

Lexico-Syntactic Features of the Texts of Travel Blogs

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ABSTRAKT

Tato bakalářská práce se zabývá lexikálně-syntaktickými vlastnostmi textů cestovatelských blogů. Práce se skládá z teoretické a praktické části. Teoretická část obsahuje popis blogů a jejich specifické vlastnosti. Pokračuje přehledem vybraných lexikálních a syntaktických vlastností počítačem zprostředkované komunikace. Praktická část obsahuje analýzu 88 vybraných cestovatelských textů napsaných osmi blogery. Analýza ukazuje použití vybraných lexikálně-syntaktických vlastností v textech cestovatelských blogů. Závěr práce hodnotí a komentuje výsledky provedené analýzy.

Klíčová slova:

Lexikální vlastnosti, syntaktické vlastnosti, počítačem zprostředkovaná komunikace, blog, cestovatelský blog

ABSTRACT

This bachelor thesis deals with the lexico-syntactic features of the texts of travel blogs. The thesis consists of theoretical and analytical parts. The theoretical part includes the description of blogs and their specific features. It proceeds with the outline of selected lexical features and syntactic features of computer-mediated communication. The analytical part involves an analysis of 88 selected travel texts written by eight bloggers. The analysis shows the use of selected lexico-syntactic features in travel blog texts. The conclusion of the thesis evaluates and comments on the results of the analysis.

Keywords:

Lexical features, syntactical features, computer-mediated communication, blog, travel blog

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I hereby declare that the print version of my Bachelor's thesis and the electronic version of my thesis deposited in the IS/STAG system are identical.

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	9
I THEORY	10
1 BLOG.....	11
1.1 HISTORY OF BLOGGING	11
1.2 STRUCTURAL CHARACTERISTICS OF BLOGS	12
1.3 BLOG AS A HYBRID GENRE	12
1.3 DEFINING TRAVEL BLOGS	14
1.4 TYPES OF TRAVEL BLOGS.....	15
1.4.1 Narrative Features of Travel Blogging Discourse.....	16
2 COMPUTER-MEDIATED DISCOURSE	17
3 LEXICAL AND SEMANTIC FEATURES OF COMPUTER-MEDIATED COMMUNICATION	19
3.1 USAGE OF I.....	19
3.2 USAGE OF YOU	20
3.3 USAGE OF WE.....	20
3.4 COLLOCATIONS	20
3.5 EMOTIONAL WORDS.....	21
3.6 SIMILE	22
4 SYNTACTIC AND PRAGMATIC FEATURES OF COMPUTER- MEDIATED COMMUNICATION	23
4.1 DIRECT SPEECH	23
4.2 CLAUSE TYPES	24
4.3 EXCLAMATIVE CLAUSES	24
4.4 IMPERATIVE CLAUSES	26
4.5 RHETORICAL QUESTIONS.....	27
II ANALYSIS	29
5 MATERIALS AND METHODS.....	30
6 LEXICAL FEATURES.....	32
6.1 PERSONAL PRONOUNS	32
6.1.1 Usage of I.....	32
6.1.2 Usage of You.....	32
6.1.3 Usage of We.....	33
6.2 VOCABULARY OF TRAVEL BLOGS	33
6.2.1 Emotional Vocabulary in Travel Blogs.....	35
6.3 COLLOCATIONS	38
6.4 SIMILE	38
SYNTACTIC FEATURES.....	40
6.5 DIRECT SPEECH	40
6.6 CLAUSE TYPES	41
6.6.1 Exclamative Clauses	41
6.6.2 Imperative Clauses	42

6.7 RHETORICAL QUESTIONS.....	43
CONCLUSION	45
BIBLIOGRAPHY	47
LIST OF FIGURES	51
LIST OF TABLES	52

INTRODUCTION

Blogging belongs to the most long-standing forms of social media communication. Even though there are social media like Twitter or Instagram, which are much more popular than blogs, they still occupy an important place in the media sphere. Blogs were designed for people who want to share their experiences and stories. However, we have many types of blogs; some are used as a marketing tool to promote a company or some product. Blogs as hybrid genres were studied by many scholars. Nevertheless, I consider blogs as hybrid texts that mix different genres, and according to Primo et al. (2014), they are divided into 16 blog genres based on their function.

This bachelor thesis focuses on travel blogs and texts written by individual travel bloggers. Travel blogs are blogs where bloggers share their travel experiences and stories. The purpose of this thesis is to outline the typical lexical and syntactic features of these types of texts and explain the pragmatic reasons why bloggers use these features.

The first chapter of the thesis is divided into four sections. The chapter provides the definition of blogs, outlines specific features of travel blogs and their types. It also explains computer-mediated communication from the lexico-syntactic perspective. The typical lexical and syntactic features outlined in earlier studies of computer-mediated communication are described in detail.

The second part of the thesis features the results of the analysis. The selection of materials and methods for the analysis is explained. The research material is analysed from the perspective of the commonality of lexical and syntactic features.

The thesis finishes with a conclusion, which contains a summary of the analysis and the interpretation of the usage of the analysed lexico-syntactic features with regard to their effectiveness.

I. THEORY

1 BLOG

In the 1980s, the Internet contained only a relatively small set of networks, and the majority of these networks had direct links to defence research or operations since it was under military control during this time (Abbate 1999, 199).

However, already in the early 1990s, the Internet turned into a popular form of communication, and it created a demand for network access bigger than ever before. Since its privatisation in 1995, the computer industry rushed into the Internet market with a set of new software products and services (Abbate 1999, 199), among which were blogs.

A blog is a special kind of website created and managed by a person who wants to tell others about their area of expertise. One passionate person usually writes blogs, but there are also group blogs written by several people and even blogs produced by a company or its department called “corporate blogs” (Scott 2013, 59). This bachelor thesis focuses on individual blogs.

1.1 History of Blogging

"Weblogs or blogs as a genre and blogging as a digital linguistic practice can be considered among the most long-standing forms of social media communication" (Heyd 2017, 165).

In the 1990s, the Internet had already existed for twenty years and was used by programmers, scientists, and people interested in new forms of communication. The problem was that web browsers were not available on most computer platforms; it changed in 1993 when the web opened up to the general public and the first widely available graphical web browser, and the first web browser that allowed embedded images. By 1994, the first users had started their online diaries. One of the first popular bloggers was Justin Hall, who still creates blogs today (Rettberg 2014, 6-7).

The sites of early bloggers were hand-coded, which means bloggers had to edit raw HTML code or use a visual HTML editor to update the blog. In late 1998 templates and web-based forms enabled posts to be simply typed straight in, allowing bloggers to quickly publish and update their online diaries and blogs (Rettberg 2014, 9).

In 2002 the blog search engine Technorati.com was launched, and due to that, the number of blogs rapidly increased, and the total number of blogs was doubling every few months. Blog search engines like Technorati made the conversations and connections between blogs much more easily accessible to the public. In 2004 the noun “blog” was announced as a word of the year by Merriam-Webster. The media were writing about blogs regularly, and

everybody seemed to have heard about them at that time (Rettberg 2014, 13). A few years later, blogs were an integral part of popular media and have entered businesses, news organisations, political campaigns, and classrooms (Nardi, Schiano, and Gumbrecht 2004, 222).

