals with cognition and the value of things according to normal practice or conventions. Thus, it relates to the ideational meaning (Martin & White, 2005). It examines the ‘value’ or significance of things, whether these things are worthwhile, significant, important, crucial, or whether they are insignificant, damaging, worthless, dangerous, or useless. It assesses the value or the significance of the subject.

(18) “This charge of systemic police bias was wrong during the Obama years and remains so today” [+valuation] (Saleh & Al-Azzawi, 2023, p.11)

There are many ways that people use to express their attitude, some are utilised for simpler analysis while others are more complex. The most unambiguous and straightforward way involves using specific lexis, that is, particular words or phrases that clearly represent the writer’s or speaker’s attitudinal position. This is known as the Inscribed (Explicit) attitude for the simple reason that the semantic analysis of the chosen lexical items directly mirrors the intended attitudinal meaning. A clear example of this is the word ‘rudely’, which contains inscribed value of judgement:

(19) “Baashir, 81, is considered the spiritual leader” [+judgement: +propriety] (Fatkhiyati, 2019, p.131)

On the other side, the attitudinal meaning may not be explicitly inherited in the lexical word but is implied through the proposition's meaning. This kind of attitude is known as Evoked (Implicit) attitude, such as:

(20) “Every religion teaches us to forgive even the sinful ones” [judgement: -propriety] (Fatkhiyati, 2019, p.132)

Martin and White (2005) assert that “The general point here is that the selection of ideational meanings is enough to invoke evaluation, even in the absence of attitudinal lexis that tells us directly how to feel” (p.62). Thus, the attitudinal meanings are not effectively conveyed through individual words but rather through utterances and complete propositions.

Assuredly, the unit of analysis is the proposition or proposal, or a series of interconnected propositions, examined within the broader context of the text in which they are situated. In the realm of explicit attitude, the explicit words literally convey the evaluative and attitudinal meanings. Thus, it is quite easy to point at the evaluative or attitudinal language expressing positive or negative attitudes. Conversely, implicit attitude is problematic because it is not easy to identify the evaluative meanings that define the implicit attitude. In this case, the writer or speaker has to rely on the audience or respondent to interpret the situation or state of affairs in

light of evaluation. Accordingly, the writers or speakers assume that the reader or listener will see and perceive the evaluated events as right or wrong, normal or abnormal, pleasant or unpleasant, calming or shocking, etc.

However, it is necessary to acknowledge that the distinction between the two kinds of evaluation can often be rather blurred. Consider, for example, the following:

(21) “He entered the room. The class rudely talked amongst themselves” [Explicit-Inscribed]

(22) “Although the principal had entered, the whole room kept on talking” [Implicit-Invoked/Token] (White, 2009, p.35)

The explicit attitude in the example (21) inscribed the value of judgement through the word “rudely”, which necessarily indicates a negative assessment of those who were talking. Example (76) has no attitudinal words to indicate the positive or negative attitudinal meaning. Instead, it has the potential to invoke negative or positive assessments. According to white (2009), the formulation which activates such type of attitude is called “tokens of attitude” in the appraisal theory. These tokens of attitude are represented in the example by the words “although” and “kept on”, which do not carry a positive or negative attitudinal meaning but only indicate the evaluation. So then, the attitudinal position is typically not realised by a single word but by the whole phrase and the interplay of many components of the utterance.

The analysis of invoked attitudes depends on various factors, including the co-textual context of these attitudinal invocations. Additionally, the values of invoked attitudes are culturally and ideologically conditioned. Thus, they are restricted by the interpretive position of the readers or what is called “the reading position.” For example:

(23) “The government has followed the directives of the World Bank” (White, 2009, p.36)

The interpretation of the positive or negative evaluation depends on the readers’ views about the policy of the “Word Bank.” Hence, people make their evaluation depending on the culture in which they live and by their own individual experiences, expectations, assumptions and beliefs. So the same event will receive different evaluations since it is perceived differently by the people who make the evaluation regarding their ideological and reading position. Accordingly, the analysis of the attitudinal invocations can be highly revealing in terms of the underlying information in the text.

