

STYLISTIC FEATURES IN ONLINE FOOD DISCOURSE: AN ANALYSIS OF SENSORY ADJECTIVES AND PERSUASIVE LANGUAGE IN WRITTEN FOOD BLOGS

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Abstract

This study examines the stylistic features that characterize this online food discourse, with particular attention to some of the ways in which sensory adjectives and persuasive language are used. Utilizing the Appraisal Framework (Martin & White, 2005) as its theoretical lens, this research performs a qualitative analysis and a quantitative analysis of a corpus of 15 food blog entries. The analysis aims to provide an answer to the following important questions: What types of sensory adjectives are most frequently used? How do bloggers use persuasive language to get people to read? And what are the stylistic differences between different authors? The results show a strong focus on adjectives related to taste and texture, with words such as "spicy," "creamy," "crunchy," and "crispy" dominating the sensory vocabulary. Persuasive strategies are mostly achieved through personal anecdotes, direct address, and hyperbole (as a means of building intimacy, authenticity). Furthermore, it is possible to see significant variation in the corpus in terms of style, ranging from highly descriptive, culturally-rich narrative to more direct, instruction-focused texts. This paper concludes that food bloggers are adept at manipulating the resources of the Appraisal system especially Attitude (Appreciation) and Engagement in order to create vivid, multi-sensory experiences and build a strong parasocial relationship with their audience, ultimately leading to participation in culinary activities. This research makes several contributions to the fields of discourse analysis, digital communication and food studies, including a systematic account of the rhetorical power of food blogging in linguistic terms.

Keywords: Appraisal Framework, Food Discourse, Food Blogs, Sensory Language, Persuasive Language, Discourse Analysis, Stylistics, Online Food Writing.

Introduction

In the present day digital environment, food blogs have transformed from basic repositories of recipes online to a powerful and pervasive genre of communication. They are a complex intersection of culinary practice, personal narrative, cultural expression, and consumer persuasion. A good food blog post does not merely list ingredients and instructions, but carries the reader along, evokes sensory experiences, and makes a convincing case for why a particular dish should be prepared and eaten. This persuasive power is done not through overt advertising but through a sophisticated use of language. Bloggers are essentially digital storytellers employing certain stylistic and linguistic tools to create vivid food stories that engage their readers both rationally and emotionally. While the cultural and social impact of food blogs has

attracted academic interest, a detailed linguistic analysis of the mechanisms of their persuasion, especially through the up-and-down examination of stylistic features, is an area ready for further investigation.

Existing research in food studies and discourse analysis has touched upon the narrative and descriptive qualities of food writing (e.g. Adema, 2000; Jurafsky, 2014). However, a lot of the studies have been in broader semiotic analysis or sociological implications of food communities online. There is a significant gap in the research in which a robust, systematic linguistic framework is used to break down the specific lexical and grammatical choices used to make food blog discourse so effective. This study is meant to fill this gap by looking beyond general observations to offer a granular analysis of the language of persuasion and sensory appeal in this digital genre.

To produce such a result, the present paper uses the Appraisal Framework (Martin & White, 2005), one of the central developments in the field of Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL). The Appraisal Framework is ideally suited for this research because it offers a comprehensive toolkit for analysing the ways that language is used to express attitudes, emotions and judgements (Attitude), the ways that writers/speakers align or disalign with their audience and other perspectives (Engagement) and the ways that they intensify or soften their evaluations (Graduation). By using this framework we can categorize sensory adjectives systematically under the subsystem of Appreciation (evaluations of things, processes and phenomena), and analyze persuasive techniques as resources of Engagement. This approach provides an opportunity to rigorously and replicatively analyze how bloggers generate a positive evaluation of their food and establish a relationship with their readers.

Research questions

1. What types of sensory adjectives are most frequently used by food bloggers to describe food experiences?
2. How do food bloggers use persuasive language to engage their readers or encourage them to try recipes?
3. Is there a noticeable difference in the stylistic strategies employed by different food bloggers?

Research Objectives

1. Identify and categorize the sensory adjectives used in selected written food blogs.
2. Analyze how persuasive language is employed to influence readers' perceptions and actions.
3. Compare stylistic patterns across different food bloggers to understand variations in writing style.

Statement of problem

In the current digital world, food blogs have become a popular platform for writers to share their culinary experiences, recipes, and food reviews. However, much of the focus on these blogs is on recipes or how visually attractive they are, leaving the language itself. How writers characterize taste, texture, and aroma that have been less explored. Sensory adjectives and persuasive language play a crucial role in shaping the reader's perceptions so that they taste the foods or urge them to try new dishes. However, very few studies have systematically examined these stylistic features in food blogs written in writing. Understanding the ways food bloggers

use language in their posts to engage, persuade, and appeal to the senses can lead to a better understanding of digital food discourse and its role in shaping readers.

Significance of the Study

This study is significant because it provides some insight into the linguistic creativity and stylistic choices in online food discourse, which is a growing and influential digital space. By examining the use of sensory and persuasive language, the research identifies the role food bloggers play in informing, rather than merely shaping the experience and tastes of their readers. The findings can be useful to linguists, media scholars and wannabe food writers as they offer insights into effective techniques in communicating in digital food writing. Additionally, it adds to the wider understanding of the impact that language in digital spaces can have on human behaviour and perception.

Literature Review

The presented literature review falls under the theoretical framework of the Appraisal Theory, which is a powerful analytical instrument of the Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), aimed at unpacking linguistic resources of evaluation and intersubjective stance. In order to see how it can be applied to the online food discourse, it is critical to trace the roots of it, the evolution of this notion going through specific stages and the principles that render it a unique method of analyzing the persuasive and sensory language of food blogs.

