DESCRIPTIVE ADJECTIVES IN TRAVEL BLOG HEADLINES

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This research explores the use of descriptive adjectives in English-language travel blog headlines from a linguistic perspective, focusing on semantics, grammar, applied linguistics, and media linguistics. A corpus of 100 headlines from five modern travel blogs (The Planet D, offMetro, Lost LeBlanc, The Endless Adventure, Kasia Writes) was analyzed, identifying the most frequent adjectives (BEST, BEAUTIFUL, PERFECT, LUXURY, ULTIMATE, EPIC, TOP, and HIDDEN), their semantic and grammatical features, as well as patterns in the use of certain types of adjectives depending on thematic orientation of the blog.

Semantically, the adjectives were categorized as evaluative, emotive, denoting place and significance, sensory, qualitative, value-based, and relational, revealing niche-specific usage that aligns with bloggers' strategies to engage their target audiences. Most travel bloggers have been shown to rely on evaluative and emotive adjectives, as well as those that denote value since they significantly impact audience engagement.

Grammatically, adjectives were divided according to their method of modifying a noun, specifically into attributive, predicative, and postpositive. It was determined that most of the headlines contain attributive adjectives. Only two out of a hundred headlines had predictive adjectives, and there was one adjective used postpositively.

Descriptive adjectives are often capitalized in headlines to enhance the visual impact and increase the likelihood that a reader or viewer will interact with the content. Moreover, it was found that superlatives were used in more than a third of the headlines.

Ultimately, the article sheds light on the importance of a meticulous language choice for travel blog headlines, which can help make posts more readable and convincing, and, as a result, attract more readers.

Future research might focus on examining the broader impact of adjectives in online communication and the blogosphere in particular to enhance audience engagement, achieve communication goals, and optimize content strategies.

ОПИСОВІ ПРИКМЕТНИКИ У ЗАГОЛОВКАХ ТРЕВЕЛ-БЛОГІВ

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Ключові слова: блог, заголовок, прикметник, описовий прикметник, граматична класифікація, семантична класифікація.

У статті розглянуто особливості використання описових прикметників у заголовках сучасних англомовних тревел-блогів з погляду семантики, граматики, прикладної лінгвістики та медіалінгвістики. Дослідження базується на аналізі 100 заголовків із п'яти сучасних тревел-блогів («The Planet D», «offMetro», «Lost LeBlanc», «The Endless Adventure», «Kasia Writes»). Виявлено найбільш уживані прикметники, серед яких BEST, BEAUTIFUL, PERFECT, LUXURY, ULTIMATE, EPIC, TOP, HIDDEN. Здійснено аналіз семантичних характеристик і граматичних особливостей цих прикметників, їх категоризацію, а також визначено прикметники, характерні для тревел-блогів різних тематичних спрямувань.

Семантично прикметники були класифіковані на оцінні, емоційно забарвлені, сенсорні, якісні, прикметники на позначення місця, цінності, відношення та значення. Було визначено, що більшість тревел-блогерів опираються на оцінні та емоційно забарвлені прикметники, а також на ті, що позначають цінність, адже саме вони мають значний вплив на залученість аудиторії.

Граматично прикметники було поділено на атрибутивні, предикативні та постпозитивні відповідно до того, як вони модифікують іменник. Визначено, що більшість заголовків містять атрибутивні прикметники, тоді як предикативні прикметники траплялися у двох зі ста заголовків, а постпозитивні – лише в одному.

Виявлено, що понад третина заголовків містить вищі ступені порівняння, а описові прикметники часто пишуться з великої літери, що може вказувати на бажання посилити емоційний та візуальний вплив, а також підвищити ймовірність того, що читач або глядач буде взаємодіяти з контентом.

У підсумку результати цієї статті підкреслюють важливість скрупульозного вибору лексики для заголовків тревел-блогу, що може сприяти тому, що дописи стають більш приємними для сприйняття та переконливими і, як наслідок, приваблюватимуть більше читачів.