3.3 Procedures

1. Literature Review: Establishing a detailed and comprehensive description of all the concepts and theories involved in the analysis added to the literature review.
2. Data Collection, Transcription and Organization: Collect a representative sample of travel blogs related to Iraqi tourism in 2021-2023. Transcribe the textual data from the blogs and systematically organise the data.
3. Model of Analysis: Developing a model for analysing the data based on systematic functional Linguistic.

4. Data Analysis: The interpersonal meaning of Attitude system in Appraisal theory is applied in the analysis of the data.
5. Analytical Approach: Conduct quantitative and qualitative analysis to answer the study's questions.
6. Results and Discussion: Discuss the results in light of the research problem and questions.
7. Conclusion: Draw the conclusion in the context of existing hypotheses summarise the main findings and conclusions drawn from the study.

4. The Analysis

According to the attitude model of the analysis, a thorough explanation will be given here. The first category of the attitudinal system is the emotional response and disposition of Affect. Appraised items serve as focal points around which emotional evaluations revolve. The way these items are appraised reveals the underlying attitudes and perspectives of the blogger. These items are used to appraise "Iraq" and "the experience of travelling," "cities," "historical attractions," etc. with positive emotional resources. Expression of surprise is seen in the following example:

- (1) "I set out to explore the country myself and was surprised at how easy it was."

The example conveys a positive emotional state regarding the speaker's travel experience in Iraq. The appraised item here is the experience of the blogger in Iraq, which is appraised positively to express positive security. This representation counters common perceptions of difficulty and danger and encourages readers to consider Iraq as a feasible travel destination, promoting a sense of accessibility and adventure. Additionally, happiness is expressed in the following example:

- (2) "I hope it will help more people to visit this amazing country and fall in love with it the way I did."

Through the lexical word "love" and the invitation of others to visit and fall in love with Iraq, the blogger reflects a deep emotional admiration for the country. The appraised item is the country itself, and the positive emotional evaluation aims to inspire readers to share the speaker's affection and enthusiasm.

The invocations of attitude, on the other hand, are evident in the expressions of happiness and satisfaction of affect. The positive invocation of affect is used to establish the personal feeling of happiness of the blogger himself and other people as well. It introduces a positive feeling about travelling to Iraq as a response to the event of opening the borders of Iraq:

- (3) "After decades of being pretty isolated from the outside world, Iraq finally decided to open its borders to international travellers, making a dream for many come true."

The second category of the attitude system concerns the meanings that serve to evaluate human behaviour either positively or negatively. It encompasses the reference to a set of institutionalised

norms and assessment of some human participant with reference to that participant's acts or dispositions.

The analysis of the system of judgment spotlights a highly positive tendency toward appraised social qualities of Iraqi people as a common theme. The inscription of judgement is evident in these examples as they highlight positive traits through various lexical words such as “friendliest,” “polite,” “friendly,” “very concern,” “over protective,” “so kind,” and “extremely friendly” and “kind” to indicate propriety. And “eager to help” “very helpful” “will bend over backwards to help you” and “free you” to highlight their capacity. In addition to the “accommodating” and “patient” to mirror tenacity. The continuous focus on the locals as appraised items with their welcoming and helpful attitude creates a narrative that portrays Iraqis as extremely amiable and willing to help tourists. Thus, the analysis of the judgement is primarily concerned with the behaviour and character of Iraqis, portraying them as friendly, helpful, and hospitable.

(4) “Iraqis are very friendly and many, especially the younger generation, genuinely care about repairing their country’s tattered reputation and encouraging tourists to visit, so they will bend over backwards to help.”

The example highlights a positive evaluation realised directly through lexical item to create a favourable image of Iraqi people. These positive evaluations are crucial for encouraging tourism and fostering a sense of welcome among tourists. The example also indicates the sincere worry of Iraqis, particularly the youth, in restoring their country’s image and promoting tourism. This is evidenced by the assertions that numerous Iraqis “genuinely care about repairing their country’s tattered reputation” and “will bend over backwards to help you.” These evaluations demonstrate a positive judgment of the capacity and propriety of Iraqis, highlighting their proactive efforts to showcase their country positively.