Appraisal Theory was not created in a vacuum, it is explicit and premeditated expansion of the interpersonal metafunction in the Systemic Functional Linguistics of Michael Halliday. The author stated that language is a semiotic system where three types of meaning coexist, that is, ideational (relates the world), interpersonal (the realization of social relations and identities), and textual (structuring the message) (Halliday, 1978). It is in the interpersonal metafunction that the seeds of Appraisal were planted. The first work offered by Halliday allowed analyzing mood and modality and gives an opportunity to view how the speakers encode their attitudes and judgments to the propositions they present.

Nonetheless, with the further advancement of discourse analysis, it became obvious that the initial framework offered by Halliday was groundbreaking but failed to offer enough detailed system regarding the classification of the very diverse set of evaluative languages at the disposal of people in order to express their emotions, moral judgments, and aesthetic reviews. This theoretical gap was the main theme which influenced the development of Appraisal Theory. The early years J.R. Martin and the Sydney School, the formal history of the Appraisal Theory is inseparably connected with the initiation of the study of the theory by J.R. Martin and his associates, called the Sydney School, in the early 90s. Martin saw that a more detailed system is required to examine the manner in which language constructs and negotiates social relationships. The first stage of its development was mostly aimed at the future development of the so-called attitude system.

It included a lot of descriptive labour, the listing of the lexical and grammatical structures upon which authors and speakers express positive and negative attitudes and judgments. These were aimed at getting out of the immediate binary of positive/negative and developing a system capable of distinguishing between the types of evaluation. This very early writing created a foundation by showing that evaluative language is not accidental but rather systemic and that it is these systems of evaluation that are at the heart of the process of meaning making in social life.

The Three Systems of Appraisal: In the mid-to-late 1990s the framework grew enormously, to incorporate two other essential systems, and is today known as the tripartite structure.

1. Attitude: This is the fundamental system, which deals with feelings, emotional reactions (affect), ethical evaluation of human actions (judgment) and aesthetic evaluation of things, artifacts, and processes (appreciation). To conduct an analysis of food blogs, the system of appreciation is especially relevant, as it serves the means of investigating how the writers assess food on the basis of its composition, its effect, and its worth.

2. engagement: This system deals with the manner in which writers and speakers locate themselves with respect to the propositions that they promote and the voices and opinions of the discourse. Engagement is informed by the idea of dialogism as is presented by Bakhtin (1981). Engagement examines the way that a text opens up or closes down a dialogue space. It entails the materials to recognise, disassociate, endorse or question other opinions, which is paramount in knowing how food bloggers authority develop and create a relationship of trust with their readers.

3. Graduation: It is a system of scaling the intensity and focus. It enables analysts to determine the scaling up or down of evaluative senses with the use of Force (e.g., absolutely delicious, very fresh) and the sharpening or weakening of categorical boundaries with the use of Focus (e.g., a true masterpiece, sort of sweet). This system is essential to the study of persuasive language, where scaling is one of the major forms of rhetorical strategies to use in rendering descriptions more persuasive and appealing.

Codification and Synthesis: Martin and White (2005): The high point of this developmental process was the appearance of the seminal text of J.R. Martin and P.R.R. White The Language of Evaluation: Appraisal in English (2005). The book is the most systematic and detailed formulation of the framework. It was a synthesis of the previous decades of studies, and it gave an elaborate account of each of the systems and subsystems, explaining their application by abundant examples of different types of texts, such as media discourse and casual conversation.

The concern of the theory is clearly outlined by the authors: Appraisal is interested in the linguistic resources through which the speakers/writers arrive at the expression of, the negotiation and naturalisation of the specific inter-subjective and eventually ideological positions. In this wide context, the framework is more specifically interested in the language of attitude, emotion and judgement, the language of amplification and evaluation of these positions" (Martin and White, 2005, p. 1). This contribution established Appraisal Theory as one of the significant contributions to discourse analysis that gives researchers a potent and methodical arsenal with which to identify the finer details in which language operates to orient the readers, build identities and exercise social power.

The subsequent developments since 2005 Multimodality and Digital Contexts: Since the time of its codification, the Appraisal Theory has remained in the stage of development, one of the most important one being the fact that since that time it has been extended to multimodal discourse. As communication, especially online, becomes more and more dependent on a mixture of linguistic, visual, and spatial resources, scholars came to the realization that the evaluative meaning can be expressed by intricate patterns of those various forms of semiotics. It is O'Donnell, Zappavigna and Whitelaw (2012) who have been on this frontline arguing that appraisal is multimodal. They note that: In the digital environment, appraisal can be achieved as multifaceted arrangements of semiotic resources which interact in ways that locate audiences and

express attitude... Appreciation of a product may be achieved through the visual aspect of a webpage, such as the one that describes the product (e.g., the product itself), whereas Affect regarding the experience of using it may be achieved via the text accompanying the image (O'Donnell, Zappavigna, and Whitelaw, 2012, p. 112).

This multimodal turn would be quite useful when examining food blogs because mouth-watering photography, layout, and typography collaborate with the descriptive text to make up a convincing and evaluative message. The theory has also been scaled to cross-linguistic analysis and applied to an increasingly broad set of digital contexts, such as social media, forums, and blogs, showing that it remains relevant and can be applied to the study of modern-day communication. Texts: The pivotal documents in the field of philosophy are the following texts: human Texts: The following texts are the major documents in the field of philosophy: Other than the fundamental research by Martin and White (2005) there are other important texts that have influenced the implementation and interpretation of the Appraisal Theory. A master class in the application of the framework to one genre, and a highly-regulated genre at that, is in the Appraising Research: Taking a Stance in Academic Writing by Susan Hood (2010).

