Reaching audiences through travel vlogs: the perspective of involvement

Authors
Xu, D., Chen, T., Pearce, J., Mohammadi, Z., & Pearce, P. L.

Published
2021

Journal Title
Tourism Management

Version
Accepted Manuscript (AM)

DOI
https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2021.104326

Copyright Statement
“This is an Accepted Manuscript version of the following article, accepted for publication in [Tourism Management]. [Xu, D., Chen, T., Pearce, J., Mohammadi, Z., & Pearce, P. L. (2021). Reaching audiences through travel vlogs: The perspective of involvement. Tourism Management, 86, 104326. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2021.104326]. It is deposited under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial License (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/), which permits non-commercial reuse,distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited.”

Abstract

Travel vlogs are popular, but how audiences get involved while watching remains unclear. This study explored audience involvement along with expressions of travel intention. A systematic sampling procedure was developed, filtering 132 ‘highly
involving sessions’ from 25 videos in Bilibili, a Chinese video-sharing platform. Qualitative analyses were applied, and the findings were threefold. Firstly, a five-category video content typology was highlighted, including frame aesthetics, video editing, fandom, humour, and tourist experiences. Secondly, bullet comments were deconstructed into six dimensions through examining concepts of ‘audience involvement’. Lastly, to address possible patterns of travel intention linked to the video content types, three propositions were made. This work serves as an exploration of audience involvement in the travel vlog phenomenon, an elaboration of travel intention expression in this context, and a method of assessing tourist-generated videos through bullet comments. Practical implications were discussed.

Keywords: travel vlog; tourist-generated video; audience involvement; bullet comments; travel social media; 弹幕

1. Introduction

Vlog, a visual variant of blog, has gained popularity among users, and gaining scholarly attention across multiple fields (Ladhari, Massa, & Skandrani, 2020; Lee & Watkins, 2016; Snelson, 2013). Travel vlogs refer to tourist-generated videos that can be publicly viewed online, often through social media sites; these videos usually represent the creators’ travelling experience. Some like Peralta (2019) suggested that vlogs are
contributing to a shift of tourist visual self-representations and the circulation of popular travel content. Studying this phenomenon is of both theoretical and pragmatic importance, constructing knowledge and practical guidelines of video-based tourist information sharing and exchange.

Research on travel vlogs, especially those which study vlog audiences offer implications. The work of Cheng, Wei and Zhang (2020), by applying the concept of customer engagement, suggested that travel vlogs can function as word-of-mouth to stimulate travel intention of viewers. Four factors, encompassing source credibility, inspiration, escapism and self-congruence, can exert a positive impact. A limitation of their work is that it lacks clear connections between audience reactions and video content; it remains unclear of what video content triggers positive perceptions of the presented destinations and stimulates travel intentions. This current study seeks to fill the research gap.

Relevant to travel vlogs, the term tourist-generated videos refers to a relatively well-researched filed. Conceptually, travel vlogs are a type of tourist-generated videos. There have been some attempts that investigated tourist-generated videos (Cheng, Wei, & Zhang, 2020; Dinhopf & Gretzel, 2016; Peralta, 2019; Stankov, Kennell, Morrison, & Vujičić, 2019; Tussyadiah & Fesenmaier, 2009), but these attempts did not always include travel vlogs. Considering the utility of travel vlogs as a source for tourist
promotion and information, as well as vlogs being a popular practice that tourists engage with, the vlog phenomenon is worth exploring.

The present study analysed naturalistic data (travel vlog videos and comments) where we adopted the concept of ‘audience involvement’. Audience involvement is a core concept in communication and media studies, indicating the multidimensional participation with media of viewers and their personae (Rubin & Perse, 1987). The concept of audience involvement encompasses the immediate relevance of audience viewing and responding, as it determines the data as a reflection of media-audience relations, in this case vlog-viewer relations, rather than relations between firms and their customers. Examining audience involvement can benefit research by expanding our understanding of the patterns of viewer participation, and may help explain the individual variations of cognitive, affective, and behavioural responses. Our objectives were to develop a typology for travel vlogs content, and a methodological insight gained through the bullet-comment system. The system displays audience comments in real-time while watching (Yang, 2019). The expected practical outcomes emphasise expanding the role of tourist-generated videos in peer tourist communication and destination promotions.