Blogging was an innovative and popular social medium before social media. With the popularity of social media like Twitter or Facebook, blogs do not attract the same attention or importance as they did in the mid-2000s. Some style or functional of blogging are evident in the social media content since blogs occupy a place in the media sphere connected with social media (Highfield 2017, 331).

1.2 Structural Characteristics of Blogs

Structurally, the blogs are “frequently updated webpages with a series of archived posts, typically in reverse-chronological order” or “modified web pages in which dated entries are listed in reverse chronological sequence” (Nardi, Schiano, and Gumbrecht 2004, 222). Posts appear in selected categories on the blog website and include specification about the post's content to make it easier for people to find the information they need. Moreover, blogs are open to comments or responses from their readers (Azariah 2017, 23).

Blogs commonly provide hyperlinks to other blogs, email addresses or older entries. It interprets a critical feature that creates meaningful connections and conceptual transitions links within the blog and other similar blogs (Sorapure 2003, 14). There are several potential applications for blogs in business, and blogs can be event logs, newsletters, or project management tools. Blogs have a flexible format that enables unstructured items of varying lengths and encourages simple categorisation of data. Thus, blogs are easy to use and implement and require very little or no training. Another advantage of blogs is that they are low-cost (Charman 2006, 57).

1.3 Blog as a Hybrid Genre

According to Meyers (2010, 19), genres are not just texts because they shape and include practices and ways of doing things. For example, comments, links, as well as simple publishing of posts, which influence the use of blogs and their form. As Swales (1990) states, genres are characterised as a “class of communicative events” which have “a shared set of

communicative purposes," similar stylistic features, content, structures and also share the intended audience.

Several scholars assumed that blogs are a genre, especially because of the chronological order of blogs' posts and also due to the frequency of personal blogs. For example, Miller and Shepherd (2004, 15) linked blogs to just one type of motivation to self-expression. Similarly, Puschmann (2009) describes personal blogs as a "supergenre" representing the antecedent to subgenres, e.g. news blogs. They stated later that experimentation and adoption led to the multiplication and differentiation of genres anchored in the same medium, and therefore, genre and medium should never be taken as synonymous or confused. If personal blogs would be the only type of content available in the blogosphere, the term blogosphere refers to the global community of bloggers; then blogs may be considered a genre in itself. Nevertheless, many individuals, organisations, and groups use blogs to aim at various communication goals (Primo et al., 344).

In the thesis, I understand blogs as hybrid texts that mix different genres, such as personal websites or digital journals. We can identify hybrid texts because we can recognise different patterns. There are boundaries, and due to them, a text may only push the limits of a genre. As a hybrid genre, blog transforms digital genres through inversion, displacement or combination (Primo et al. 2014, 345). For example, travel blogs mix travel guides with personal websites.

Therefore, considering blogs as a medium, not as a genre and considering that posts are historically and socially situated, I will apply four dimensions discussed in Primo et al. (2014, 346) to identify travel blogs: (1) number of bloggers – if the blog is written by an individual or by a group of bloggers); (2) interaction form – everyday communication or formalised blog; (3) content focus; (4) content treatment (report or reflection).

Depending on the function, blogs can be (see Primo et al. 2014, 346):

1. self-reflective – bloggers discuss their matters such as their frustrations, motivation, or problems;
2. internal informative – objective posts about blogger's matters – research group publishes notes about the papers they will present in future conferences;
3. informative – objective posts on other matters relevant to bloggers – that can be, for example, a university's office for international students maintains a blog about the student's life in a particular city;

4. reflective – thoughts and discussions on other matters relevant to bloggers – a cook publishes his thought on environmental problems;

Sixteen blog genres can be identified from the intersection of the four dimensions discussed above and blog functions: (1) professional self-reflective; (2) professional internal informative; (3) professional informative; (4) professional reflective; (5) personal self-reflective; (6) personal internal informative; (7) personal informative; (8) personal reflective; (9) group self-reflective; (10) group internal informative; (11) group informative; (12) group reflective; (13) organisational self-reflective; (14) organisational internal informative; (15) organisational informative and lastly (16) organisational reflective (Primo et al. 2014, 346-347). In the thesis, I will especially look at personal self-reflective and personal informative blog genres.

1.3 Defining Travel Blogs

Travel blogs can be defined as a hybrid genre where tourists ordinarily publish their personal travel stories and recommendations as they frequently reveal multiple aspects of a tourist's experience at a specific destination (Li and Wang 2011, 690). Travel blogs are typically multimodal, as they include individual accounts of experiences (Azariah 2017, 9) introduced by words, videos, and images. These are used as attention-grabbing means and supporting material. Additionally, due to the nature of language and style, individual travel blogs are associated with greater authenticity (Azariah 2017, 23). This greater authenticity might also be the reason for travel blogs' positive perception and popularity.

The motivation for writing a travel blog is to help people who are going to visit a specific destination. Another motivation is to evoke memories in the readers who have already been there and provide enjoyable reading for those who read for personal interest and pleasure (Goethals 2013, 152). Two essential principles can define how a blogger approaches the topic. The first principle highlights the way in which the author of the blog presents the trip and whether he/she focuses on the evaluation of the trip, its realisation, or narration of the experience. The second principle deals with the blogger's interpersonal orientation, which can be displayed in a more interactive or intimate direction (Goethals 2013, 152). These principles are often combined in posts. The private details are combined with external issues, so the online identity of any blogger mixes both personal or social and professional characteristics. To provide the readers with reliable data, information, opinions and feelings

while describing the particular destination is usually the purpose of the travel blogs (Pascual 2018, 261-262).

However, the degree of formality, whether it features elements closer to either a written style or a speech style, always depends on the communicative goal of the bloggers and the relationship that they intend to create with the readers (Luesma 2015, 14).

Depending on the reason, travel blogs can be used by individuals to publish personal travel stories and experiences online and to stay in contact with relatives and friends, or a need for self-expression, a desire to share experiences with other travellers and social interaction with people with the same passion (Schmallegger and Carson 2008, 101), as well as commercial benefit. Blogging as a way of promotion is frequently considered a cheaper marketing activity than traditional advertising. Some researchers have suggested that tourism blogs represent a new and non-traditional way to help define the image of a destination or a company (Schmallegger and Carson 2008, 102).

1.4 Types of Travel Blogs

Travel blogs can be classified according to authorship, and there are three types of travel blogs: travel blogs from guidebook publishers such as Lonely Planet, travel blogs published on travel-specific web hosts sponsored by commercial advertising and travel blogs that are generally written by a single author and independently hosted (Azariah 2017, 11).

Even though blogs on travel are ubiquitous, the use of the format by guidebook publishers is comparatively rare (Azariah 2017, 20).

On the other hand, a significant number of travel blogs are hosted on travel-specific websites which are sponsored by third-party advertising. In this type of blog, many other voices, apart from the author's voice, claim a reader's attention. These voices generally find expression in paratextual elements such as titles, logos, hyperlinks, maps, or blogrolls that are provided by the web hosts and their commercial sponsors (Azariah 2017, 42).

The last type represents individuals who host their blogs independently on their websites and generally enjoy access to a greater variety of standard features and therefore have more freedom of expression. Individuals who write publicly accessible travel blogs have to be aware of their potential audiences and create these narratives with their readers (Azariah 2017, 69).