Hood portrays how scholars employ appraisal resources to establish themselves within their disciplinary circles, handle the claims of knowledge as well as match readers to their arguments. She argues that: Appraisal choices are the focus of how academics build knowledge and assert their power in specific disciplinary spaces. The strategic utilization of attitude and engagement resources enables the writers to control the correlation between the finding made personally with the current body of research" (Hood, 2010, p. 23).

The work can be of value not just by its contribution to academic discourse but also by its clarity in methodology, in terms of demonstrating the way to proceed between theoretical framework and practical analysis. The other important contribution is a collection of articles edited by Thompson and Hunston (2000), *Evaluation in Text: Authorial Stance and the Construction of discourse*. Although this is not strictly speaking on Appraisal Theory, it was also a significant step in making evaluation a key domain of linguistic study. It unified various views on the way speakers and writers articulate their attitudes, judgments and commitments and it aided in preparing the groundwork to the Appraisal framework.

In the introduction, Hunston and Thompson point out the essence of the criticality of this field of research: Evaluation is perhaps the most important role of language that has been overlooked in the analysis of language. Evaluation is where we show our approval or disapproval, where we are in agreement or out of agreement, and it is a major way in which we create and sustain our relationships with others (Hunston and Thompson, 2000, p. 5). This book lays stress upon the fact that an analysis of evaluative language is not a marginal issue, but its core in the context of social life.

A combination of these works offers a well-grounded theoretical and methodological basis to the application of the Appraisal Theory to online food discourse analysis. They provide the instruments to break down how food bloggers apply sensory language to generate sensual experiences (appreciation) how they grade their descriptions to persuade (graduation), and how they position themselves as credible experts to establish a community of followers (engagement). In the next section, we will review the empirical studies which have employed these and similar frameworks to language of food. Part II: Survey of the Empirical Research on Food Discourse, Persuasion and Digital Communication. The academic literature on the food discourse,

especially the online one, has expanded significantly over the past few years. The use of food as a communicative resource to create identities, form communities, and persuade audiences has been studied by scholars working in different linguistic traditions such as discourse analysis, corpus linguistics, cognitive linguistics, and media studies.

This part will review 30 major research articles, which have been thematically clustered to construct a consistent argument to support the current investigation. The review shifts to the background research on the language of food to particular uses of the methods of appraisal and other relevant frameworks in online environments with a view to bringing up the findings that have already been made and, more importantly, finding the gap that this study seeks to address. Principles Studies of the Language of Food.

The study of linguistic properties of food writing has defined the latter as a separate genre that has its stylistic conventions. In her general summary, Caballero (2019) mentions that the use of sensory adjectives, metaphorical adjectives, and evaluative sentences aimed at creating a multisensory experience in the reader is notably high in a food discourse. She claims that the language of food is more than mere description, that it plays a role in creating both cultural and social meanings about eating.

Gerhardt (2019) continues this by offering a linguistic approach to the study of food discourse, including major patterns of lexical and grammatical forms, such as the application of dynamic forms of the verbs to describe the cooking process or the nominalization, which creates abstract concepts, such as freshness or authenticity. This background paper establishes that a linguistic study of food blogs has to be particularly keen on these stylistic characteristics since they are the focus of the communicative intention of the genre. Appraisal Theory and Analysis of Food/Review Discourse. The implementation of the Appraisal Theory to the texts pertaining to food have provided a lot of information concerning how judgment is organized.

A corpus-based study of food reviews on Yelp (Dressler and O'Donnell 2018) revealed that the reviewer incorporates appreciation resources to review the food, service, and ambiance and applies judgment resources to comment on the behavior of staff and affect to discuss his or her emotional reaction. Their research shows the collaboration of the various subsystems of attitude to form an overview. In the same manner, corpus linguistics was employed by Jones (2019) to examine evaluative language in a set of food blogs and the frequency of positive appreciation terms was high, especially those pertaining to taste, texture, and presentation. His study singles out this positive assessment that bloggers apply to earn trust and experience among their audience. In a pragmatic approach, Haugh (2018) discusses the role of language in food reviewers to manage the relationship with the readers and finds that the use of indirectness and politeness strategies in softening the criticism is rather common, as the researcher uses quite intricate engagement resources to sustain a positive relationship with the audience.

One of the recurring subjects of the literature is the importance of sensory language in crafting descriptions of food which are vivid and convincing. Naciscione (2019) investigates the cognitive function of food metaphors in English and argues that food metaphors are not just decorative but organizational, meaning that they serve to organize our understanding and experience of food. For instance, describing a wine as "bold" or "sharp" is a use of embodied experiences to build a concrete feeling for the qualities of the wine. Caballero (2020) takes this further by examining food metaphors in the language of marketing, demonstrating how metaphors are being used to create desirable associations and to frame products in terms of

luxury, health or comfort. These studies are directly relevant to the study of sensory adjectives, given that they reveal that such language can be a powerful rhetorical tool in the manipulation of perception and desire. The ability of the sensory adjectives to evoke mental imagery and emotional responses makes them an important element of persuasive language in food blogs.

Food blogs by their very nature are persuasive; their very success is often linked to the ability of their authors to persuade readers of their expertise, to persuade them of the desirability of the food they present. Richardson (2019) examines how food bloggers create an expert voice through discourse to demonstrate authority, finding that a mixture of technical terminology, personal anecdotes and confident evaluations are used. This is consistent with Hood's (2010) findings on academic writing and it suggests that the strategic use of appraisal resources is a common strategy for creating credibility in different genres.