An important concept developed within investigation is that of ‘highly involving sessions’ – video clips in a vlog where bullet comments are intensive. A larger number
of real-time bullet comments indicates a higher level of active engagement by the viewer with the video content while watching a vlog.

This study was guided by three research questions.

1. What types of video content are presented in these highly involving sessions?

2. What types of audience involvement can be observed within the bullet comments of these highly involving sessions?

3. How does audience involvement link to various types of video content? How can these patterns of involvement and interaction contribute to the expression of travel intention from watching vlogs?

This study proceeds as follows. Section 2 poses as an overview of the literature into travel vlogs, online comments in video-sharing platforms and the theoretical base of audience involvement. Section 3 delineates the research methodology, particularly on how to collect and analyse naturalistic data of travel vlogs. Section 4 presents the findings in the sequence of the three research questions. Section 5 presents the discussions and the conclusions.
2. Literature review

2.1 Audience involvement

The concept of audience involvement underpins the theoretical base of the current investigation. The term involvement was sometimes used interchangeably with engagement, absorption and presence (Brown, 2015). In the work of Rubin and Perse (1987), a widely recognised definition of audience involvement was proposed – “involvement, then, is cognitive, affective, and behavioural participation during, and because of, media exposure” (p.247). There are two general types of audience involvement, including involvement with narratives and involvement with media figures (Moyer-Gusé, 2008). The former refers to the response triggered by storylines and narrative structures of media messages, whilst the latter relates to media figures – how viewers interact with characters for who they are and what they do in media programmes.

2.1.1 Narrative involvement

Narrative can be defined as “the larger or broader concept of an account or a description of a sequence of events or incidents” (Moscardo, 2020, p.3). Involvement triggered by such sequences is nominated as narrative involvement (Moyer-Gusé, 2008). Mental processes of viewers, such as emotion, imagination and judgement, towards conflicts,
crises and resolutions from the narrative of media programmes are typical examples of narrative involvement. There are some similar concepts which relate to narrative involvement, such as transportation (Green & Brock, 2000) and narrative engagement (Quintero Johnson & Sangalang, 2016), which also include viewers’ reactions caused by media personae. The present study intends to differentiate audience responses towards media figures from narrative involvement. Thus, we define narrative involvement as a convergent mental process of the audience concentrating on and resonating with events and incidents occurring in the narrative from travel vlogs (Green & Brock, 2000; Moyer-Gusé & Nabi, 2010).

2.1.2 Involvement with media personae

Involvement with media personae includes three sub-concepts, namely parasocial interaction, identification with media personae, and perceived similarity and affinity. These sub-concepts, despite being related to media figures, have different emphases.

2.1.2.1 Parasocial interaction

Parasocial interaction was identified by Horton and Wohl (1956) to describe a one-sided illusionary interaction between performers and their audiences in the mass media. Commonly, audience members actively engage in such interactions and hold a belief that they share an intimate relationship with the media personae (Auter, 1992; Boerman
This relationship is developed voluntarily, and nominated as a parasocial relationship (Liu, Liu, & Zhang, 2019). Positive parasocial interactions and pleasing parasocial relationships can augment marketing efforts and improve the purchase intentions of viewers (Jin & Ryu, 2020; Sokolova & Kefı, 2020). Importantly, although parasocial interactive patterns are usually one-way cultivated by the audience instead of the performers, the latter are able to impact the construction of the interactive patterns (Horton & Wohl, 1956). Media personae tend to present themselves in a positive manner, and thus such purposive presentation orients how audiences react (Lockie, 2019).

Pleasing interaction patterns have the potential to foster positive parasocial relationships, and further contribute to marketing outcomes. Research within online spaces concluded that parasocial relationships improve travel satisfaction (Choi, Kim, Cha, Suh, & Kim, 2019), well-being (Kim & Kim, 2017) and marketing effectiveness (Fu, Ye, & Xiang, 2016; Ye, Fong, & Luo, 2020). In this study, we examined the parasocial interaction in the context of travel vlogs and the media personae within them.