Most travel blogs on the Internet belong to the consumer to consumer (C2C) category, representing a personal online diary. Nevertheless, the tourism blogosphere does not solely

contain travel blogs as a form of a consumer to consumer (C2C) communication, it offers a broader range of potential applications, including business to business (B2B), business to consumer (B2C) or government to consumer (G2C) travel blogs and all of these have significant results in destination marketing and tourism (Schmallegger and Carson 2008, 101).

This thesis focuses on the travel blogs independently hosted and written by a single author. The majority of them belongs to the C2C category.

1.4.1 Narrative Features of Travel Blogging Discourse

The presence of the words referring to travel in a blog is mainly determined by its narrative voice, tone, theme, time, the organisation of and reference to space, as well as the positioning of its narrator (Dann 1996, 200).

The travel experience is usually presented as an activity focused on the self and personality. The use of a first-person voice in most texts helps to narrate the travel experience. Travel is typically described metaphorically as an exploration, an adventure, and a nomadic experience with something undiscovered before. The authors usually focus on the journey rather than a destination. The focus on the journey rather than a destination makes travel blogs different from tourism discourse. Unlike travel blogs, tourism discourse necessarily focuses on the destination as it has a commercial purpose of promoting the place, commonly through tautology and euphoric adjective-filled descriptions (Dann 1996, 200-201). The travel narratives use the present narrative tense, which contributes to perceiving travel with a sense of timelessness (Azariah 2017, 6). Another characteristic is that travel texts usually address an anonymous audience, and an implied or explicit "you" often refers to a potential consumer or tourist. These are the characteristics also identified in guidebooks and brochures, where implicit narrators are usually positioned as experts or guides and apply techniques such as "ego-targeting" to promote destinations and direct individuals to consume places in a particular way. The style of address in touristic discourse is often monologic (Dann 1996, 200-201), for the travel blog posts have the characteristics of travel narratives, and usage of addressing an anonymous audience more common.

2 COMPUTER-MEDIATED DISCOURSE

According to Herring (2001), computer-mediated discourse refers to the communication produced when people interact with each other by communicating through messages using networked computers. The study of computer-mediated discourse is focused on the traditional aspects of discourse analysis used in computer-mediated communication to analyse a language of computer networks and the variety of genres that originated in it.

Some linguistics, such as Vettorel (2014), who characterises computer-mediated discourse as "interactive written discourse" and "digital networked writing," have defined computer-mediated communication as written discourse because of its medium characteristics since it is displayed on a screen and is typed on a keyboard, but informal features of spoken discourse are also characteristic of it (Luesma 2015, 4).

To refer to electronic language, David Crystal (2001, 18) coined the term *Netspeak*, which acknowledges the interactive nature of this type of discourse. *Netspeak* is a combination of the word "net", which refers to the place in which computer-mediated communication occurs, and the suffix "speak", which involves both writing and speaking. The scholar regards *Netspeak* as a new variety of language, unlike Herring (2001), who argues that there is no singular term for all the categories of online language.

When analysing computer-mediated discourse, it is necessary to consider that it is a medium of transmission-communication in the form of the text that represents messages typed on a computer keyboard and read as text on a computer screen, typically, by a person or people at a different location from the message sender (Herring 2001, 1). Accordingly, e-grammar differs from the regular employment of speech due to its physical and electronic character. The e-grammar is the grammar in electronic language, which has some unique characteristics described below (Herring 2007).

There are some linguistic aspects, which online communication lacks compared to face-to-face interaction. It is crucial to understand how e-grammar is used to produce speech in writing without losing features of conversational speech. Linguistic features such as phonology are less relevant in computer-mediated communication in comparison to typography or orthography. In a conversation between two people in face-to-face interaction, one of them may express a feeling of surprise by elevating the pitch of their voice. These non-verbal aspects of speech are substituted in computer-mediated communication via multiple exclamation marks or the use of capital letters (Luesma 2015, 5).

Even though many aspects distinguish computer-mediated communication from speech and written discourses, the first feature that makes it different from the speech is the speed of exchanging information. Although computer-mediated discourse exchanges are predominant over written exchanges, they can not be compared to the exchanges during a conversation (Herring 2007, 13). Because there are two significant differences between computer-mediated communication and speech are the lack of simultaneous feedback because of the functioning of the technology and the slower rhythm of interaction between the participants, which can be affected by the unexpected problems that the functioning of technology might have. For example, when someone posts a blog, there is no certainty about how long it will take to get some reaction (Crystal 2011, 31). So this shows that computer-mediated communication can not be linked entirely to speech discourse due to some of its characteristics of written discourse.

3 LEXICAL AND SEMANTIC FEATURES OF COMPUTER-MEDIATED COMMUNICATION

Lexical features typical of computer-mediated discourse are expressed at the word level, and the stylistic variation can arise due to the addition, substitution, or deletion of words. These variations can give rise to texts that distinctively differentiate, for instance, sentiment, excitement, or formality. Words like *residence* and *occupied* are emotionally distant, unlike their subjective counterparts, *home* and *busy*, and the emotionally distant words are more objective (Brooke and Hirst 2013, 627). Subjective counterparts of objective words are often used in travel blogs since they have a more considerable emotional effect on the reader. However, a word itself, in fact, does not express a whole thought. Therefore, more complex semantic subjects are needful (Cruse 2000, 90). Due to that, the vocabulary is analysed within some context in this thesis.

Below we will look at the characteristic lexical and semantic features such as personal pronouns *I*, *you* and *we*. As a next thing, the theoretical part describes collocations and emotionally loaded vocabulary and the usage of simile in computer-mediated discourse.

3.1 Usage of I

The use of the personal pronoun *I* and its forms, the possessive *mine* and *my* and the accusative form *me*, are obvious constructive options. The usage of *I* in personal testimony is perhaps the most obvious advantage. If an argument deploys personal experience, first-person narration with the personal pronoun *I* is a necessary choice. Because of that, direct quotations are often incorporated in the text to allow the first person's voice to be heard. The pronoun *I* can also be used as the so-called "authoritative I" that might be used to foreground statements made from the position of authority. There is also the methodological first person, which usually features speech act verbs, for example, a verb *argues*. It means that the pronoun *I* is used to guide the reader through the text of the author (Fahnestock 2011, 280). When the text written by the author represents the personal online diary, the use of the singular first-person pronoun is widespread. First-person pronouns indicate a "generally involved style and an interpersonal focus" (Newman and Teddyman 2010, 282).

3.2 Usage of You

The second person pronoun *you* forms direct address which means that the author purposefully acknowledges the presence of the audience by calling on them or even making some demand. In a dialogue, such a direct address may be automatically convincing. On the other hand, in writing, the usage of *you* does not represent an immediate invitation as in the conversation; however, it is still one of the characteristics of a more oral and usually informal style (Fahnestock 2011, 281).

There are many uses of the second person pronoun. Online texts that try to persuade the audience, such as advertisements, tend to use much second-person pronoun *you*. The use of the personal pronoun *you* in blogs is also very frequent. It can address all the readers of the blog or a particular person or people. Another type of *you* is the so-called *generic you*, that addresses anyone. The *generic you* is usually used when someone discusses common practices or norms of behaviour, which means it is likely to appear, for example, in conditionals (Meyers 2010, 80).

The pronoun *you* appears in situations where the rhetor invites the audience member to imagine himself or herself in a particular situation by using you (Fahnestock 2011, 282).