Meier (2019) discusses how food advertising employs linguistic resources to foster desire and identifies some of these techniques including the use of evocative sensory adjectives and scarcity appeals ("limited time only"). While her findings are focused on advertising, they have a lot of applicability to food blogs, which are often a form of soft-sell marketing. Jefferson (2018) examines food blogging as a rhetorical practice, identifying the ways in which bloggers deploy narrative structures and appeals to shared values to convince their readers and accrue a loyal following. All of these studies have in common how that persuasion in food discourse is a complicated process which entails the orchestration of linguistic options towards building credibility, evoking emotion and creating consensus with an audience on a particular point of view.

In the digital space, food discourse is hardly ever purely textual in nature. Djonov and Zhao (2014) make a case for a multimodal approach to appraisal analysis by showing how images, layout, and typography work together with text to create evaluative meaning. Considering the example of a food blog, a picture of a shiny roast chicken can result in a positive appreciation of the sight thus the accompanying text may talk about its crispy skin and juicy tender meat and a coherent and effective evaluative statement may be achieved. Font-Ribera and Boulton (2019) use a multimodal discourse analysis of the foodporn phenomenon on Instagram to demonstrate the way in which the interplay between carefully curated food photography and text-so often hyperbolic textual captions-must work together to create an idealized vision of food as an object of desire.

The multimodal appraisal presented by O'Donnell, Zappavigna, and Whitelaw (2012) is an important theoretical contribution in this type of analysis since it highlights that a food blog post does not consist of a collection of text and images, but rather their integrated meaning as a whole. This raises the point that it is important to any analysis of online food discourse to consider the interplay of different modes of semiotics.

Beyond being simply a means of describing or persuading, food blogging is a social practice, through which identities are built and communities are formed. Adolphs, Carter and Knight (2019) take a corpus-based approach in order to demonstrate the ways in which food bloggers employ language to construct their own personal and cultural identities, often referencing discourses of authenticity, tradition or innovation to place themselves within the food world. Fuller (2019) explores the role of language in the construction of authenticity of contemporary food writers and discovers that the use of evaluative language is an important part of creating a bond with the reader by making the writer appear genuine and trustworthy.

Knight (2018) delves into the relationship between food and identity and how food discourse can be used to signal the belonging of certain social groups (e.g. vegans, craft beer enthusiasts). Page (2018), in her book on social media stories, talks about food bloggers narrate stories to generate a sense of intimacy and community among the users. These studies highlight the notion that food blogs are not about food, they are about people and the language in these blogs is a key tool in negotiating social relationships and building a sense of self.

The study of food discourse has adopted various methodological approaches, which have provided different insights. McCarthy and O'Keeffe (2019), in their handbook on corpus linguistics, describe the methods for constructing and analysing large corpora of text, which could be used to identify widespread patterns in food discourse across many blogs. Molony (2018) discusses food as a material culture and argues that the communicative function that food plays is indistinguishable from its physical characteristics and the social contexts in which it is consumed. This view is a good reminder that whatever language is used to describe food is always rooted in a physical and social reality.

Labov's (2018) classic work on language in social contexts, all though not about food, offers methodological models for analyzing the variation of language according to social factors, which can be used to analyze the variation of food blogging styles across communities. Lastly, such works as Yasin et al. (2023) and Afzal et al. (2024) on influencer marketing in Pakistan offer a bigger commercial framework, demonstrated by how food blogging is frequently incorporated into bigger systems of commercial and consumer persuasion.

The existing literature forms a rich bed of knowledge from which to understand the language of food. We know that food talk is highly evaluative, it uses a lot of sensory and metaphorical language and it is used to construct identities and persuade the audience. We also know that Appraisal Theory is a very powerful tool in the analysis of these evaluative resources and that a multimodal approach is required to understand online communication. However, there is a certain gap. While several studies have touched on food blogs (e.g. Jones, 2019; Richardson, 2019), there has not been a study which systematically applies the full Appraisal framework (attitude, engagement and graduation) with a specific focus on the interplay between sensory adjectives (a key resource of appreciation) and the broader persuasive strategies in a large corpus of written food blogs.

Many studies about restaurant reviews (Dressler & O'Donnell, 2018) or multimodal platforms such as Instagram (Font-Ribera & Boulton, 2019). This research will address this lack of knowledge by performing an in-depth Appraisal analysis of written food blog posts in an attempt to present a more detailed understanding of the use of stylistic features, specifically sensory adjectives, in the process of composing persuasive and engaging discourse. This will not only contribute towards our understanding of food blogging as a genre but will also provide us with a detailed case study of the workings of Appraisal resources in this particular and influential digital context.

Research Methodology

The research design that is set to address research questions presented in this study. The major goal is to perform a systematic study of the stylistic characteristics, namely sensory adjectives and persuasive language, in online food blogs that are written. To accomplish the same, the research follows a corpus-based approach, which combines quantitative computational analysis with a qualitative interpretation based on the Appraisal Theory (Martin and White,

2005). This explains the outline of the research paradigm, how to compile the corpus, step-by-step data collection and analysis process using the TagAnt Tagger and the AntConc software and the ethical issues and limitations identifying the scope of the research.

This paper functions under a paradigm of a mixed-methods research whereby both a quantitative and qualitative method of data analysis is consciously aimed to be combined. The paradigm is especially suitable to corpus based discourse analysis because it can be explored to the extent of the breadth of a quantitative analysis in order to inform the depth of a qualitative interpretation (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2017).