2.1.2.2 Identification with media personae

Identification with media personae describes a mental process in which viewers take the perspectives of the media personae while examining media productions. Cohen
(2001) outlined that “identification is a process that culminates in a cognitive and emotional state in which the audience member is aware not of him – or herself as an audience member, but rather imagines being one of the characters in the text (p.252)”. A key to identification is vicarious experience – a term referring to experiencing things, identities, feelings or thoughts that cannot or have not yet been through. Vicarious experience is closely related to empathy (Boller, 1990). In the tourism literature, scholars have different perspectives on the efficacy of vicarious experience on destination image perception. The work of Riley and Van Doren (1992) suggested that vicarious experience of movie-watching is of central importance to attract potential travellers, whereas Kim and Richardson (2003) concluded that it is not a main driving force and argued that vicarious experience is not as closely tied to empathic involvement. Determining the efficacy of identification and vicarious experience can benefit future studies and industry practices as it would clarify theoretical background and pragmatic guidelines.

2.1.2.3 Perceived similarity and affinity

Perceived similarity and affinity are two similar sub-concepts. The nature of these two sub-concepts is perception and attitude (Cohen, 2001), and both of them are considered as antecedents of parasocial interaction and identification (Turner, 1993). Importantly, affinity occurs before parasocial relationships were constructed, but it encompasses an
evaluation of a media personae and potential intention for parasocial interaction.

Perceived similarity describes how two interacting persons are alike in certain attributes, such as social status, educational background and belief (Eyal & Rubin, 2003; Hoffner & Cantor, 1991). Perceived similarity can increase communication effectiveness. More specifically, by viewing media production, audiences may have a stronger impulse to interact with the performers who share similarities with them. Scholars argued that this concept can enhance customer self-image perception and brand image perception (Hanks, Line, & Yang, 2017), indicate preference in electronic word-of-mouth (Kim, Kandampully, & Bilgihan, 2018) and determine popularity perception and eventually increase purchase intention (Ladhari, Massa, & Skandrani, 2020).

Affinity covers “all instances where a media user displays a liking for a media figure, without identifying with them, or forming a parasocial relationship” (Giles, 2002, p.290). This is essentially a positive evaluation of media characters. For example, viewers tend to favour physically attractive media figures. Such preference is engendered by an aesthetical affinity, where good-looking characters are perceived with better quality and thus more popularity (Liu, Liu, & Zhang, 2019). In some references, affinity is also denoted through social attraction or liking (Moyer-Gusé, 2008).

The concept of audience involvement, despite being rooted in media research, has been
applied in tourism studies as a theoretical basis. More specifically, Kim (2011) found that behavioural involvement, emotional involvement and referential reflection are the three major dimensions of audience involvement among film tourism visitors. A further study by Kim and Assaker (2014) also suggested that a higher level of involvement can bring a higher level of satisfaction. Likewise, Fu, Ye and Xiang (2016) revealed that a higher level of involvement in reality shows can better stimulate audience’s travel intention. Arguably, audience involvement can enhance tourism experience, tourism product marketing and destination promotion.

More importantly, there has been evidence that some components of audience involvement, such as parasocial interaction, contribute to a specific form of tourism activity – film-induced tourism (Kim, 2011; Su, Huang, Brodowsky, & Kim, 2011). Film-induced refers to on-location tourism that follows the success of a cinema production in a particular region (Beeton, 2005). These findings are all based on traditional video production. Thus, a timely research opportunity is to understand audience involvement in the context of travel vlogs. If audiences of travel vlogs actively engage, and thereafter travel to the locations motivated by their involvement, such travelling may show similarities to film-induced tourism. Therefore, the marketing and management implications for this type of tourism activities can be applicable in the context of travel vlogs.
2.2 Analysing naturalistic data in travel video social media

Among the research into travel videos that analysed naturalistic data (the content of both travel videos and viewers’ comments to the videos), YouTube seemed to be a popular research context. More commonly, quantitative description analysis and qualitative methods were employed. Briciu and Briciu (2020) applied descriptive analysis to show the typical patterns in the amounts of likes, sharing and comments on travel videos, which is a projection of the participatory culture. Tiago, Moreira and Tiago (2019) articulated the differences among three types of content by different creators through descriptive analysis of both videos and comments. A critical reflection of these studies is that descriptive analysis, although useful, cannot unpack viewer involvement patterns in detail; to reveal further information embedded in the data requires methodological development. These studies reached a consensus that travel vlogs are increasingly playing a role in promoting destinations to potential markets, which aligns with the study of Cheng, Wei, & Zhang (2020). Overall, it is necessary to develop a systematic method to reveal viewer involvement while watching vlogs, and thereafter to offer in-depth theoretical and pragmatic insights.