3.3 Usage of We

The pronoun *we* has multiple meanings in English, and it is a powerful pronoun in persuasive texts. *We* can represent plural authors and take all the functions of the singular first-person pronoun (Fahnestock 2011, 285). *We* can be *inclusive* or *exclusive*. The *inclusive we* includes the author and the readers. On the other hand, the *exclusive* use of *we* does not have to include the reader. The *exclusive we* is used by the author to refer to some group of people to which the reader does not belong (Meyers 2010, 55). Regarding the choice of pronouns, the strongest lexicalisation of identification is represented by the inclusive pronoun *we* that connects the author with the reader within the first person plural, thanks to that the reader can become an agent of different actions and a carrier of different states (Fahnestock 2011, 285–286). In the analysed travel blog posts is the exclusive *we* usually used to mention a friend with whom the blogger travels.

3.4 Collocations

The collocations that are widely used might be called "prepared phrases". The collocations fall into and fall out of use and they can be identified by their occurrence across contexts or their frequency in texts. If a phrase sounds familiar to a language user without recalling a

particular context, it is probably a prepared phrase. Collocations or prepared phrases can have two types. The first type represents the standard adjective-noun pairs such as *pleasant experience*, *complex decision*, and *complicated relationships*. The second type represents general connectives which are also widely used collocations, and these are, for example: *in terms of* and *taking into account* (Fahnestock 2011, 92).

Some of the collocations (clichés, prepared phrases) fall under language formulas. Pragmatic definitions of formulae incorporate the importance of context, social contract and components of repetitive sequences. These pragmatics formulas are at least two morphemes long, fluently articulated and immediate, formulas used repetitively and always have the same form. They are dependent on the situation, and the community frequently uses them (Bardovi-Harlig 2012, 208-209).

3.5 Emotional Words

Emotions are forms of evaluations of a situation, and this sort of evaluations originate in a system of desires. Therefore, emotions are judgments of a situation based on the agent's values and leading to a decision (Solomon 2003, 7-8). Emotions can be divided into two types; the first type represents explicit emotions which involve references to emotions through verbal emotion labels, e.g. I am fed up. In computer-mediated communication, emotions are expressed in a different way than in the face to face communication. They are expressed through emoticons, lexical surrogates such as “hmm” and through nonstandard or multiple punctuations, e.g. "!!!" or "...". (Vandergriff 2013, 1). Six categories of the primary emotion types are known. These types are love, joy, surprise, fear, sadness and anger. Moreover, emotional words are the direct method of communicating emotions in written language (Ballatore and Adams 2015). From an argumentative perspective, emotional discourse uses language arousing certain emotions to lead the interlocutor to a particular conclusion (Macango and Walton 2010, 11).

Emotive language can include the use of metaphors and euphemisms to cover something. Other techniques are loaded words and emotive vocabulary (Macango and Walton, 2010, 13).

Euphemisms, for example, are used to soften a harsh reality: for example, the words *passed away* substitute a much less emotionally acceptable *dead*. Additionally, euphemisms can be used to hide some aspects of reality, leading the interlocutor to draw a conclusion based on only a partial representation of the situation. This hiding frequently happens

through the use of loaded words, namely words presupposing facts not shared or accepted by the speakers to support a value judgment. Another strategy is modifying the interlocutor's evaluation of the situation not by modifying or hiding the facts but acting on how a person may judge a state of affairs (Macango and Walton, 2010, 12-13).

Across cultures, individuals describe experiences, narrate stories, express opinions about places. Emotions and their expression play a significant role in these representations of places, making some places appear beautiful and joyful, and others sad, scary, or disgusting (Ballatore and Adams 2015, 1). An enormous corpus of opinions about places keeps expanding online across social media, blogs and newspapers. How places are described in the analysed texts of travel blogs is described in section 6.1. 1..

3.6 Simile

The simile is a linguistic device expressing arguments based on resemblances and comparisons. Simile has indirect argumentative effects, which can be used, for example, as the proof of our argument. At the same time, the simile is not a trope because substitution is not involved. However, similes are grouped with other devices expressing arguments based on analogies. Some similes are designed for insertion among our arguments to help our proof, whereas others are devised to make our pictures even more vivid. Similes are extensively used in contemporary argumentative prose, and they are traditionally linked to metaphors. However, the difference between this metaphor and simile is that metaphor expresses an implicit comparison, simile expresses an explicit one (Fahnestock 2011, 109). The author must be especially careful that the subject chosen for the simile is not unfamiliar or unclear because, for anything that is selected for the clarification purpose, something else must itself be more perspicuous than that which it is designed to clarify. However, he acknowledged that the more remote the simile is from the subject to which it is applied, the more prominent the perception of news and the unexpected (Fahnestock 2011, 109).

It means that we should select a generally known subject for the simile that can seem to be unrelated to the term that is being clarified. The use of similes in travel blogs can be seen in section 6. 4..

4 SYNTACTIC AND PRAGMATIC FEATURES OF COMPUTER-MEDIATED COMMUNICATION

At the syntactic level, e-grammar reflects the spontaneity and the speed of the interaction, which leads to a decrease in the number of words that form a sentence. Computer-mediated communication syntax is known to be fragmented and telegraphic and also closer to an informal style than to a formal style. Firstly, that means that syntax tends to be more colloquial and closer to conversation because it involves a more personal tone through figures of speech or slang. Secondly, the sentences are more straightforward, avoiding complete grammatical clauses and usually using ellipses, abbreviations, and contractions. Participants reflect what they say and think about in a written form (Luesma 2015, 10-11). According to Crystal (2001, 40), the syntax of a Netspeak is closer to writing than to speech because it lacks the same features of spoken language, which indicates most notably the use of reaction signals such as *mhm*, *uh*, and comment clauses such as *you know*, or *you see*. There are syntactic features typical for both spoken and written discourse in blogs because the format always depends on a particular blogger's preferences. This kind of informal writing is generally thought to be more used in computer-mediated communication genres where the exchange of information is fast, e.g., in social networks or chats. However, this phenomenon is starting to spread to blogs, too (Luesma 2015, 10).

Nevertheless, blogs are usually characterised by an informal and casual style which involves the availability and presence of syntactic and pragmatic structures that users can associate with spoken discourse (Puschmann 2009, 2).

4.1 Direct Speech

When direct speech or direct quotation is used, another person's exact words are moved from their context of utterance into a new context. The incorporated text is commonly attributed to a named source and marked off as someone else's text by quotation marks (Fahnestock 2011, 307). The motivation for using direct speech might be plausibility and increased variety in a text, and it is also a primary means of characterisation. The choice of lexis and grammatical options may be indicators of social situation, education, interests, background, and many others. Using direct discourse rather than some form of indirect discourse conveys a greater sense of immediacy and possibly stresses the importance, and therefore it adds to the emotional impact of the utterance (Black 2006, 66).

4.2 Clause Types

“Clause types are universal, associated with a specific force, and form a closed system” (Portner 2004, 235). Declarative, interrogatives and imperatives are frequently referred to as the three major clause types. There is no given maximal length or complexity of clauses, and they might also be conjoined by coordination and subordination. Conjoined clauses are also called complex clauses, and they consist of two independent clauses. Subordinate clauses are functionally or formally dependent on the main clause (Siemund 2018, 18).

Every language has a way to make a statement, tell someone else what to do, or ask a question. The form of a statement is a clause type called declarative, the form of the question is called interrogatives and the imperative clause orders to an addressee some act (Aikhenvald 2010, 1).