Подальше вивчення специфіки використання англомовних прикметників у межах інтернет-комунікації загалом та блогосфери зокрема дозволить встановити їхній вплив на аудиторію з метою досягнення комунікативних цілей та масштабування впливу.

Statement of the problem in a general form and its connection with important scientific and practical tasks.

In the digital world, a travel blog is not only a place of inspiration, but also a source of useful information and recommendations for travelers around the world. A blog headline is the first thing that catches readers' eye before they click. For this reason, it should be thoughtfully written and captivating enough to make people continue reading. This research analyses the use of descriptive adjectives in travel blogging headlines.

The theoretical foundation of this article is grounded in the works of both foreign and Ukrainian scholars. Among foreign scholars, David Crystal's [Crystal 2006, 2011], Tamara Grašič's [Grašič, 2022], Brian Carroll's [Carroll, 2010], and Anne Handley's [Handley, 2014] works on digital communication in general and blogging in particular offer valuable insights into the linguistic dynamics of online content creation. Additionally, the studies by John Mulligan [Mulligan, 1852], Robert Dixon [Dixon, 1982], and Frans Heyvaert [Heyvaert, 2010] on the nature of descriptive adjectives complement analysis, particularly in categorizing and interpreting the adjectives used in travel blog headlines. Ukrainian researchers Olena Medvid, Mariia Hartsunova, and Larysa Hartsunova [Medvid et al., 2021] have extensively analyzed the transformations in language brought about by digitalization, providing a foundation for understanding linguistic changes in digital communication. Karpushyna Maiia's exploration of stylistic features in media headlines [Karpushyna, 2024] is relevant to this study of adjectives in travel blog headlines, as it highlights the impact of style on audience engagement. Together, these contributions create a comprehensive theoretical framework for our research.

Aim, tasks, and relevance of the research

Due to the rapid development of digital media, travel blogs have gained great popularity. Now people can learn about the world and «travel» virtually not leaving their houses. Headlines in travel blogs play a key role in determining whether the reader will interact with the content. This paper **aims** to examine the types and semantic roles of descriptive adjectives in modern English-language travel blog headlines and to evaluate their impact on readers.

The **research tasks** include the following:
• to conduct an examination of the descriptive adjectives used in travel blog headlines,
• to identify the most commonly used descriptive adjectives in travel blog headlines,
• to categorize the identified adjectives,
• to analyze the effect of descriptive adjectives on reader engagement and perception.

The **relevance** of the study lies in the fact that it covers an important topic related to modern digital media communication.

Analysis of recent research and publications

In travel blogs, descriptive adjectives show the atmosphere of a place and captivate the audience, make them feel present, and encourage them to visit the described locations. «The name descriptive is given to this class of words because they describe an object by some quality or property either attributed to it or asserted of it» [Mulligan, 1852, p. 255].

Heyvaert [2010] divides adjectives into descriptive and relational according to their semantic feature. The latter defines the relationship between the subject and its naming (e.g. «chemical» means «related to chemistry»). Dixon [1982, p.16] distinguishes several semantic types of adjectives, which belong to such categories as: dimension, physical property, human propensity, age, value, color, speed. Meanwhile, Maks et al. [2008] state that a global semantic typology divides adjectives into such semantic classes: attributes of abstract nouns, emotional and mental attributes, physical and perceptional attributes, color, substance, place, and temporal attributes. Adjectives describe qualities, either physical or mental. Physical qualities are perceived by our external senses: sight (color), hearing (sound), touch (texture), smell (odor), and taste (flavor). Some properties, like size and shape, may involve multiple senses. Mental qualities, on the other hand, relate to the mind, emotions, and character [Mulligan, 1852, p. 258].