We argue that using data from a commenting system like that of YouTube is constrained. An important reason is that this system can neither explicitly link viewers’ responses to video content, nor ensure the immediacy of such responses. By examining the
comments of a vlog, scholars cannot refer to what video content that the viewer mentions. This issue has been addressed, however, in the Chinese platform BiliBili which offers viewers an opportunity to comment on vlogs throughout their viewing (Yang, 2019). These bullet comments, originally labelled as danmaku (弹幕) and in some cases named ‘barrage’ (Hao, Xu, & Zhang, 2019), allow users to present immediate comments on travel videos as they watch. This behaviour is similar to an audience reacting to a live performance in theatre or stage productions, shouting out their comments in reaction to specific actions on stage. Therefore, the system provides evidence to connect audiences’ involvement with video content.

Bullet comments on Bilibili share a similar speed of processing to a technique applied in social and political psychology, the Implicit Association Test (IAT). IAT works on the assumption that the closer a response is to the stimulus that triggered it, the more implicit the attitude of the person (Jost, 2018). Whilst IAT’s are essentially used to identify stereotypes and prejudices, the core methodological principle is similar for bullet comments; i.e. the immediate responses of tourists to video content reflect more honest and genuine reactions from them. In the commenting system like that of YouTube, however, there are potential delays between consumption of video content and involvement (commenting). This study utilises the bullet comments and this similar methodological principle to investigate the concepts of audience involvement.
2.3 Summary of literature review

The concept of audience involvement from communication and media research was introduced as the theoretical base of the current investigation. Figure 1 provides an outlook of critical components of the concept. The four concepts – narrative involvement, parasocial interaction, identification with media personae, and perceived similarity and affinity – underpin the qualitative analysis and further discussion of the findings. The review of research using naturalistic data in travel video social media reveals a need for new methods.

![Diagram of Audience Involvement](image)

Figure 1. The theoretical base of audience involvement for this study

The three research questions address gaps in the literature. The first research question – what types of video content are presented – was set to propose a typology of travel vlog content that attracts most comments. This typology may serve as the first in the tourism context to collect and categorise popular video content. Complexity and
difficulties of applying tourist videos to industry practices and research can be alleviated by the typology.

The second research question – what types of audience involvement can be observed – aimed to understand audience involvement patterns. Addressing this question can help deconstruct viewer-video interactions in the travel vlog context, and therefore to better construct audience experiences, video selections and presentations in marketing practices.

The last research question – how does audience involvement link to video content, and how do these linkages further lead to travel intention expression – focused on the connection from videos to travel intention. It is a response to the knowledge gap of the current bod of literature (Cheng, Wei, & Zhang, 2020; Peralta, 2019). These linkages, if found, can serve as industry guidelines to use travel vlogs for destination promotion.

3. Methodology

This study adopted a pragmatic paradigm. Pragmatism holds that “the function of inquiry is to relieve and benefit the condition of man” (Rorty, 1991, p.27), and its model of inquiry “embraces the two extremes normally espoused by positivism/post-positivism and those supported by interpretivists” (Pansiri, 2005, p.197). In this paradigm, research is considered as a tool to provide solutions and to alleviate
difficulties (Rihova, Buhalis, Gouthro, & Moital, 2018), and it is believed that the combination of methods and philosophical stances that maximise desired outcomes are preferable (Weave, 2018). Multi- and mixed-method research designs are commonly adopted in pragmatism. In this study, the multi-method approach encompasses a combination of quantitative sampling and qualitative analysis.

3.1 Sampling comment-attracted video content

This study utilised a micro-case approach involving the sampling of select units which together build a comprehensive picture of a topic area (Pearce, 2008). Conventional methods in vlogging research take the whole video as the sample unit (Zhang, 2019). However, this can overwhelm data analysis because both useful and extraneous information is included. Compared to conventional studies, this research redefines the sample unit as those containing ‘highly involving sessions’. These sessions refer to those video clips where online viewers actively comment and respond to both the video content and other viewer comments. A large number of user comments represents viewers’ enthusiasm to engage with the video while watching. Thus, the results of the sampling constitute a collection of comment-attracted video clips sampled from travel vlog content. Furthermore, this sampling scheme ensures both generalisability and representativeness of these cases, which is crucial for case-study research (Flyvbjerg, 2006). More specifically, we applied a three-step sampling in this study.
3.1.1 Step one: Choosing a vlog-sharing website