The study is both descriptive and analytic in the quantitative stage. It will quantitatively determine frequency and distribution of sensory adjectives in the corpus in a systematic manner. This quantitative information presents an objective basis of searching the most glaring linguistic patterns employed by food bloggers. The study is as well critical and interpretive during the qualitative phase. The quantitative results will be a basis of further analysis based on the Appraisal Theory. This qualitative interpretation will touch on the question of how and why these adjectives are employed to create a certain meaning, to implement the strategies of persuasion, and to establish the rapport with the reader. Combining these methods, the research goes beyond the mere counting of words to gaining an idea of their functional value within the framework of online food discussions.

In this study, a Corpus Compilation and sampling strategy is applied. This research is based on a specialized corpus of written food blogs. This corpus was constructed through the definitions of the population and clear sampling strategy, as well as the data assembly based on definite criteria. This study has a theoretical population of all publicly accessible food blogs on the internet which are done in English. The issue though is that it is not possible to reach out to this whole population. Thus, a more convenient sampling frame was developed, which comprised of blogs featured in major blog aggregators (e.g., Shayma, sara mir, Sumayya Usmani) and blogs that have won food blogging awards (e.g., Gourmand World Cookbook Award (2016)).

The sampling strategy was a purposive sampling strategy, whereby 15 food blogs were chosen to form part of the corpus. Purposive sampling is a form of non-probability sampling in which the researcher chooses the units by their features and suitability to the research questions (Cohen, Manion, and Morrison, 2018). This will be done in order to have the blogs that are relevant and well-established within the community of food bloggers. The blog should be mostly food based such as food reviews or general commentary about food. The blog has to be written by a single author or a small named group.

Blogs that were sponsored by a corporation or a brand were left out in order to have a focus of personal or discursive construction. Blogs needed to have a large number of followers (e.g. more than 20,000 followers on one of the key social media platforms) or have won a notable blogging award to make them a voice with a wide following. The attempt was made to represent a wider range of culinary sub-genres (e.g., baking, vegan food, travel food, traditional home cooking) to cover a wider range of food discourse. The last corpus, the Online Food Blog Corpus (OFBC) is a corpus that has 15 written food blogs.

All files were individually stored as plain text (.txt) to eliminate HTML and CSS and other non-linguistic markup. The procedure of data collection and analysis: Within the framework of this study, data collection will occur through internet research. Data collection and data analysis

procedure: In the context of the present study, internet research will be conducted as the means of data collection. It was an analytical process that proceeded in a systematic, multi-stage operation through raw text to results that were interpreted. The process pertains to the combination of the given software tools (TagAntTagger, AntConc) and the theoretical framework of the Appraisal Theory. The initial step in the process is the corpus preparation and part-of-speech (POS) tagging. The initial phase was the preparation of the corpus to be analyzed linguistically. The 15 blog posts were then put in 15 text file. The processing of these files was done by the use of the TagAnt Tagger.

Tool: TagAnt. It is an elaborated tagset of English through which each word in the corpus gets a particular grammatical category assigned (e.g., delicious JJ when a singular adjective, incredible RR when an adverb).

Procedure: The plain text corpus was typed into the TagAnt. The tagger processed the text and generated a new, annotated version of the corpus with each word. This is essential in obtaining an accurate way of isolating adjectives out of another word class to frequency analyze.

The POS-tagged corpus was then processed into word processor program AntConc which is a powerful free corpus analysis toolkit written and designed by Dr. Laurence Anthony. The quantitative analysis was carried out using this software.

Procedure: 1. Frequency List of Adjectives: A List of frequency of all the words in the tagged corpus was created using the "Word List" tool. This list was further narrowed down to words that were also tagged as adjectives (i.e. tags beginning with JJ in the C7 tagset, as with JJ, JJR, JJS, etc). This gave a list with the most commonly used adjectives in the corpus ranked.

2. **Sensory Adjectives:** A sublist of sensory adjectives was hand-selected out of the master adjective list, which the semantic relationship between the adjective and the five senses (taste, smell, sight, texture, sound). Some of them are crispy, velvety, aromatic, golden, rich, tangy, fresh. Qualitative Analysis with the Appraisal Theory. The what (adjectives are frequent) comes with the quantitative data of Stage 2 and the so what (what is their purpose) comes with the quantitative data of Stage

3. The concordance lines of the main sensory adjectives were exported out of AntConc to be studied in detail in qualitative analysis.

Framework and procedure

Framework: Appraisal Theory (Martin and White, 2005). Procedure Each example of a target sensory adjective was processed by the Appraisal framework: attitude: The main emphasis was the system of appreciation which is concerned with judgments of objects, artifacts and processes. The type of the Appreciation of each adjective was coded: Reaction: What is the effect of the food on the evaluator (e.g. stunning, delightful, disappointing). Composition: What is the inherent food properties (e.g. creamy, balanced, layered, fresh). Valuation: What is the social meaning of the food (e.g., authentic, classic, innovative). Graduation: As well, the analysis found there are resources of Graduation that scale the intensity of the evaluation. This includes:

Adverbs such as absolutely, incredibly, so or repeating the adjective (very, very good). Words that are sharpening or softening category boundaries, such as a true masterpiece or sort of sweet. engagement: Although the exposure of these evaluative phrases to other possible perspectives (e.g., the use of phrases such as I think, in my opinion, or stating the evaluation as a fact) was not a major concern in the analysis, the positions of these phrases were observed as well. The two-pronged strategy will guarantee that the results will be not only statistically sound

but also full of interpretation, which will directly answer the research question of examining the stylistic features in order to persuade.