Grammatically, Quirk et al. [1985, pp. 416–417] argue that adjectives are classified as attributive when they precede the head of a noun phrase; as predicative when they serve as a complement to the subject or object; and as postpositive when they directly follow the noun or pronoun they describe.

The study will proceed using these classifications as a foundation.

Results and Discussion

In this part of the article, the use of descriptive adjectives will be studied and analyzed based on 100 headlines from popular travel blogs. A total of 139 descriptive adjectives were extracted and their frequency of occurrence was examined (see Fig. 1 below).

According to the bar chart above, the following adjectives were found to be the most frequently used: BEST, BEAUTIFUL, PERFECT, LUXURY, ULTIMATE, EPIC, TOP, HIDDEN.

BEST is the superlative of good. It describes places or things that are «of the most excellent type or quality» (Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, n.d.). In the context of a travel blog, BEST refers to specific places (e.g., cities, beaches, hotels) or abstract things (e.g. trip or adventure) that are incredible and absolutely perfect among others.
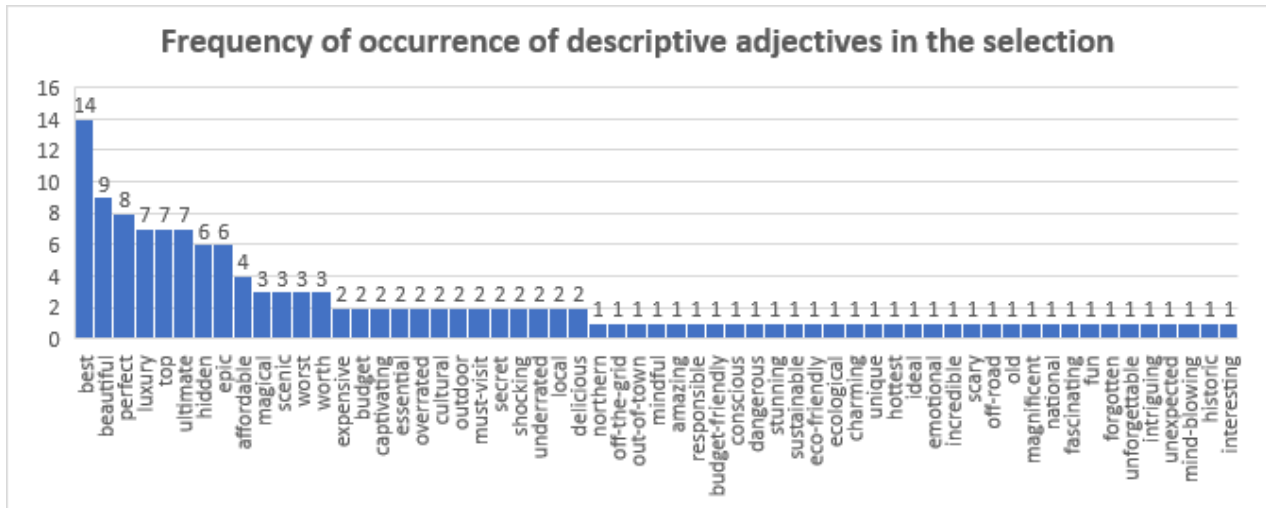
Fig. 1. Frequency of occurrence of descriptive adjectives in the selection

To illustrate, «Kasia Writes» shares a post about «BEST Must-Visit Museums in Athens for History Lovers» to show her readers the places that are really worth visiting (see Fig. 2).

BEAUTIFUL means «having beauty; giving pleasure to the senses or to the mind» (Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, n.d.). Travel bloggers use this adjective to show that some place is extremely attractive and aesthetically pleasing. Fig. 3 shows the video titled «3 Days in Corfu Town – Most BEAUTIFUL Greek Island Getaway» («The Planet D»), which is supposedly aimed at attracting tourists who want to experience this amazing destination for themselves.