We conducted our research using the popular Chinese video-sharing website, Bilibili (https://www.bilibili.com). Bilibili is one of the largest video sharing platforms in China, originally focusing on animation and gaming videos. It is operated by the similar business strategy of YouTube in which users of the platform are both content viewers and content producers. With an increasing number of users joining Bilibili (1.3 million monthly active users; Bilibili, 2020), the platform presents a diverse range of video content including travel vlogs. Moreover, the bullet comment function is available on Bilibili (Figure 2). These bullet comments are synchronised to “a specific playback time at a specific position in the video, thus offering participants a sense of sharing the viewing experience virtually” (Hamasaki, Takeda, Hope, & Nishimura, 2009, p.222). As Figure 2 shows, bullet comments appear on screen and are then visible to other audience members. Based on the amount of bullet comments, we can identify highly involving sessions and conduct further analysis. The bullet comment system overcomes the weakness of simply using comments after viewing a video for content analysis. It explicitly connects viewer textual reactions with moments in the video content, allowing researchers to locate what triggers the responses of audiences.
3.1.2 Step two: selecting vlogs

We combined ‘旅游’ (Travel) and ‘vlog’ as keywords in searching on Bilibili. We excluded vlogs that are not user-generated, such as destination promotion videos posted by destination marketing organisations (DMOs). Next, we applied two principles in selection. Firstly, we applied a content-based tourism typology from Buhalis (2000) as a guide (Table 1). We examined the content of vlogs and filled each category with at least one vlog entry, or a series of vlog entries recording one trip. This procedure ensured the generalisability and representativeness of our selection, covering most destination types and activities. We did not consider business activities in our coding frame, because travel vlogs mostly record leisure tours.
Table 1. Destination and leisure activity typology by Buhalis (2000)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of destination</th>
<th>Leisure activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>Sightseeing&lt;br&gt;Shopping&lt;br&gt;Show&lt;br&gt;Short break</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sea&lt;br&gt;Sun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seaside</td>
<td>Sand&lt;br&gt;Sex&lt;br&gt;Sports</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ski&lt;br&gt;Mountain sports&lt;br&gt;Health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Relaxation&lt;br&gt;Agriculture&lt;br&gt;Learning activities&lt;br&gt;Sports</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alpine</td>
<td>Adventure&lt;br&gt;Authentic&lt;br&gt;Charities&lt;br&gt;Special interest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Special occasion&lt;br&gt;Honeymoon&lt;br&gt;Anniversary</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Secondly, within each category, we selected one travel vlog or a series of vlogs that recorded a trip to one destination with the largest amount of bullet comments. This criterion maximises the information for the research goals of assessing the driving features underlying vlog popularity (Flyvbjerg, 2006). Eventually, 21 travel vlog entries (each with single entry) and two series of travel vlogs entries (each in the series has two entries) were retrieved based on the above frame and principles in January 2020. For the completeness of travel information in tourist-generated content, if a series was selected, data of all videos in that series would be retrieved. The median length of these
25 videos was 10 minutes 19 seconds, ranging from 5 minutes 7 seconds to 51 minutes 43 seconds. The median number of views was 926,000, ranging from 93,000 to 5,932,000 viewings. The median amount of bullet comments was 12,000, ranging from 3,120 to 64,000.

However, due to the bullet comment display setting, not all comments could be retrieved. Each video, based on its length, has a maximum limit of bullet comment demonstration (飞飏之龙, 2018), and visible ones were those that were produced most recent to the retrieval date. Thus, with all 25 videos, we obtained 48,500 bullet comments, averaging 2,425 comments for each video.