Additionally, locals are depicted as being ready to assist with transportation, lodging, and guidance, underscoring their role as facilitators of a smooth travel experience as seen in the example below:

(5) “Where locals are accommodating to help you with transport, accommodation, or advice.”

These assessments play a critical role in shaping a reliable and attractive image of Iraq as a travel destination. The word “accommodating” suggests tenacity and enhance the travel experience since the presence of helpful locals can greatly improve the trip, making it more convenient and enjoyable.

Meanwhile, the negative inscription of judgement is directed towards appraising the tourists’ behaviour through the lexical word “jailed”

(6) “You cannot hug, let alone kiss, either in public or in the car. If you are caught, you may try to arrange it with the policeman, who can be kind to let you go; however, legally, you can be jailed for that.”

The example employs the modal verb of prohibition, “cannot,” as it is codified with the category of propriety to reflect the social sanction. The prohibited social behaviour is augmented by the phrases “let alone” and “legally, you can be jailed”. The judgement category, in this instance, touches on social norms that travellers must follow, such as restrictions on public displays of affection. It reflects the ethical grounds of such behaviour through negative propriety and highlights behaviours that are considered unacceptable.

The last category of the attitude system encompasses the evaluations that are made of products, processes or natural phenomenon. It is the values which fall under the general heading of aesthetics and non-aesthetic category of social valuation which includes meanings such as significant and harmful. The results reveal a balance between the ancient glories of Mesothelioma and the current reality of Iraq.

All types of appreciation appear in the data with a higher positive tendency towards positive valuation of various aspects concerning the experience in Iraq. The positive inscription of appreciation is exemplified by multiple lexical items such as “important,” “unforgettable,” “unique,” worth,” “photo-worthy” “greatly improved,” “worth,” “rewarding,” “worthy” and “iconic” to express positive valuation and “worth noting” “most dangerous” to express negative valuation. While reaction is expressed through “incredible,” “beautiful,” “impressive,” photogenic,” “interesting,” “good,” “great,” “a love good,” “easiest, safest, & most spectacular” “excellent” “beautiful,” “fascinating,” “nice,” and “reliable,” for positive evaluations as well as “horrendous,” “worse,” “be a pain,” and “not a particularly good,” for negative evaluation. At least, explicit composition is expressed through “dramatic blue bell-shaped structures” “straightforward,” and “impressively large,” “difficult,” to reflect negativity. However, most of these evaluative languages are used to appraise the historical and cultural sites of Iraq:

(7) “The Beginning of Humanity at Shanidar Cave: The cave itself is a large slit, gaping at the top of a mountainside staircase. Beautiful and phenomenally important from an archeological perspective.”

As indicated through these lexical items, the blogger uses highly positive lexical items to evaluate the cultural and historical Iraqi sites. The lexical words “beautiful,” “excellent,” and “interesting” in the above examples emphasise the reaction subcategory of appreciation, wherein the blogger delivers his immediate responses to the historical and cultural sites in Iraq. They also convey the positive valuation of appreciation through the lexical item “important” and showcase a positive reaction and valuation to the aesthetic and cultural significance of these landmarks. This combination of the subcategories of appreciation not only highlights the values and importance of these sites but also acknowledges the emotional impact these cultural and historical sites have on tourists. The following examples illustrate the realisation of positive inscribed appreciation:

(8) “Lalish is a fascinating destination and one of my favorite places in all of Iraqi Kurdistan.”

(9) “The building is impressively large, though much of the wall section has been more recently rebuilt.”

These instances appraise “Lalish” as “fascinating” via reaction and “the building” of Bash Tapia Castle Ctesiphon as “impressively large” to comment on its composition. This appreciation highlights the rich cultural sites of Iraq and their significance. By accentuating the historical and cultural importance of these locations, the blogger increases their attractiveness and appeal to tourists who are interested in history and culture.

The negative evaluations, however, explore factors of economic difficulties or environmental conditions such as:

(10) “The whole concept of tourism is a brand-new thing for Iraq, which means it does not have a big choice of hotels. Only the most expensive ones in the big cities are listed on booking.com. Apart from a few travel agencies, qualified English tour guides are hard to find.”