Apart from the major clause types of declaratives, interrogatives and imperatives, there are, according to Siemund (2018, 21), various minor types such as "exclamatives." The majority of grammarians understands exclamatives or exclamations as either one of the significant clause types together with declaratives, imperatives, and interrogatives or as a minor clause type (Beijer 2002, 3). The classification of exclamatives is mentioned below.

The posts of analysed blogs contain all of these clause types. However, because computer-mediated communication lacks intonation and has to imitate the speech, it has to indicate these features by punctuation. It is apparent from the analysis that authors use a lot of exclamative and imperative clauses to imitate the speech.

4.3 Exclamative Clauses

Exclamative clauses quite frequently represent the function of emotive and embodied commentary within the text. Many languages have dedicated grammatical forms to express the element of surprise. English, for instance, has particles that may be used to indicate exclamatory force and an exclamative sentence type (Unger 2016, 2).

However, the problem is to distinguish between expressive and emotional utterances and exclamatives in general. Expressive and emotional utterances point out to all utterances that have an emotionally involved speaker in the utterance. The involvement in the utterance is expressed from the linguistic point of view by intonation or by performative expressions (Beijer 2002, 2). The term exclamative is frequently used to refer to a specific clause or the clause type together with the three clause types, declarative, imperatives, and interrogatives. Additionally, the term “exclamative” refers to a grammatical category, to a specific clause

type. And the term “exclamation” refers to the semantic or logical status of an utterance (Beijer 2002, 2).

Another point of view on exclamative clauses is defined by Radford (1997, 506). He determines an exclamative as a kind of structure used to exclaim, for example, surprise or annoyance. He also says that the term is primarily limited to clauses in English syntax, which begin with words like *what* or *how*. The use of the word structure denotes that he considers exclamative as a syntactic phenomenon, whereas others consider exclamatives a pragmatic phenomenon (Beijer 2002, 2-3).

Exclamatives or exclamations are described by the majority of grammarians as either one of the significant clause types together with declaratives, imperatives, and interrogatives or as a minor clause type. Exclamatives are distinguished from these clause types because these utterances lack inversion, begin with *what* or *how* and function in the different way than ordinary declaratives or interrogatives. Nevertheless, the exclamative does not have to be a clause type, exclamative might be a pragmatic phenomenon instead, and this statement is supported by the fact that grammarians who perceive exclamative to be a sentence type have to introduce minor sentence types which have similar exclamatory functions as the sentences they call exclamative (Beijer 2002, 3).

Exclamatives can be distinguished from the other clause types by several formal properties. They have an initial exclamative phrase with exclamative *what* or *how* (1).

- (1) a) *"What a fool I've been", she shouted.*
b) *Oh, how stupid he is!*

Another property is that the exclamative clause can be reduced to just this phrase, as in (2):

- (2) *What a lovely day.*

Subject-auxiliary inversion showed in (3), and subject postponement showed in (4) are possible but very rare:

- (3) *How true do these words sound!*
(4) *How gross and stupid would seem to them this romance!*

Exclamative clauses can also be subordinated, unlike imperatives (5) (Collins 2005, 2-3).

(5) *Once in a while, she said what a shame it was.*

4.4 Imperative Clauses

Imperatives belong to individual clause types together with declaratives and interrogatives (Portner 2004, 235). The idea of imperatives is that they contain a force marker and denote propositions. The force marker indicates that the proposition is used to place a request on the addressee (Portner 2004, 240).

According to Hun (2001, 290), imperatives represent the illocutionary directive force associated with requests and commands. The type of role or action the speaker intends to perform in the process of making an utterance is referred to as illocution. It is an action that is defined by a set of social norms. It is, in a nutshell, an act of speaking (Huang 2015, 128).

The idea of the imperative is a command. However, imperative and command not always refer to the same thing. One can command even without using an imperative, and imperatives themselves do not have to command. Imperatives are used as requests and entreaties, instructions and advice, and they can also express invitations or principles and life mottos (Aikhenvald 2010, 3).

The imperative is a sentence type whose prototypical function is the performance of directive speech acts. An imperative that is directed at a singular addressee is the most prototypical type, and it often coincides with the bare stem of the verb. Another type of imperatives is an imperative addressed to the first or third person that tends to be more formally marked and quite often expressed analytically, while one-word synthetic expression is used for the straightforward command to the addressee (Aikhenvald 2010, 75).

Imperatives create an independent clause type because:

1. They cannot be declaratives, because they do not indicate a proposition but property, and due to that, they are not appropriate for being part of declaratives.
2. They can not be interrogatives, because they indicate a property more likely than a set of propositions, and due to that, they are not appropriate for addition to the questions.
3. They can not be exclamatives, because they do not indicate a set of propositions, and they are not factual. Due to that imperatives can not contribute to widening.
4. Due to their denotation of a property, they are suitable for being added to some individual's requirements (Portner and Zanuttini 2003, 4).

The varieties of meaning displayed by imperatives, for instance, suggestions (6), invitations (7), and of course orders (8) (Portner 2007, 355), are shown in the examples from analysed travel blogs below:

(6) *Book your tickets in advance!*

(7) *Have a piece of cake!*

(8) *Go for it now!*

4.5 Rhetorical Questions

The implicit answer within the question is the characteristic of rhetorical question. The use of rhetorical questions in the area of persuasion dates back to at least the 1800s. At that time, they were regarded as a tactic of successful debating. Since then, their effectiveness has been examined in various areas of persuasion, from closing arguments of a defence attorney to editorials and advertising. The prevailing explanation for rhetorical questions' persuasive effects is the message elaboration, which proposes that rhetorical questions focus the recipient's attention on message arguments and, therefore, enhance persuasion when the argument's quality level is high (Ahluwalia and Burnkrant 2004, 26).

The rhetorical question has the form of a question; however, they serve the function of a statement, and they are an essential tool employed by users to express their viewpoints. It is challenging to identify rhetorical questions as they are not syntactically different from other questions (Ranganath et al. 2017, 1).

According to Ranganath et al. (2017, 2), rhetorical questions can also be stated as an indirect speech, and this means that the user posting the rhetorical questions implies the message from its context and does not convey the message explicitly. The user can harness rhetorical question to imply a message to mitigate or strengthen a statement he previously made.

From the point of view of social media, rhetorical questions are a popular form of expressing the views of the authors, and the identification of rhetorical questions has many practical applications. For example, the rhetorical question can be disguised as a question to express an idea or opinion distinctly and, thanks to that, influence people. The identification of this persuasive behaviour can warn users of the tactics, and it enables people to form their personal opinions without external influence. But the detection of rhetorical questions can also offer insight into the persuasive behaviour, which can help, for example, with more

successful social media campaigns (Ranganath et al. 2017, 3). The frequency of rhetorical questions in analysed travel blogs is shown in section 6. 7..

II. ANALYSIS

5 MATERIALS AND METHODS

To give an answer to the research question posed, a corpus of travel blogs was compiled to highlight the most critical and specific lexical and syntactic features of travel blogs. The corpus for this thesis is composed of 88 travel blog posts. All of these 88 posts were written by American native speakers, so native speakers of English are represented in the analysis. Eight different travel bloggers have written the selected posts for the following blogs: *A Dangerous Business*, *Adventurous Kate*, *Be My Travel Muse*, *Camels and Chocolate*, *Hippie in Heels*, *Jessie on a Journey*, *Lee Abbamonte* and *The Blonde Abroad*. Links to all of these travel blogs are mentioned in Appendix. From each of these travel blogs, 11 posts were selected for the analysis of lexico-syntactic features. For the more precise analysis, the 11 particular destinations were chosen from each travel blog. These destinations are Thailand, China, Iceland, Canada, Great Britain, Australia, Italy, Greece, South Africa, Vietnam, and the USA. The corpus texts of travel blogs consist of 2,097 sentences. The texts range from 235 words to 1899 words, and the total length of the corpus is 42,524 words. Additionally, the blog posts had 889 visual elements embedded in the texts along with captions.