3.1.3 Step three: identifying highly involving sessions

We identified the sessions based on the amount of bullet comments by seconds. We used an assistant software, pakku (https://github.com/xmcp/pakku.js) to retrieve the full list of bullet comments of every selected case. We followed a set of procedures, as in Figure 3, to accomplish this procedure. All bullet comments were categorised by the second when they were displayed on the screen. \( N_i \) indicates the amount of bullet comments in the \( i \) second of the video; \( \bar{N} \) indicates the average amount of bullet comments in one second; \( \sigma \) indicates the standard deviation of bullet comments by seconds.
Firstly, we identified the ‘highly involving moment’, denoted as $N_h$. When $N_i$ is out of 2 standard deviation of $\bar{N}$, $i = h$. Thereafter, a 30-second video clip centring around $h$ was selected, with a 20-second clip before the moment, and another 10-second clip after the moment. Advertising research has established that a 30-second video clip is ideal to achieve the balance between detailed narrative and exhausting the audience (Nudd, 2016). It can be inferred that such 30-second items enable holistic understanding of video content and assist researchers’ goals in analysing the study material. More clips
were taken prior to the key moment due to delays in commenting behaviours. That is, viewers generate the bullet comments at the time or slightly after the point when the content that attracts them appears.

Since we were taking the 30-second approach, there is an opportunity that either or both the 30-second scope of \( h-1 \) and/or \( h+1 \) are overlapping the 30-second scope of \( h \). By a preliminary investigation of some samples, we found that when the 30-second scope of \( h-1 \) and/or \( h+1 \) are within the 30-second scope of \( h \), the contents at these moments are highly related. Therefore, we decided to merge overlapping sessions and treat them as a single independent unit for analysis. As a result, some sessions are over 30 seconds.

Overall, through the three-step sampling procedure, we identified 132 highly involving sessions from the 25 videos. The total time length of these sessions is 112 minutes 27 seconds (6,747 seconds), accounting for 29.4% of the sum of all the videos. Meanwhile, these sessions attracted 53.7% (26,048 out of 48,500) of the total amount of bullet comments.

3.2 Qualitative data analysis

3.2.1 Labelling the content of sampled video clips

We employed a qualitative approach to label video content, which embraced procedures
from the grounded theory. This approach was adopted for two reasons. Firstly, to the
best of our knowledge, there is no guiding theoretical work for travel vlog content.
Secondly, the grounded theory approach is a systematically data-driven approach to
analyse and to understand a phenomenon. Fortunately, there are several studies outside
the scope of tourism research that have applied grounded theory procedures into
qualitative labelling and typological research (Chan, 2010; Voigt & Hohmann, 2016),
which guided the present study.

The grounded theory approach has a long history in informing qualitative research and
continues to be used across a broad range of social science studies (Corbin & Strauss,
1990; Glaser, Strauss, & Strutzel, 1999). There are commonly three phrases of theory
construction, including open coding, axial coding and selective coding (Strauss &
Corbin, 1998). Throughout the coding procedure, researchers should organise nodes
from memo-writing, using common words, phrases or sentences. These nodes are
further grouped into categories according to the similarities; a set of interrelated
categories is then collapsed to represent a theme (Li, Pearce, & Chen, 2019; Zhang,
Tucker, Morrison, & Wu, 2017).

To assure the labels can accurately represent these video clips, after the first round of
manual coding of the video content, a confirmatory procedure was carried out to ensure
the labels represent the selected video clips. We examined the bullet comment content
in the chosen video clips, identifying the key topics in the comments and checking if they matched with the labels coded for a particular video clip.

3.2.2 Thematic analysis of bullet comment content

Deductive thematic analysis was applied for evaluating bullet comment content. The procedures encompass firstly building a preliminary frame, and thereafter following this frame into qualitative examination (Bryman, 2016). The frame was constructed from the important concepts that we identified in the literature section. Moreover, considering bullet comment system is a space for both viewer-vlogger and view-viewer interaction (Yang, 2019), a theme denominated as ‘reactions to other viewers’ was included. Another theme ‘travel intention expression’ was also incorporated because the aim of this study is to see how vlogs may stimulate travel intention. The following guidelines form the criteria of thematic coding:

- **Narrative involvement** – bullet comment content in relation to the sequence of events and incidents occurring in the narrative;

- **Identification** – bullet comment content in relation to a shift of perspective to the media figures in travel vlogs;

- **Parasocial interaction** – bullet comment content in relation to interpersonal
interaction from viewers to media figures in travel vlogs;

- **Similarity and affinity** – bullet comment content in relation to expressing similarity and liking from viewers to media figures in travel vlogs;

- **Reactions to other viewers** – bullet comment content in relation to initiating conversation or drawing response from other viewers in the bullet comment interface;

- **Travel intention expression** – bullet comment content where viewers express travel intention.