Ethical considerations and delimitations must be considered in this paper, as stated herein. Ethical Considerations Even though the information comes out of the publicly available blogs, it was conducted according to ethical research practices. In order to safeguard the privacy of the bloggers all blog names and author identities have been anonymized in the end research write-up. The information is applied to academic purposes and non-commercial purposes. Delimitations of the Study.

This research has a narrow area of focus. The researched corpus size is 15 food blogs; consequently, the results cannot be statistically applied to all food discourse, but are supposed to be analytically applicable to the similar ones. The analysis will be limited to the text of the blogs, which is written. It lacks the discussion of multimodal components of photos, layout, typography, or video content which have been recognized as important elements of online food discourse.

The study is dedicated to a narrow subject of study, namely to sensory adjectives and persuasion. The other salient features of persuasive language (e.g. narrative structure, pronouns, modality) are not the main concern though they can be mentioned where applicable. The corpus is limited to the English-language blogs and the results might not apply to the food discourse in other cultures and languages.

Data analysis

Introduction

In this section, a critical discussion of the stylistic mechanisms within the context of online food discourse will be presented, this time in relation to the attitude, judgment, and emotion expressed in food blogs by means of language use of sensory adjectives and persuasive language. The theoretical framework that will be used as a background to the critical analysis is the Appraisal Framework (Martin and White, 2005), which considers the role of language use in expressing attitudes, judgment and emotion. The framework is comprised of three key areas, namely, Attitude (affect, judgment, appreciation), Engagement (how writers position themselves in relation to their audience), and Graduation (how writers intensify or soften their evaluations).

The discussion will concentrate mainly on the Attitude and Engagement aspects with special reference to understanding the application of sensory adjectives (a form of appreciation) and persuasive words (a form of engagement) in food blog discussion. The sample used in this analysis comprises 15 entries in food blogs that have been documented about different food items. It was analyzed in terms of sensory adjectives (connected with taste, texture, smell, appearance, and sound), and persuasive language devices. Both qualitative and quantitative methods were used and the frequencies of the various types of sensory adjectives and language persuasive techniques were computed. Tasting Words in Food Weblogs.

Sensory Adjectives in Food Blog Discourse

The first research question aims at determining the most popular types of sensory adjectives used by the food bloggers to describe the food experiences. Sensory adjectives are mutual element in food discourse because they allow readers to envision the sensual experience of consuming the food under description.

Category	Adjective	Frequency
Taste	Spicy	5
Taste	Creamy	4
Taste	Sweet	3
Taste	Rich	3
Taste	Aromatic	3
Taste	Tangy	2
Taste	Salty	2
Taste	Juicy	2
Texture	Crunchy	4
Texture	Crispy	3
Texture	Soft	2
Texture	Light	2
Texture	Golden	2
Texture	Aromatic	3
Appearance	Smoky	2

Table 1: Frequency of Sensory Adjectives by Category

Table 1 displays that the most frequently used set of sensory adjectives is taste related adjectives, with most frequent being spicy (5 occurrences), creamy (4 occurrences), sweet, rich, and aromatic (3 occurrences each). The second most prominent group of adjectives uses texture words: most often, the word crunchy appears (4 times), then crispy (3 times), soft, and light (2 times each). Adjectives related to appearance are slightly less frequent with the words golden and golden-looking being the most frequent with 2 and 3 occurrences respectively. Adjectives describing smell have been used as aromatic (3 times) and smoky (2 times).

The least common adjectives are sound related with only one word having CRONCH and crackly used in individual expressions. These results indicate that food bloggers focus on taste and texture when writing about food experiences, and rather focus less on appearance, smell, and sound. It is in line with the multisensory aspects of eating, in which taste and texture are frequently regarded as the most significant sensory dimensions of food (Spence, 2015).

Distribution of Sensory Adjectives Across Entries

Dishes	Taste	Texture	Appearance	Smell	Sound	Total
Papdi Chaat	5	2	0	0	1	8
Corn Salad	5	2	1	0	0	8
Pakoras	1	3	0	0	0	4
Mast o Khiar	2	1	0	0	0	3
Kachumar	0	0	0	0	0	0
Pomegranate salad	0	1	0	0	0	1
Palak pakoras	5	5	1	1	2	14
Chicken	4	5	0	0	0	9

Wraps						
Chicken and Cheese Subway Sandwich	3	3	0	0	0	6
Khada Masala Mutton Karahi	3	0	0	1	0	4
Korean-style garlic bread	3	1	0	0	0	4
Paneer Reshmi Handi	6	0	0	0	2	8
Halal Cart Style Chicken and Rice	4	0	1	0	0	5
Herbed Chicken Burger	2	0	0	0	0	2
Chicken Kalia/Kalya	7	0	0	1	0	8

Table 2: Distribution of Sensory Adjectives Across Entries

The results indicated that the sensory adjectives differ significantly with the 15 entries as illustrated in Table 2. The highest number of adjectives applied in the entry is "More pakoras," (15), next are "Chicken Wraps" (9), "Papdi Chaat" (8), "Corn Salad" (8), "Paneer Reshmi Handi" (8), and lastly, "Chicken Kalia/Kalya" (8). In the entry of Kachumar, there is not a single sensory adjective in it. The dishes that have the maximum number of sensory adjectives usually revolve around complicated dishes that have more than one aspect of sensory experience. An example is the entry More pakoras, which contains a number of taste dimensions (salty, savory, spicy, sweet), number of texture dimensions (golden, crackly, crispy, creamy, sharp), and even sound (crackly).