The above example evaluates the concept of tourism negatively. It presents a negative appreciation of various aspects of Iraqi tourism, such as the newness of tourism, the cost of hotels, and the scarcity of qualified English tour guides. The word “Brand new” conveys a reaction of quality to the unfamiliarity of tourism in Iraq, which has its effects on the the lack of experience in this field. Other lexical words such as “does not have a big choice” contain further a negative valuation and indicate the lack of options that should be available for tourists. By mentioning “only the most expensive ones” as a reaction to quality, the blogger limits the options for travellers by providing the quality of hotels. This negative quality implies a difficulty and a lack of diversity presented to tourists in Iraq. The blogger ends his paragraph with the appreciation of composition “hard to find”, pointing to the challenge that may face travellers in looking for qualified English guides. All these lexical words imply a negative appreciation of different aspects of Iraqi tourism.

5. Results and Discussion

This section provides the discussion which proceeded to start an academic conversation. The data analysis comes up with several findings by applying the model established by Martin and White (2005), which concentrates on the representation of Iraqi tourism in travel blogs. The three components of the attitude system and their subcategories are discussed. The following table summarises the general results of the analysis of the attitude system in the five travel blogs:

Table 1. Results of the Analysis of Travel Blogs

Attitude System	Blog 1	Blog 2	Blog 3	Blog 4	Blog 5	Frequency	Percentage
Affect	4	11	3	10	6	34	12.69%
Judgement	12	13	4	16	2	47	17.54%
Appreciation	40	33	33	27	54	187	69.78%
Positive	36	50	31	47	55	219	81.72%
Negative	20	7	9	6	7	49	18.28%
Inscribed	51	43	34	48	48	224	91.04%
Invoked	5	14	6	5	14	44	16.42%
Total	56	57	40	53	62	268	100%

The above results answer the question number One: “To what extent is Iraqi tourism evaluated positively or negatively in travel blogs? How is this evaluation realised through inscribed and invoked attitudes?” The analysis of the attitude system in the five travel blogs about Iraq reveals

a highly positive tendency towards appraising Iraq as a travel destination. Table (1) illustrates that positive attitudes are used more than negative ones in all five travel blogs. Of the whole number of attitudes (268), the total number of positive evaluations in the data is (219) with a percentage of (81.72%), whereas the total number of negative evaluation is (49) occurrences with (18.28%). Additionally, a significant difference regarding the use of inscribed and invoked attitudes is noted. Whereas the former is realised with a noticeable number of occurrences (224) comprising (91.04%) per cent, the latter is observed through only (44) items corresponding to (16.42%).



Figure 1. Attitude Analysis

The figure is quite revealing in terms of polarity in travel blogs. The high percentage of positive polarity mirrors the highest positive evaluations, while the low percentage of negative polarity mirrors the lowest negative evaluations found in travel blogs. Accordingly, the bloggers use the attitude resources to reflect the positive aspects of Iraq as a travel destination. The results also indicate that the positive evaluation of Iraq as a tourist destination is mainly realised through various positive lexical items such as adjectives, verbs and intensifiers. It means that travel bloggers tend to reflect their evaluation of the destination through the inscriptions of attitude rather than the invocations. Based on all the above, hypothesis No.1, reading, “The study hypothesises that Iraq is predominantly represented positively in travel blogs through the inscription of attitude, reflecting the potential allure of the country as a tourist destination,” is verified.

Analysing the attitude system in travel blogs underscores the three categories of attitude employed in the data. The results answer the study's Second question: “Do the writers of travel blogs rely on emotional resources to represent Iraq as a travel destination?” Hence, travel blogs include multiple attitude resources the bloggers use, such as affect, judgement, and appreciation. The resources of appreciation used to appraise semiotic and natural events have the highest percentage (69.78%) distributed in (187) instances. While the category of judgment comes next to record the percentage of (17.54%) distributed in (47). Finally, the emotional resources of

affect that examine people's positive and negative feelings have the lowest percentage (12.69%) in (34) occurrences. The figure below showcases the distribution of attitude resources over the five travel blogs:



Figure 2. Attitudinal Resources

The results indicate that Iraq, as a travel destination, is generally evaluated through the resources of appreciation, which means that the bloggers predominantly use appreciation resources to represent Iraq rather than relying on the attitude of affect and the emotional responses. The low percentage of affect in travel blogs highlights various important aspects regarding how representation is approached and the goals pursued by bloggers. Affect, denoting the manifestation of individual emotions and sentiments, is overshadowed by the emphasis on appreciation and judgment. However, travel blogs are commonly referenced by readers to help them decide on their next travel destination. A lower percentage of affect and emotional engagement ensures that the information provided is seen as credible and factual rather than being coloured by the bloggers' personal opinions.

Thus, the bloggers' relatively low use of affect indicates their prioritisation of objectivity in describing Iraq. By minimising personal emotions, writers can present a more impartial and unbiased depiction, which may be more convincing and reliable for potential travellers. This reduction in subjectivity helps maintain a more neutral and factual portrayal of Iraq since the emotional biases of the bloggers are less likely to overshadow the factual content. Therefore, hypothesis No.2, which assumes "The study suggests that the travel bloggers use the emotional resources of Affect less than the other resources of Judgement and Appreciation," is confirmed.

While not as widespread as appreciation, the utilisation of judgement signifies a critical perspective towards the actions, behaviours, and customs of locals and communities. This evaluation yields a profound understanding of local culture and societal norms, presenting a holistic view of the locale beyond its tangible characteristics. From other perspectives, with (17.54%) of the attitude focused on judgement, there are only (10.64%) of negative judgement with (89.36%) of positive judgement. This may indicate that the bloggers often aim to be

culturally sensitive and respectful of the destinations they write about. So they avoid the risk of offending the local population or misrepresenting cultural norms and practices.

Additionally, the bloggers might prefer to highlight the positive aspects of the local culture and people, focusing on what makes the destination unique and appealing, and this perspective is evident in many examples across the data, such as “The country, however, is much more than just archaeological sites. Iraq is made of its people, kind-hearted Iraqis who will accompany you in your journey, offering unprecedented doses of Arab hospitality and generosity.” This approach, however, helps create a welcoming image of the country and its people. Thus, the elements of tourism such as social practices and cultural norms are portrayed positively in the data, as shown in the table below:

Table 2. Frequency and Percentage of Judgement

Judgement	Blog1	Blog2	Blog3	Blog4	Blog5	Frequency	Percentage
Normality	1	1	1	1	-	4	8.51%
Capacity	3	2	1	2	1	9	29.03%
Tenacity	2	-	-	-	-	2	6.45%
Veracity	-	-	-	1	-	1	2.13%
Propriety	6	10	2	12	1	31	65.96%
Positive	42						89.36%
Negative	5						10.64%
Total	47						100%

The result of the analysis of judgement answer the Third question, “How can the elements of tourism be seen through the lens of Judgement?” However, among the most prominent sources of judgement that the bloggers have used extensively in texts is the propriety resources, which involves how ethical someone is. These resources record (65.96%) distributed in (31) instances. Propriety indicates the evaluations of human behaviour either positively or negatively according to their ethical grounds. The bloggers use propriety mainly to spotlight a positive tendency toward appraising the ethical qualities of Iraqi people as a common theme. These resources function as a tool to highlight the kindness, hospitality, friendliness and respect of Iraqi people towards tourists in Iraq. The representative words used to describe these resources include “kind,” “generous,” “hospitable,” etc.

Capacity comes next to record the percentage of (29.03%) distributed in nine instances. This indicates that the bloggers evaluate the capabilities, competencies, and reliability of the Iraqi people. Capacity is realised through words and phrases like eager “to help,” “tend to help,” “will bend over backwards to help you,” “very helpful,” etc. Positive capacity could be a reassurance to travellers who might be hesitant due to concerns about safety conditions. By drawing attention to the locals’ capacity and service usefulness, these blogs contribute to establishing confidence in Iraqi people and overshadowing any negative stereotypes.