Specifically, to minimise coding omissions, other than normal coding procedures, the determination of ‘travel intention expression’ from bullet comments followed another round of keyword searching and manual examination. We searched words ‘想 (want)’, ‘要 (want)’, ‘也 (also)’, and ‘去 (go)’ in the textual data, locating 25 highly involving sessions where audiences expressed their travel intention while watching travel vlogs. Figure 4 demonstrates the procedures of data analysis in this study.
An inter-coder reliability check was conducted for both the qualitative labelling and deductive thematic analysis. We applied the Category Agreement (CA) as the consistency measurement, which indicates good reliability when it reaches over 75% (Schuletheiss & Brunstein, 2001). The CA for this study is 91.5%, which is well above
the accepted level for good reliability.

4. Findings

4.1 A typology of video content

Following the grounded theory procedures, we identified 76 types of video content, and these 76 types were grouped into 14 themes according to their content similarity, which were further arranged into five major categories. The typology was constructed by the categories and themes, which are presented in Table 2 (refer to Appendix A for the full results of our coding). The typology answers the first research question, describing the types of video content observed from these highly involving sessions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categories</th>
<th>Themes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Frame aesthetics (25 sessions)</td>
<td>Filming techniques or skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Background music</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Video editing (25 sessions)</td>
<td>Animation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fandom (67 sessions)</td>
<td>Vlogger-initiated parasocial interaction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Personal characteristics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humour (17 sessions)</td>
<td>Advertising</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Vloggers’ failures and/or mistakes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tourist experiences (107 sessions)</td>
<td>Tourist spending</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sightseeing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Vlogger-engaged recreational activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mundane lifestyle in travelling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Interaction</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Frame aesthetics include video content that can be perceived as productions of special
filming and editing techniques. More importantly, these techniques serve to make more appealing videos. Despite the concept of aesthetics being substantially a subjective evaluation process (Niu & Liu, 2012), there are consensus and criteria of beauty upon contextual differences (Lange, 2011). In the case of travel vlogs, we define aesthetics as basic image elements (e.g. colour, light and space), basic motion elements (e.g. speed, trajectory and transitions), and how all these components interrelate and interact with others. Specifically, these skills are advanced to basic videotaping and video production in perspectives (drone view), context (underwater recording), photography proficiency (time-lapse photography and aesthetic compositions) and processing proficiency (editing skills). What makes frame aesthetics a distinct factor is the collective identity of vlogger’s as amateur video-makers. These techniques improve the quality of videos, and meanwhile demonstrate vloggers’ competencies in video production.

Likewise, the category of video editing also relates to production skills that can be observed from travel vlogs. However, these skills serve the purpose to communicate with the viewers, rather than to make a good-looking video. Commonly in travel vlogs, the episodes (what the media figures do and say) and the frames (how the mediatised settings look like) disclose information to the viewers directly. Conversely, some video editing techniques convey messages indirectly; background music is one major type. Music is capable of conveying emotions, feelings, or creating a specific atmosphere,
sometimes even without linguistic expressions (Swaminathan & Schellenberg, 2015). For example, when a video presents a vlogger’s haunted-house tour in a theme park, adding spooky music may construct a scary and paranormal atmosphere. Animations function similarly, by communicating through cartoonish icons and therefore giving a sense of playfulness and childishness.

Fandom refers to a subculture – forming communities of shared-interest people who may interact with each other (Gray, Sandvoss, & Harrington, 2017). Two important dimensions of fandom encompass perceived membership and communication with other members (Reichenberger & Smith, 2019). As a label in this coding scheme, the term fandom indicates the video content that stimulates fandom communications through showing vloggers themselves and shaping the membership of fan communities. Commonly in travel vlogs, the shared interest forming fandom is an appreciation or an affection towards the vlogger or other media figures. Such enthusiasm eventually reflects in an increased amount of bullet comments that was filtered by our sampling procedure. Monologues in travel vlogs are typical examples – vloggers simply face the camera and talk as if they are communicating with an actual audience. These soliloquys stimulate passionate replies from the fan audience (Frobenius, 2011). Furthermore, a small amount of video content presenting advertising is also categorised as fandom. Such content may receive supportive comments from the viewers arguably due to their
affection to the vloggers. Evidently, the travel vlogs content mentioned above provides space for fan communities and fandom culture.