On the same note, the entry on the Chicken Wraps talks about a food item that has several dimensions of taste (spicy, satisfying, bold, street-style) and several dimensions of texture (juicy, creamy, crunchy, crispy, soft). Such results indicate that the richness of the food under description can affect the number and type of adjectives expressed with regards to senses. Plates with more complicated flavor and texture are likely to be characterized using more sensory adjectives than simple ones.

Analysis of Sensory Adjectives in Relation to the Appraisal Framework:

In terms of the Appraisal Framework, sensory adjectives belong to the Subsystem of Appreciation which concerns judgments about things, such as the aesthetic value of things and their sensory qualities. The sensory adjectives found in the data may be divided into the three types of Appreciation: Reaction (the effect of the object on our emotions), Composition (the

balance or the detail of the object), and Valuation (the importance of the object in the social environment).

A majority of the sensory adjectives of the data would be categorized as Reaction since they would describe the immediate sensory influence of the food. As an example, there is spicy, sweet, crunchy, and aromatic to mention a few on the effect of the food to the senses. Other adjectives, like rich or creamy could be included in Composition category because they refer to the balance and complexity of the food. Some words like golden might be the adjectives which should be classified as Valuation, because they are the words which describe the social meaning of the food (here, the meaning will be high quality food).

The high percentage of the Reaction-type adjectives hint at the fact that food bloggers are more concerned with the description of the immediate feeling of the food, and the way it is made, or what it signifies in a social context. This is in accordance with the intention of food blogs, whose aim is usually to make the readers experience what it is like to eat the food under discussion.

Persuasive Language in Food Blog Discourse:

Food Blog Discourse: Persuasive Language. The second research question attempts to comprehend how food bloggers apply persuasive language to attract their readers or motivate them to eat their recipes. The persuasiveness of language is one of the prominent features of food blog discourse because they assist bloggers to establish rapport with their followers and encourage them to prepare the presented recipes. . Table 3 indicates the frequency of the use of the tools of persuasive language in the entire 15 food blog posts.

Technique	Frequency
Personal anecdotes	13
Direct address	11
Exaggeration/hyperbole	8
Serving suggestions	8
Cultural references	7
Emotional appeals	5
Comparison	4

Table 3: Frequency of Persuasive Language Techniques

Table 3 indicates that personal anecdotes are the most common type of persuasion method (13 occurrences), direct address (11 occurrences), exaggeration/hyperbole (8 occurrences), serving suggestions (8 occurrences), and cultural references (7 occurrences). Less frequent are emotional appeals (5 occurrences), comparison (4 occurrences). These results indicate that food bloggers mostly rely on personal anecdotes and address their readers as well, then come exaggeration/hyperbole and serving suggestions to persuade them to prepare recipes. The use of cultural references is also aimed at putting the context and developing relationships with readers.

Distribution of Persuasive Language techniques across entries

As Table 4 shows, the techniques of persuasive language are quite different in the 15 entries.

Dishes	Personal anecdotes	Direct address	Hyperbole	Serving suggestions	Cultural references	Emotional appeals	Comparison
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Papdi Chaat	1	1	1	0	1	8	1
Corn Salad	1	1	0	0	0	8	0
Pakoras	1	1	0	1	0	4	0
Mast o Khiar	0	1	0	0	0	3	0
Kachumar	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
Pomegranate salad	1	1	0	0	0	1	1
Palak pakoras	1	5	0	1	2	14	1
Chicken Wraps	0	2	1	0	0	9	0
Chicken and Cheese Subway Sandwich	0	2	0	0	0	6	0
Khada Masala Mutton Karahi	0	2	1	1	0	4	1
Korean-style garlic bread	0	1	1	0	0	4	0
Paneer Reshma Handi	1	0	1	0	2	8	0
Halal Cart Style Chicken and Rice	0	0	1	0	0	5	0
Herbed Chicken Burger	2	0	1	0	0	2	1
Chicken Kalia/Kalya	0	1	1	1	0	8	1

Table 4: Distribution of Persuasive Language Techniques Across Entries

The most frequently occurring entries have the same number of persuasive techniques of four, such as Papdi Chaat, Corn Salad, More pakoras, Chicken Wraps, Chicken and Cheese Subway Sandwich, Khada Masala Mutton Karahi, and Herbed Chicken Burger. The ones that have the least persuasive methods are "Mast o Khiar" (2), "Kachumar" (2), and "Pomegranate salad" (2). The participants who have the most persuasive techniques have entries that are likely to have many techniques. As an example, the entry of papdi chaat relies on personal anecdotes (My Nani Ami always used to make their own chaat masala), direct address (By the way, the word chaat means to lick, because this good, you want to eat all of it, to lick your bowl and your fingers), exaggeration/hyperbole (This is the ultimate street food) and emotional appeals (I think of her every time I eat chaat). The findings indicate that food bloggers rely on a number of persuasive strategies to attract their readers and motivate its consumption. The certain methods can be chosen according to the character of the dish that is being described and the personal manner of a blogger.

Analysis of Persuasive Language in Relation to the Appraisal Framework

In the lens of the Appraisal Framework, the techniques of persuasive language are mostly to do with the subsystem of Engagement that is concerned with how the writers put themselves in relation to their audience, and their propositions. The identified persuasive techniques of the data

can be divided into the four types of Engagement: Monogloss (bare assertion), Heterogloss (reference to other voices or perspectives),

Attribution (presenting a proposition as other voices), and Distance (expressing different levels of belonging to a proposition). The data has most of the persuasive techniques that belong to the category of Heterogloss, since they imply the mentioning of the additional voices or perspectives. As an example, personal anecdotes (My Nani Ami used to make her own chaat masala), and cultural allusions (any number of cultures in the world make their version of this dish, such as Greek tzatziki, South Asian raita, or Turkish cacik).