There are several definitions of PERFECT given by the Merriam-Webster Dictionary: «being entirely without fault or defect», «satisfying all requirements» or «corresponding to an ideal standard». The headline «The PERFECT Day in Canggu Bali» («Lost LeBlanc») is likely to attract viewers who want to make their trip impeccable and smooth.

LUXURY describes things that are «expensive and providing great comfort» (Cambridge English Dictionary: Meanings & Definitions, n.d.). In travel blogging, the word LUXURY is often used to refer to places, accommodation or destinations that offer exceptional comfort and exclusivity. The video «7 Days on a LUXURY Cruise» («Lost LeBlanc») may be appealing to viewers looking for premium experiences.

The adjective ULTIMATE states that something is «the best or most extreme of its kind» (Merriam-Webster, n.d.). The headline «The ULTIMATE One Day in Lisbon Itinerary – Portugal Travel Guide» («The Planet D») implies that the blog will outline the best possible way to spend a day in Lisbon, offering the top recommendations, must-see places, and unforgettable experiences.

The descriptive adjective HIDDEN characterizes a place or thing that is «out of sight or not readily apparent» (Merriam-Webster, n. d.). In the context of travel blogging, this term is used to refer to places that are little-known and off-the-beaten-path, where there are no crowds of tourists, and it is possible to enjoy tranquility and solitude. The headline «Discover HIDDEN Gems in New Mexico» («offMetro») offers to visit unique and mysterious places in New Mexico.
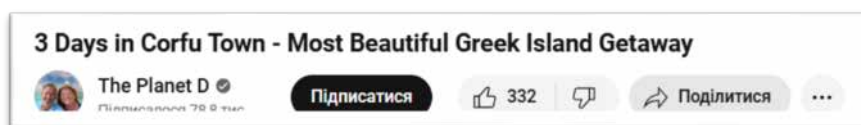

Fig. 2. Kasia Writes' post

Fig. 3. The Planet D's video

EPIC means that something is "extremely good" (Cambridge English Dictionary: Meanings & Definitions, n.d.). In travel blogging, the adjective EPIC is usually used to convey a sense of magnificence and excitement. This post "Mycenae Greece: An EPIC Journey into Myth and History" ("Kasia Writes") promises the reader to have an exceptional experience by visiting this place.

The adjective TOP has the following meaning: « (in the position of being) most important or successful; best» (Cambridge English Dictionary: Meanings & Definitions, n.d.). This headline «TOP Travel Destinations Where Your Heart Should Lead» («offMetro») is intended to attract people, guaranteeing them reliable and indeed the best destinations.

Overall, it was determined that such descriptive adjectives as BEST, BEAUTIFUL, PERFECT, LUXURY, ULTIMATE, EPIC, TOP, HIDDEN are the most frequently used, regardless of the niche of travel blogs.

Categorization and Trends in Descriptive Adjective Usage

Based on the way a noun is modified, adjectives are divided into attributive, predicative, and postpositive [Quirk et al., 1985, pp. 416–417]. Table 1 shows examples of these types of adjectives.

Only two out of a hundred headlines had predictive adjectives, and there was only one postpositive adjective. Thus, it can be concluded that most headlines in travel blogs contain attributive adjectives.

Next, the research will focus on the categorization of the selected adjectives (see Table 2 below).

Evaluative adjectives express a subjective assessment or opinion about a thing or place, such as «AMAZING trip» or «TOP destinations». Emotive ones convey a feeling or evoke an emotional response [Mulligan, 1852]. For example, «MIND-BLOWING destinations» or «SHOCKING experience». Adjectives of place may indicate location or direction, e.g., «the most NORTHERN city», or «OUTDOOR holiday». Significance adjectives emphasize the importance of a thing, for instance, «ESSENTIAL tips» or «MUST-VISIT museums». The sensory category includes adjectives that describe experiences related to perception through visual, auditory, olfactory, tactile, gustatory, and kinesthetic senses [Mulligan, 1852]. Only two sensory adjectives were found in the sample. They are DELICIOUS (gustatory) and SCENIC (visual). Qualitative adjectives describe objective characteristics and qualities of things, phenomena, or places [Mulligan, 1852]. For instance, «SUSTAINABLE tourism», «ECO-FRIENDLY travel tips». Value-based adjectives reflect value or usefulness, such as «EXPENSIVE country» or «AFFORDABLE trip». Relational adjectives describe the relationships between objects or concepts [Heyvaert, 2010]. As an example, CULTURAL means «related to culture».