These travel bloggers are shown in a post called *21 U.S. Travel Bloggers Worth Following* from the year 2018 on the *Far & Wide* website, a website that shares tips and inspiration for travellers. The most famous of the chosen blogs is *The Blonde Abroad* and *Adventurous Kate*, which can be found on the two first pages on Google when we search for U.S. Travel bloggers.

All travel bloggers use features closer to spoken discourse than the written discourse, which is represented by a more colloquial tone through a narrative style discussed below.

The data for this thesis were collected from online travel blog posts according to the nationality of the authors and described destinations. After the collection of travel blog posts, the analysis of lexical features was implemented by the *AntConc* corpus analysis toolkit, and most of the data from the lexical analysis were discovered by this program. The subchapters of the lexical and semantic features of computer-mediated communication were chosen according to the results from the analysis and according to their relation to computer-mediated communication. The statistical method was chosen for the analysis. From the lexical and semantic perspective, I analysed features such as personal pronouns, collocations or emotionally loaded vocabulary (see chapter 6). The analysis of syntactical features was acquired manually by reading travel blog's texts. I evaluated which data were appropriate for this kind of analysis and which of them are connected to computer-mediated analysis. From

the perspective of syntax and pragmatics, I analysed clause types and direct speech and rhetorical questions (see chapter 7).

6 LEXICAL FEATURES

AntConc was used to analyse the respective blogs. The analysis showed that the corpus contains 42,524 words. Of the top ten most frequent words, all are common function words. Personal pronouns play a significant role. Therefore, below, I will focus on the analysis of personal pronouns *I*, *you* and *we*. The following subchapter is focused on the vocabulary of travel blogs and the emotional vocabulary of travel blogs. After that, I will analyse the use of collocations, and the last part of lexical features analysis deals with the use of similes in travel blog writing.

6.1 Personal Pronouns

According to AntConc analysis, the personal pronoun *I* occurs 806 times, the personal pronoun *you* occurs 607 times and the personal pronoun *we* occurs 303 times. These personal pronouns were contained in the top ten function words.

6.1.1 Usage of I

The analysed travel blogs express the personal experience and the first-person narration. Therefore the use of the first person singular is essential and frequent (9).

(9) When I arrived here I was just a stranger, but leaving here I feel just like family.

In this example, the blogger describes some of his or her experience and talks about himself or herself. Due to that, the personal pronoun *I* is used.

6.1.2 Usage of You

The second person pronoun *you* in analysed blogs is mainly used to address the readers of the blogs (10), and there also occurs the *generic you*, usually in conditionals (11).

(10) To give you an idea of how bumpy that ride was, my Fitbit was counting steps as I was securely fastened into my seat.

By the use of *you* in this context, the author addresses all readers of the travel blog. The author wants to explain how bumpy that ride was to all his or her readers and not just to one of them.

(11) *If you like culture, you can visit the many Chinese Assembly Halls.*

The generic you in this example is used in the conditional, which states the common practice.

6.1.3 Usage of We

The most frequently used personal pronoun we within the analysed travel blog posts is the exclusive we, which refers to the blogger and his or her companions who accompany him or her on described travels (12).

(12) *We all laughed and felt retarded and for whatever reason just continued saying that quote the next few days.*

This example shows that the author indeed refers to the group of people to which he or she belongs.

6.2 Vocabulary of Travel Blogs

The top ten lexical words in the analysed texts appear to be very topic-specific (see Table 1).

Table 1. Top 10 Lexical Words

Top 10 lexical words	Total number of occurrences
Time	116
Day	108
See	100
Go	89
Best	87
People	84
Town	80
Back	74
Vietnam	74
City	73

These lexical words have clear semantic connections to the topic of travelling, and the word *Vietnam* determines the destination of Vietnam. It appeared in the top 10 lexical words list because it is a destination described by all authors of analysed travel blog posts. They frequently include the name of the destination in their narration about Vietnam.

The word *time*, which is used most often, refers mainly to the amount of time spent in a destination, the amount of time spent on the way, in a car, in a train, or to indicate that it is the right time to do something. Obviously, all of these mentioned examples are important to mention in travel blogs because travel bloggers write about their experience with travelling, and that definitely includes reference to time spent in a destination (13).

(13) *I've spent a lot of time in Asia.*

It is notable that the verbs *see* and *go* occur very frequently because these words are obviously connected with travelling. The bloggers often use the verb *see* in connection with a particular place to show what can be seen there (14).

(14) *There are a lot of little lizards and critters to see along the way.*

The term *go* indicates the movement from one place to another (15).

(15) *You just can't go to the Gold Coast without surfing!*

The word *best* usually describes someplace or experience positively. The most frequent use in analysed blogs of this word is connected with the word *place* away (16).

(16) *Downtown is the best place to stay because you'll find a lot of places to eat and play within walking distance.*

We found that renting a car for two days and driving to see as many sites as possible was the best way to experience Iceland.

Another word from the top 10 lexical words is the word *back*. It is clear that it often relates to returning home from some destination or returning to the destination again (17).

(17) *I haven't so much as flipped through my photos since I got back from there in 2007.*

I'll probably never go back to the Vatican again.

Lastly, I will explain the use of the word *people*. The word *people* is associated with travelling in the sense that bloggers do not just visit places but also meet new people. How bloggers in analysed blogs use this word can be seen in the following example (18).

(18) The gorgeous beaches that are distinctly Thai and the wonderful people makes a trip worth doing.

Overall, all of these top ten lexical words are related to the topic-driven nature of travel blogs.

6.2.1 Emotional Vocabulary in Travel Blogs

The analysis mainly focuses on how the individuals describe travel experiences, narrate stories about their trips, and/or express opinions about places, e.g. to make them appear beautiful and joyful.

As the result of the analysis of emotional vocabulary, I divided the emotionally charged vocabulary of the travel blogs into two sections: positively and negatively connotated vocabulary.

In Table 2, you can see the words that express positive emotions and their occurrences in the analysed texts.

Table 2. Vocabulary: Positive Emotions

Top 10 positive emotional words	Total number of occurrences
Best	86
Experience	47
Love	45
Fun	38
Amazing	36
Beautiful	32
Friends	27
Good	26
Perfect	26
Cool	25

From the analysed travel blog posts, positive vocabulary is used to create a positive atmosphere in the narration and describe the joyful travelling experience. For example, the word *love* is often used to point to what the author loves (19).

(19) *I love Vietnam.*

I love this freedom.

On the other hand, the word *best* is mostly used to describe an experience or place (20). This word is by far the most used.

(20) *But the best part was when the sky turned pink.*

In my opinion, this is one of the best places to go in Victoria, BC.

The word *experience* is used as a noun as well as a verb. When this word is used as a noun, it determines the particular adventure or event (21). As a verb, the word *experience* refers to something that happened to the blogger or a particular thing and activity that the blogger can do or see (22).