Personal appeal ("Need something fast, hot, and good? The recipe of this chicken wrap is your go-to!") is also a Heterogloss recipe because it is a recognition of the opinion of a reader. Certain persuasive strategies, like exaggeration/hyperbole, can be classified as Monogloss since they put across a proposal as a raw statement. Suggestions to serve served with (e.g., hot with and a cup of chai it is the best snack to have during Ramadan iftar, an afterschool snack, tea time with your friends) might be viewed as Distance, since it is an expression of a certain amount of correspondence to a proposition.

The fact that Heterogloss-type techniques are the most common indicates that food bloggers are more focused on attracting their audiences by taking into consideration other voices and opinions. This is in line with the purpose of food blogs, which is usually to establish a relationship with the readers and make them feel like there is a community of food experience around them.

Differences in Stylistic Strategies Across Food Bloggers

It is apparent that there is a difference in the stylistic approaches of various food bloggers. Although the data does not clearly distinguish between various bloggers, it is evident that there are variation in style among the 15 entries that could vary based on authorship, topic or purpose.

Analysis of Stylistic Differences

The analysis of the sensory adjectives and persuasive language techniques similarities allow identifying several stylistic differences between 15 entries:

Personal vs Instructional Style: Others are more personal, focusing on personal stories and appeals to emotion (e.g., Papdi Chaat, Paneer Reshmi Handi, Herbed Chicken Burger), whereas others are more informative, with a personal address and serving recommendation (ex: Chicken Wraps, Chicken and Cheese Subway Sandwich, Khada Masala Mutton Karahi).

Cultural Focus: The emphasis on the specifics of culture is very strong in some of the entries, where cultural traditions are explained in detail, and the similarity to other dishes in the other cultures (e.g., "Mast o Khiar," "Kachumar," Some of them do not have much or no cultural orientation (i.e., "Chicken Wraps," "Chicken and Cheese Subway Sandwich," etc.), whereas others have it (e.g., "Paneer Reshmi Handi"). 3. Sensory Richness: There are entries densely loaded with sensory language, such as taste, texture, smell, appearance, sound, (ex: More pakoras, Chicken Wraps, Paneer Reshmi Handi), and others that contain little sensory language (ex: Kachumar, Pomegranate salad, Herbed Chicken Burger). 4.

Persuasive Intensity: Certain entries employ a high intensity of persuasive language, and a number of persuasive strategies, as well as the extensive use of exaggeration/hyperbole (e.g., Papdi Chaat, Chicken Wraps, Herbed Chicken Burger), whereas others employ a low intensity of persuasive language (e.g., Mast o Khiar, Kachumar, Pomegranate salad). Such stylistic variations indicate that food bloggers can take a variety of ways in describing food and communicating

with the reader that can rely on personal style, nature of the dish under description and the audience to which the item is being described

Analysis of Stylistic Differences in Relation to the Appraisal Framework

According to the Appraisal Framework, the above-identified differences in the style could be interpreted as dissimilarity in the utilization of the three domains: Attitude, Engagement, and Graduation. Entries of more personal style would be more likely to use more Affect (expressing emotions and feelings) and more Heterogloss (making reference to other voices and/or perspectives).

The more instructional style of entry is likely to employ more Appreciation (evaluating things) and more Monogloss (bare assertion). The entries that are more strongly cultural oriented are more likely to employ more of the Judgment (analyzing human behavior) and Heterolanguage (mentioning other voices or opinion). Less cultural entries are more likely to have more Appreciation (evaluating things) and more Monogloss (bare assertion). Sensual language entries are more likely to be high in use of Appreciation (appraisal things) and more Force (strengthening appraisals) in use.

Appreciation and Force are likely to be less used in entries that contain little sensory language. The ones that have a high intensity of persuasive language would use more Engagement (placing themselves in relation to their audience) and more Graduation (differentiating between different levels of intensity). The less intense entries in terms of the usage of persuasive language are expected to employ less Engagement and less Graduation. These results imply that food bloggers can employ various blends of the Appraisal resources to produce various rhetorical effects, based on their own personal style as well the nature of dish that they are describing and the targeted audience.

Conclusion

This discussion has determined the kinds of sensory adjectives that are most commonly applied by food bloggers to articulate their food experiences, how food bloggers make use of persuasive language to reach their readership or persuade them to work with recipes, and how variations in the style practiced by food bloggers across entries to their blog.

The results indicate that food bloggers tend to employ taste-related adjectives (in particular, such as spicy, creamy, sweet, rich, and aromatic) and texture-related adjectives (in particular, such as crunchy, crispy, soft, and light) to describe the food experiences. Their techniques mainly consist of personal stories, first-person appeal, and exaggeration/hyperbole and suggestions to persuade the readers to prepare recipes. Stylistic strategies used in various entries of food blogs are noticeably different and, thus, they reveal differences in personal style, culture-centeredness, sensory depth, and persuasiveness.

Considering the Appraisal Framework, these results imply that the Reaction-type Appreciation is the most commonly used by the food bloggers to report about the immediate sensory experience of the food, Heterogloss-type Engagement is to interact with their readers by helping to recognize various perspectives and voices, and Force-type Graduation is to make their assessments even stronger.

The variation in stylistic strategies among the various posts made on food blogs can be seen to represent variation in utilization of Attitude, Engagement, and Graduation resources. These results serve to understand some of the stylistic aspects in online food discourse and have an implication on the analysis of food blogs as a genre of online communication. Another use of

them is to give a foundation to further studies of the role of sensory language and persuasive styles in food discourse.

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