Besides the most frequently used descriptive adjectives present in almost each of the selected travel

Table 1

Position of the adjectives in the headlines

Position of the adjective	Example
attributive	«BEAUTIFUL **Places** to See and Visit in Ohio This Year» («offMetro») «20 BEST **Hotels** in The World» («Lost LeBlanc») «The BEST LUXURY **Glamping** Ever!!» («The Endless Adventure») «TOP 50 MAGICAL **Castles** in Europe You Should Visit» («Kasia Writes»)
predicative	«**Maldives** is Shockingly AFFORDABLE (But is it WORTH it?)» («Lost LeBlanc») «Is **Ibiza** WORTH the Hype?!» («Lost LeBlanc»)
postpositive	«Discover Hidden Gems in New Mexico: Beautiful **Attractions** WORTH Exploring» («offMetro»)

Table 2

Classification of adjectives

Category of adjective	Adjectives
Evaluative	Amazing, beautiful, best, incredible, ideal, magical, perfect, worst, top, ultimate, unique, hidden, secret, forgotten, fictional, magnificent
Emotive	Mind-blowing, emotional, intriguing, unforgettable, charming, shocking, fun, scary, unexpected, interesting, fascinating, stunning, captivating, dangerous, epic
Place	Northern, out-of-town, outdoor, off-road, local
Significance	Essential, must-visit
Sensory	Delicious (gustatory), scenic (visual)
Qualitative	Responsible, sustainable, conscious, eco-friendly, mindful, off-the-grid
Value-based	Affordable, budget, budget-friendly, expensive, overrated, worth, luxury
Relational	Cultural, ecological, historic, national

Trends in adjective usage across niches

Blog	Niche	Distinctive adjectives
offMetro	Sustainable Travel & Eco-Tourism	Sustainable, eco-friendly, conscious, off-the-grid, responsible, ecological, mindful, outdoor, essential
Lost LeBlanc	Luxury & Budget Travel	Expensive, budget, underrated, shocking, worth, worst
The Endless Adventure	Road Trip	Incredible, underrated, hottest, unique, dangerous, charming, epic, off-road, scary
The Planet D	Adventure Travel	Mind-blowing, overrated, essential, magical, amazing, scenic, fun, emotional, secret
Kasia Writes	Cultural Travel	Iconic, historic, national, magnificent, forgotten, cultural, intriguing, old, fictional

blogs, some adjectives are typical of a certain niche of travel blogs. Table 3 shows some trends across different niches.

Most adjectives in Sustainable Travel & Eco-Tourism are qualitative. They emphasize environmental consciousness, natural beauty, and authenticity. They often convey values of sustainability and ethical responsibility. This might indicate that this niche focuses on mindful travel and attracts those enthusiasts who value minimal impact on the environment.

«The Lost LeBlanc» combines the features of both luxury and budget travel blogs. That means that in this niche, quite contrasting value-based adjectives are present. Therefore, this might be indicative of the fact that its audience is quite wide, as it has the potential to attract those who want to save money, as well as those willing to get an exclusive experience.

Road Trip content contains emotive adjectives evoking a sense of freedom, exploration, and the dynamic nature of the journey and attracts people willing to go through this experience.

The niche of Advanture Travel uses emotive and evaluative adjectives to highlight thrill, challenge, and extraordinary experiences. It appears to target thrill-seekers and those who want to step out of their comfort zones.