(21) *The experience offers an incredible combination of views!*

(22) *If you want to experience a quieter Iceland, I highly recommend visiting during the winter.*

The word *friends* refers to people with whom the blogger has a close relationship and travels with them (23).

(23) *My friends and I set out on a journey that took us through seven African countries, many wild animal encounters and tons of wonderful people.*

Other words such as *fun*, *amazing*, *beautiful*, *good*, *perfect* and *cool* are adjectives that describe the particular actions, experiences or destinations. I choose the word *beautiful* for the example (24).

(24) *I'd recommend driving up the beautiful California coast to Orange County and Los Angeles.*

Negative emotional words are also found in the analysed travel blogs. However, their total number of occurrences is much lower than that of positive emotional words. I have found only a minimum of negatively connoted words. For instance, the word *fear* occurs only in 7 times, words *panic*, and *problem* occurs only in 5 cases. These words are usually used for the description of some tricky situations during their trips (25).

(25) *The only problem was the awful showering situation they have.*

In this example are two negative emotional words: *problem* and *awful*. Both of them specify an unpleasant experience.

According to AntConc results, predominantly positive emotional words for describing the destinations or experiences play a crucial role because bloggers use them to promote places and experiences and create the destination's image. This description can influence readers to want to visit these destinations, and therefore it can ensure more traffic to a destination.

6.3 Collocations

Prepared phrases can be identified by their appearance across contexts or their frequency in texts. An example can be the phrase *amazing experience* which was used in three selected blog posts. In this analysis, several common collocations appear across different posts (See Table 3). We can see from Table 3 that the most frequent prepared phrase is connected with a plural of the noun *place*. This phrase is *best places*.

Table 3. Collocations

Selected word	Collocations	Total number of occurrences
Place	best places	7
Destination	perfect destination	4
	travel/tourist destination	4
Experience	amazing experience	3
	surfing experience	2
	once-in-a-lifetime experience	1
Expectations	exceeded my expectations	2
	blew my expectations	1
Gallery	photo gallery	2
Opportunity	perfect opportunity	2

As shown in Table 3, the predominant use of collocation within the analysed travel blogs is to describe *places*, *destinations*, or *experiences* more accurately.

6.4 Simile

In everyday speech, similes can be used to convey the meaning effectively and quickly. According to the results, the usage of the simile in the analysed blogs is quite frequent (see Table 4).

Table 4. Simile

Simile	Total number of occurrences
Similes – like	76
Similes – as	59

When the bloggers in analysed travel blogs use simile, they prefer explicit ones that introduce the element for comparing with the help of *like* or *as*.

Similes that use the word *like* for the comparison occurs in analysed travel blogs 76 times. The bloggers usually use them to describe some kind of behaviour (26) or the particular destination (27).

(26) *Lek treats these elephants like her children.*

Instead of a complicated explanation of Lek's relationship to elephants, the author uses comparison with children, and due to that, everyone can easily understand their relationship.

(27) *Driving around Hekla is like driving on another planet.*

In my opinion, the authors use similes to describe a destination because it is hard to imagine a place where one has never been. Therefore simile is used to bring the destination nearer to the reader.

Similes that use the word *as* for the comparison occurs in analysed travel blogs 59 times. They are used for easier understanding of some characteristics (28).

(28) *The water in the lagoon was as blue as the sky.*

SYNTACTIC FEATURES

Syntactically, sentences in the selected travel blogs contain both long, complex sentences and also simple sentences. Paragraphs are divided into multiple parts, which provides a faster rhythm closer to speech. For instance, some paragraphs consist of just one word, e.g., “*Obsession*” or interjections as “*Oh!*”

6.5 Direct Speech

Direct speech is used by the bloggers to convey a greater sense of immediacy and stresses the importance, and therefore it adds to the emotional impact of the utterance (Black 2006, 66).

The total number of direct speech occurrences in the analysed travel blog posts is 76, whereas the most frequent use is in a travel blog called *Jessie on a Journey*. Such a trend indicates that the author of this travel blog is trying to achieve a higher immediacy with the reader and a more significant emotive impact on him/her (29).

(29) “*Mom, I can’t take it anymore! I need to get out of here!*”

In this example, the author telephones her mother and tells her the unpleasant situation that is happening to her. Direct speech is used to describe the author’s feelings at that moment as detailed as possible. Furthermore, thanks to this, the reader understands the whole situation better.

Table 5. Direct speech

Blog name	Total number of occurrences
Jessie on a Journey	18
Be My Travel Muse	11
Adventurous Kate	10
A Dangerous Business	9
Camels and Chocolate	8
Lee Abbamonte	8
The Blonde Abroad	7
Hippie in Heels	5
Total	76

6.6 Clause Types

Analysed texts contain all kinds of clause types that mean declarative sentences, which is the majority of all sentences, interrogative clauses occur only minimally in these texts, imperatives and exclamatives occurs relatively frequently. They are specific for computer-mediated communication, and therefore, the analysis of clause types is focused on these two sentence types. You can see the number of imperatives and exclamatives concerning the total number of sentences in Figure 1.

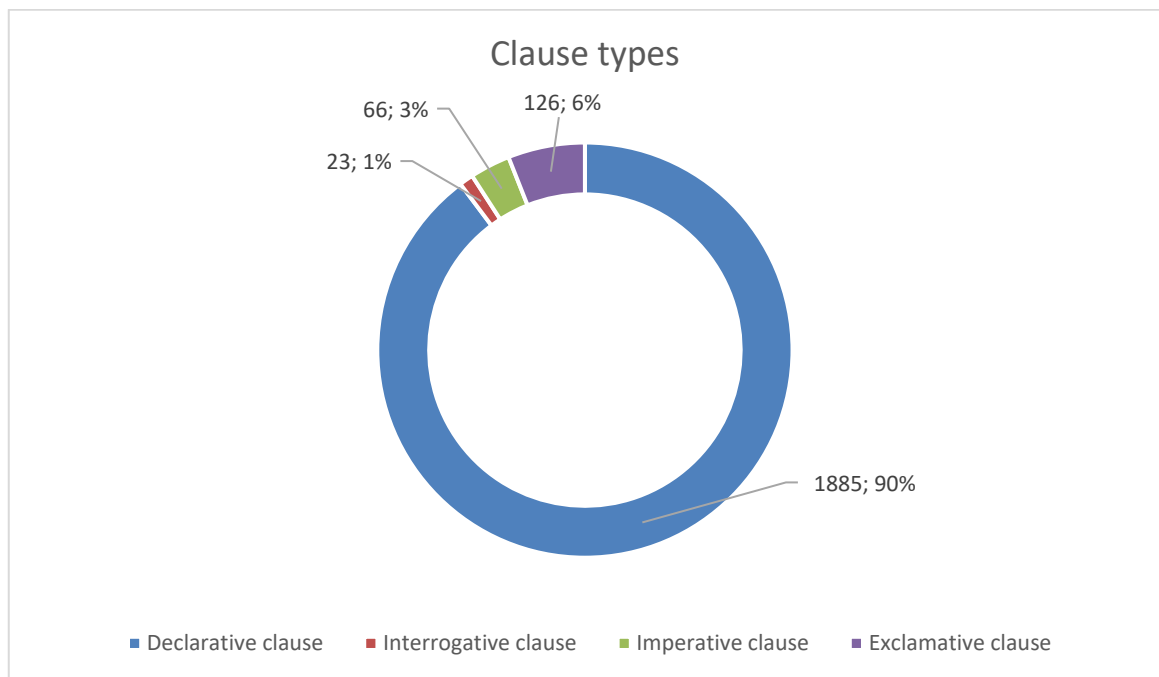


Figure 1. Clause types

6.6.1 Exclamative Clauses

Analysed posts show a high frequency of exclamative clauses. From the analysis of 88 travel blog posts, the 106 exclamative clauses were identified. The highest number of occurrences has Lee Abbamonte's travel blog with 29 exclamative clauses in its selected posts. The second-highest number of occurrences has travel blog Hippiie in Heels with 22 exclamative clauses in its selected posts.