Normality of judgement records the percentage (8.51%) distributed in four instances. These resources are used to evaluate the positive normal social qualities of locals in Iraq through words like friendliest, and get together. However, only one instance has been found to invoke the negative judgement: “Don’t be surprised if the guy at the immigration window is smoking a cig when he stamps you in, welcome to Iraq!” Therefore, tenacity demonstrates a positive tendency towards appraising the accommodation of Iraqi locals to present help and assistance. It records

the percentage of (6.45%) distributed only in two instances. Finally, the veracity of judgment records the lowest percentage at (2.31%) in one positive instance. Consequently, the quantitative/qualitative analysis of the subcategories of judgement indicates that the propriety and capacity of judgment are commonly used to evaluate social norms and practices.

Generally speaking, the bloggers use these two resources to evaluate the behaviour of Iraqi people in terms of how ethically grounded and capable they are. By portraying locals positively in terms of propriety and capacity, the bloggers try to change the perception of locals' status in a Western society that may have a negative image of Iraqi people. Locals are truly helpful, kindness, generous and hospitable. These qualities create a welcoming atmosphere that the tourists remember, leading to a positive interaction between visitors and locals who may repeat visits and inspire others. Iraqi locals introduce favourable portrayal and influence how the country is perceived globally. Thus, these results refutes a part of hypothesis No.4, which reads, “The study speculates that the elements of tourism are commonly expressed through Propriety and Tenacity of Judgment.”

As mentioned previously, the resources of appreciation have the highest percentage among other resources of attitude. Through appreciation, the bloggers intend to spotlight the attractive of the country, like its historical sites, landscapes, and cultural heritage. These qualities are mostly positive, as explained in the table below:

Table 3. Frequency and Percentage of Appreciation

Appreciation	Blog1	Blog2	Blog3	Blog4	Blog5	Fr.	Pr.
Reaction	19	12	17	22	32	102	54.55%
Composition	6	5	6	-	2	19	10.16%
Valuation	15	16	10	5	20	66	35.29%
Positive	152						81.28%
Negative	35						18.72%
Total	187						100%

The bloggers try to encourage the readers to consider visiting and change their perceptions of the country. By highlighting the beauty, culture, hospitality, history, etc., they emphasise a more positive portrayal and shift the focus away from any negative stereotypes. These findings answer the Fourth question of the study, which reads, “How can aspects of Iraqi tourism be manifested through the resources of Appreciation?” The analysis uncovers that reaction of valuation has the highest percentage and frequency among other resources of appreciation as well as the other resources of attitude. It compares (54.55%) distributed in (102) instances. This resource indicates the emotional effects of the various aspects of Iraq, such as the safety situation and Iraqi cuisine, on the visitors. Thus, the resource of reaction is usually advocated to describe the safety conditions, some religious practices, Iraqi cuisine and weather in Iraq, places, historical sites, and cultural attractions through words such as reliable, fascinating, great, nice, beautiful, amazing, incredibly diverse, interesting impressive. The example, “Lalish is a fascinating destination and one of my favourite places in all of Iraqi Kurdistan”, positively evaluates a specific place in Iraq. The example “Mosul is a very interesting place to visit, but some of the ruins are really unsafe” also evaluates specific areas through positive and negative reactions.

On the other hand, the invoked reaction is mostly positive, such as “Personally, cruising the Mesopotamian Marshes by mashuuf (a traditional canoe-like boat) to see the traditional

marshland reed houses were a highlight of travelling around Iraq for me.” Meanwhile, the negative reaction appears in very restricted examples through words like bigger pain, unsafe, not safe, and not accessible. However, the reaction is usually used as a signal of encouragement or praise, whether the various aspects of Iraqi tourism positively influence the bloggers’ emotions or not. It is the emotional effects of things or natural phenomena on the bloggers. For instance, when the bloggers walk alone in the cities, this calm and comfortable atmosphere touches them emotionally, making them perceive Iraq as a safe country. So, the reaction responses are more concerned about emotional impacts.