Cultural Travel emphasizes evaluative and relational adjectives that emphasize the richness, depth, and authenticity of cultural experiences. It might appeal to travelers seeking a connection with history, art, and traditions. Everyone has their preferences and interests. While some people like something adventurous and extreme, others prefer something cultural.

As mentioned in the theoretical part, headlines play a crucial role in whether a person will watch a video or read a post. Therefore, the use of specific vocabulary for different niches of travel blogs is crucial, as it helps to attract the target audience.

In conclusion, this part of the paper has examined the important role of adjectives in travel blog headlines. The adjectives were analyzed based on their placement within noun phrases and explored how they are categorized according to their functions and meanings. Additionally, trends in adjective usage across various niches were examined, demonstrating how they are strategically used to appeal to distinct audiences.

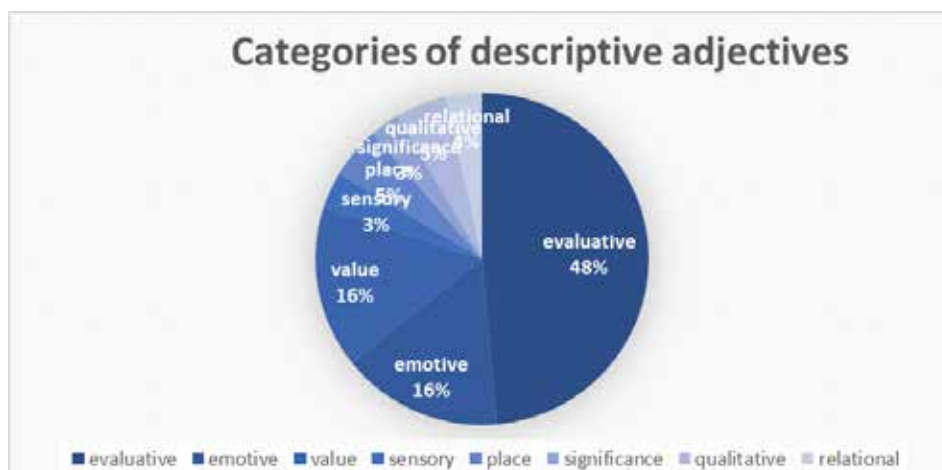**Impact of Descriptive Adjectives on Reader Engagement and Perception**

Fig. 4. Categories of descriptive adjectives and their quantity

As illustrated in Fig. 4, evaluative adjectives make up nearly half (48%) of all adjectives, with value-based and emotive adjectives each accounting for 16%. The other categories are not as frequent.

The data suggests that by using evaluative adjectives, bloggers attempt to frame destinations in a positive light. These adjectives highlight the uniqueness and attractiveness of the location, making readers associate the place with positive emotions. Value-based adjectives focus on the perceived worth or cost of a destination, which may also be very important for readers, as people regardless of social status want to have a wonderful holiday. Emotive adjectives are words that evoke strong feelings or emotions. These adjectives are often used to create a deep emotional response in the reader, making the destination feel more personal, exciting, or intriguing.

These findings could imply that travel bloggers choose these three types of adjectives to persuade and influence the reader, as they are the ones with the potential to evoke the strongest emotional response and shape the perception of tourist destinations.

Adjectives in travel blog headlines are often capitalized, which might be aimed at enhancing their ability to grab attention. As Fig. 5 shows, adjectives in the video titled «The Most EPIC and AFFORDABLE Adventure» («Lost LeBlanc») may increase the probability that it will be noticed.

In Fig. 1, the adjective BEST has the highest usage rate, occurring 14 times. Moreover, the intensifier MOST was used in 17 headlines. In total, the number of superlatives in the research sample is 35. That leads to the conclusion that more than a third (35%) of headlines in travel blog posts contain superlatives. Bloggers might use them to show some unique experience or, on the contrary, a terrible one. They want to give personal advice to the audience, guarantee an amazing trip, and prevent them from unpleasant adventures. For instance, «The Planet D» writes about «5 Best European Summer Destinations» to show the readers the places that are worth visiting. The blog «The Endless Adventure» has a video about «Worst RV Road Trip Ever!», by watching it people can avoid having bad experiences during a road trip.