Table 6. Exclamative clauses

Blog name	Total number of occurrences
Lee Abbamonte	29
Hippie in Heels	22
Camels and Chocolate	16
Adventurous Kate	13
Be My Travel Muse	13
Jessie on a Journey	12
The Blonde Abroad	12
A Dangerous Business	9
Total	126

Exclamative sentences express surprise, delight or even annoyance and an exclamation mark typically marks them. In travel blog texts which were selected for this analysis is the typical use of exclamative to express surprise or excitement, and it adds more emphasis to the sentence. The exclamative function of expressing surprise and excitement shows the following example (30).

(30) *But something else caught our attention on the horizon...whales!*

The author tries to add an emphasis and express his or her excitement and surprise of whales. It also catches the reader's attention much more than if the sentence was following: But something else caught our attention on the horizon, whales.

A Dangerous business has the lowest occurrence of exclamative sentences because her travel blog is especially descriptive and does not express emotions as much as the other bloggers.

6.6.2 Imperative Clauses

Imperatives are used as requests and entreaties, instructions and advice, and they can also express invitations or principles and life mottos (Aikhenvald 2010, 3). Sixty-six imperative clauses were identified in the analysed blogs. They are used less than exclamative clauses, but it is important to mention them because they are typically used in computer-mediated communication as well as exclamatives.

Table 7. Imperative clauses

Blog name	Total number of occurrences
Hippie in Heels	13
Lee Abbamonte	11
Camels and Chocolate	10
The Blonde Abroad	8
A Dangerous Business	7
Adventurous Kate	6
Be My Travel Muse	6
Jessie on a Journey	5
Total	66

Regarding the analysis, imperative clauses appear typically at the end of the blog post to emphasise the action they propose (31), or they have a function of recommendation (32).

(31) So grab your hiking shoes, a bottle of water, and maybe a raincoat too, and let's go!

(32) Think twice about visiting Penguin Island!

It is more effective to recommend something by using imperative because it emphasises the statement more, and due to that, it has a more significant effect on the reader.

6.7 Rhetorical Questions

Table 11 shows that the total number of rhetoric questions within the analysed travel blogs is 54. The highest number of occurrences is shared by the two blogs, Adventurous Kate and Hippie in Heels.

Table 8. Rhetorical questions

Blog name	Total number of occurrences
Adventurous Kate	11
Hippie in Heels	11
Be My Travel Muse	8
Camels and Chocolate	7
A Dangerous Business	5
The Blonde Abroad	5
Jessie on a Journey	4
Lee Abbamonte	3
Total	54

Rhetorical questions are often used instead of direct expression of the author's opinion and may also influence the reader's opinion. Another reason for using rhetorical questions is that the author does not expect an answer to the question, but the reader has to think about the topic since the author asks it.

Examples of the use of rhetorical questions from the analysed blogs can be seen in the examples (33) and (34).

(33) Why Travel Solo to Australia?

(34) I mean, who doesn't love a good waterfall, right?

The example (27) shows a rhetorical question that makes the reader think about the topic, but the question does not expect any answer. And in the example (28), the rhetorical question expresses the blogger's opinion.

CONCLUSION

This thesis aimed to analyse and characterise lexico-syntactic features of texts of travel blogs written by native American speakers. Lexical features that were analysed as important for travel blog texts include using personal pronouns, emotional vocabulary, collocations, and simile. Syntactic features which were chosen for analysis are imperative and exclamative clauses, direct speech and rhetorical questions. Attention was paid to these particular features because they had a significantly high occurrence in the analysis and also because they are typical for computer-mediated communication.

Eighty-eight texts of travel blogs written by American native speakers were analysed to see how the research question can be addressed.

The AntConc analysis revealed that between the top 10 functional words belong personal pronouns I, you and we. The personal pronoun I is predominantly used because bloggers write blogs in the first-person narrative. The analysed travel blogs revealed that the second person pronoun you is mainly used by bloggers to address their readers. And lastly, the plural first-person pronoun we refers to the blogger and his or her companions most often. The top 10 lexical words of selected travel blogs are very topic-specific and include words such as *time*, *see*, *go*, or *town*. The analysis shows that when it comes to emotionally loaded words, most of them express positive emotions. It includes words such as *best*, *love*, *amazing* or *fun*. Negative words appear exceptionally in travel blogs, and this is probably caused by the fact that travel blogs describe experiences and adventures that should promote the visited places; therefore, travel blogs are mostly written using positive vocabulary. The next part of the lexical analysis were collocations. Their frequency in analysed travel blogs was not as high as I expected, but surprisingly the bloggers try to be more original and authentic, and they try to avoid clichés in their texts. The last part contains the analysis of the usage of simile in travel blogs. According to the analysis, similes are used quite frequently. Similes are used to help to the more detailed and precise description of particular places, behaviours and characteristics in more detail, so the reader has a much clearer vision of them.

The syntactic part of analysis results revealed that with declarative clauses, which are the most typical clause type of all writing styles, the exclamative and imperatives appears reasonably often within the travel blog discourse. Exclamatives created 6%, and imperatives created 3% of the total number of sentences in the analysed corpus. The exclamative

sentences are typically used to emphasise the sentence and express some excitement and surprise, and these indicators were the reason in all exclamative clauses from the analysis. The reasons for using the imperative clauses in analysed travel blogs were the emphasis on actions that sentences proposed, and moreover, imperatives are used as a recommendation which is more effective than when a declarative clause represents it. Another frequently used syntactic feature was direct speech. Due to direct speech, bloggers achieve greater intimacy with the reader than without using that. Furthermore, it can help the reader to understand the emotions of the blogger properly. Finally, bloggers often employ rhetorical questions in their blog posts. There were two different reasons for using them in analysed travel blog posts. The first reason was to express a blogger's opinion indirectly, and it can influence the reader's opinion since he/she does not recognise it immediately. Moreover, the second reason was to make the reader think about the situation or destination.

Even though travel blogs are written discourse, they use lexical and syntactical features to imitate the spoken discourse.

To summarise this bachelor thesis, travel bloggers employ lexico-syntactic features to help them imitate the spoken discourse; these features also help make the text more attractive and engaging.

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LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1. Clause types.....41

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1. Top 10 Lexical Words	33
Table 2. Vocabulary: Positive Emotions	36
Table 3. Collocations	38
Table 4. Simile	38
Table 5. Direct speech	40
Table 6. Exclamative clauses	42
Table 7. Imperative clauses	43
Table 8. Rhetorical questions.....	44

APPENDIX

List of Blogs Analysed

A Dangerous Business. “Blog.” Accessed May 2, 2021. <https://www.dangerous-business.com/blog/>.

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