The second highest recurrences are the valuation resources of appreciation. They record (35.29%) distributed in (66) instances. Valuation is associated with evaluating things, so when the bloggers use the meaning of valuation, they construct the evaluation of semiotic and natural phenomena concerning tourism in Iraq. Thus, the positive valuation of historical attractions, cities of Iraq and cultural heritages reproduced by the bloggers mirror a positive portrayal of tourism and increase the appeal of the destination. Therefore, the writers describe these aspects related to Iraqi tourism to highlight the importance of these elements and their influential role in enriching the tourism industry. Positive valuations are shown in words like greatly improved, new and highly appreciated, which appraises the safety condition, authentic, most rewarding destinations, and unique to describe the experience in Iraq.

While the negative resources are mainly directed towards describing the effects of religious sectarianism and Iraq’s damaging history, the negative valuations used by the bloggers serve to negatively evaluate the tumultuous past of Iraq that is characterised by wars and sectarian such as: “From the war between Iran and Iraq in 1980 to Saddam’s Hussein regime, the US invasion in 2003 and the more recent ISIS rule, decades of conflict and religious sectarianism made Iraq an actual war-torn country, labelled by all international media as one of the most dangerous destinations in the world.” Also, the description of some problems in the country, like: “Water scarcity is a common problem in the Middle East, but Iraq is one of those affected the most, especially with a climate where the temperature can reach 50-60 degrees in June-August. In 2022, the Sawa lake near Nasiriya simply dried up for the first time. The environmental changes and their effect on water supply are alarming in Iraq”

Overall, the positive valuation overcame the negative one. By positively appraising the elements of tourism as worthwhile, the bloggers emphasise their significance value, the value of Iraqi culture or the worthiness of historical figures in Iraq, the importance of specific places and so on. The bloggers expressed their words in the tendency of positive valuation items and aimed to tell the readers that Iraq is such a newsworthy travel destination which has aesthetical value to be discovered.

The third subcategory of appreciation is the composition resources which concern with the form or structure of some elements in Iraq. These resources mostly provide a nuanced description of some specific Iraqi dishes, indicating whether the Iraqi cuisine is well-structured and elaborated. Composition records (10.16%) were distributed in (19) instances. The keywords used to form these resources include easy, sophisticated, varied, regular, and organised, in addition to the invoked composition like: “Rawanduz Canyon is an outdoor lover's paradise with a canyon to trek all over, waterfalls, and gorgeous nature.” According to these results, hypothesis No. 4,

which states “The bloggers rely heavily on the resources of valuation of appreciation to echo the richness of Iraq as a travel destination,” is rejected.

6. Conclusion

The attitude model serves as a robust linguistic tool, relying on lexico-grammatical resources to discern the polarity of texts and elucidate the spectrum of positive or negative attitudes exhibited by speakers towards the discussed topic. By analyzing the lexical and grammatical features employed within a text, the attitude model offers valuable insights into the nuanced evaluative stances adopted by individuals or groups. These evaluative stances encompass a wide range of emotions, opinions, and judgments intricately woven into the fabric of language. Through meticulous examination of linguistic cues such as affective expressions, judgmental statements, and appreciative evaluations, the attitude model unveils the underlying sentiments, beliefs, and attitudes conveyed within textual discourse. Additionally, it provides a framework for understanding the dynamic interplay between language and ideology, shedding light on how linguistic choices shape the construction of meaning and influence the interpretation of texts.

Thereupon, travel blogs about Iraq tend to focus on the positive aspects of the country to reflect the alluring and richness of Iraq. This is evident from the high positive tendencies of resources of appreciation that concentrate on the vivid description of the elements of tourism. These elements of tourism include safety conditions, historical significance, cultural heritage, hospitality, religious attractions, and landscape, which work together to build a nuanced portrayal of Iraqi tourism and attract tourists’ attention to the destination. Hence, these components work together to represent the country’s attractions as a travel destination. Therefore, the positive evaluation of the representation of Iraqi tourism is mainly activated through the lexical items as adjectives, verbs and intensifiers. Thus, travel blogs explicitly represent the country via the inscriptions of attitude rather than the invocations. Furthermore, the structure of travel blogs suggests that the bloggers emphasise creating unique and unforgettable experiences, which may overshadow any expression of personal feelings in the writing of travel blogs. The structure of travel blogs focuses on providing an objective account of the experiences in Iraq by delivering a descriptive rather than emotional narrative.

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