To conclude, evaluative, value-based, and emotional adjectives may have the greatest impact on reader engagement and perception. When writing headlines, bloggers rely on these types of adjectives because they induce an emotional response among readers and spark more interest. In addition,

capitalizing adjectives and using superlatives in headlines is also common, as it helps to make the content more comprehensible and of course increases people's engagement with the content.

Conclusions and prospects for further investigations. This study aimed to analyze the use of descriptive adjectives in travel blogging headlines, focusing on their role in shaping reader engagement and perceptions of travel destinations.

For this research, 5 modern travel blogs from various niches were selected, such as «The Planet D», «offMetro», «Lost LeBlanc», «The Endless Adventure», «Kasia Writes». A sample of 100 travel blog headlines was analyzed.

The most frequent adjectives were found to be BEST, BEAUTIFUL, PERFECT, LUXURY, ULTIMATE, EPIC, TOP, and HIDDEN. They were thoroughly analyzed within the framework of travel blogging.

Grammatically, adjectives were divided according to the way they modify a noun, specifically into attributive, predicative, and postpositive. It was determined that most of the headlines contain attributive adjectives. Only two out of a hundred headlines had predictive adjectives, and there was only one adjective used postpositively. This indicates that bloggers prefer attributive adjectives in their headlines.

Semantically, the adjectives were classified into the following categories: evaluative (e.g. AMAZING, BEAUTIFUL, BEST, INCREDIBLE), emotive (e.g. CAPTIVATING, INTRIGUING, MIND-BLOWING), denoting place (e.g. NORTHERN, OUT-OF-TOWN) and significance (e.g. ESSENTIAL, MUST-VISIT), sensory (e.g. DELICIOUS, SCENIC), qualitative (e.g. RESPONSIBLE, SUSTAINABLE, CONSCIOUS, ECO-FRIENDLY), value-based (e.g. AFFORDABLE, BUDGET, EXPENSIVE, LUXURY), relational (e.g. CULTURAL, ECOLOGICAL, HISTORIC).

The study identified distinct trends across various travel blog niches. For instance, Sustainable Travel & Eco-Tourism prominently feature qualitative adjectives, while Luxury & Budget Travel emphasizes value-based adjectives. Road Trip blogs frequently use emotive and evaluative adjectives, Adventure Travel leans toward emotive adjectives, and Cultural Travel highlights evaluative adjectives. This demonstrates that bloggers, depending on the niche of their blog, use certain types of descriptive adjectives to attract

Fig. 5. Lost LeBlanc's video

their target audience, to make their content more compelling.

Evaluative adjectives make up nearly half of all adjectives (48%), with value-based and emotive adjectives each representing 16%, while other categories are less frequent. Bloggers rely heavily on these types of adjectives because they may have the greatest impact on audience perception.

To enhance the visual impact and increase the likelihood that a reader or viewer will interact with the content, descriptive adjectives are often capitalized in headlines. Moreover, it was found that superlatives were used in more than a third (35%) of the headlines, which can also affect audience engagement to some extent.

This study offers valuable insights for travel bloggers. Strategic use of descriptive adjectives can enhance blog appeal, boost engagement, and influence travelers' decisions. By selecting adjectives that resonate with their audience, bloggers can craft headlines that capture attention and encourage emotional connections.

Further research into the specifics of using English adjectives in various forms of online communication, including the blogosphere, provides opportunities for a deeper understanding of their role in shaping the audience's emotional perception and behavioral responses. Examining the impact of adjectives on different user segments may help identify patterns that contribute to the effective formulation of texts to achieve communicative goals.

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