Humour has a role to play in tourist experiences (Pabel & Pearce, 2019), and in travel vlogs, the label ‘humour’ mainly refers to those funny representations of on-site episodes. The video content under this category is often linked with tourist experiences, and with humour representation and video processing. There are three sub-categories by our summarisation. Firstly, the original experience that vloggers have been through is funny, and secondly, vloggers manipulate humour components in the video through editing procedures, or thirdly, a combination of the former two. This may differ from how humour can be articulated in travel blogs (Pearce & Pabel, 2015), because vlogs (videos), as message carriers, enable diversified image editing and thus more possibilities in representations. The data under the humour category are largely composed of black humour, where vloggers self-deprecate themselves and thereafter display the funny side of their embarrassments.

The last category is the video content recording on-site tourist experiences. There are five themes under the category of tourist experiences, including tourist spending, recreational activities, sightseeing, interactions with other media figures and mundane lifestyle. These themes cover a wide spectrum of practices across vloggers tours, from travelling to settling, from mundane lifestyle to vacation lifestyle, and from singular
activities to collective activities. Two findings emerged through observation. Firstly, the sharing of both positive and negative experiences attracted a large volume of bullet comments. Secondly, there were multiple categories coded in most of the individual highly involving sessions and tourist experiences is the most frequent one, co-occurring with other themes. Specifically, among the 25 sessions that include the theme of frame aesthetics, 19 also include the theme of tourist experiences (76.0%); the sharing percentage with video editing is 80.0%, and 88.2% with humour, 77.6% with fandom. Such coding co-occurrence indicates that comment-attractive vlog content is a mixture of various types of content in multiple ways, and tourist experiences are often where such mixtures take place.

4.2 Audience involvement while watching travel vlog

Applying the deductive thematic analysis, we decoded bullet comment content into five categories under the concept of audience involvement. To illustrate how various types of video content link to audience involvement, a Sankey diagram was produced (Figure 5).
Figure 5. Relationships between video content and audience involvement

In Figure 5, the numeric proportions indicate the percentage of the category in the coding scheme; the colours of the arrows indicates from what type of video content co-occur with types of audience involvement, and the sizes of arrows indicate the frequency of co-occurrence. Among the five categories of video content, ‘tourist experiences’ and ‘fandom’ were two major causes of audience involvement. It is not surprising that tourist experience is a dominant type since sharing travelling stories through a camera is the substance of travel vlogs. However, fandom content earning a considerable proportion is somehow unexpected. Considering the video content in our data is a result of viewer preference, this implies that online viewers welcome an affective connection with vloggers. As for bullet comment content, ‘parasocial
interaction’ and ‘similarity and affinity’ were with dominant numbers.

The arrows between two columns represent how video content co-occurs with bullet comment content. Likewise, the thickness of the linking curves indicates the number of co-occurrences. We found that, regardless of video content type, parasocial interaction and, similarity and affinity are always the two dominant audience involvement patterns. These two co-occurrence patterns took 67.24% (314 out of 467 coding references) of all video-bullet comment arrows. Since similarity and affinity are a component that is highly related to parasocial interaction (Cohen, 2001; Moyer-Gusé, 2008), it can be concluded that the dominant audience involvement patterns are similar to the relationship between celebrities/influencers and their fans.

4.3 Travel intention expression

In this section, we jointly examined video content and bullet comment content in detail to explore the mechanism that triggers travel intention expression. Three propositions were therefore constructed.

4.3.1 Proposition 1: Vlog narrative → Narrative involvement → Travel intention expression

The narratives embedded in travel vlogs can be recognised as parts of the destination
storyworld (Moscardo, 2020), and can orient others to become visitors to the site (Reijnders, 2016). While viewing travel vlogs, such inspiration is likely derived through narrative involvement – audience dive into the ups-and-downs of episodes, and learn from or even copy such experiences. A travel vlog recording a 4,000-metre Himalayas hiking trip is a good example (TSETV 官方频道, 2018). We identified 16 highly involving sessions from this 35-minute vlog. By examining these 16 sessions, vloggers’ hiking story is thereafter recounted, from a confident departure, a set of frustrating setbacks to several breath-taking serendipities. Nearly by the end of the video (The 12th highly involving session in this vlog from 24:32 to 26:25), the story arrives to its climax, where the vloggers overcame their challenges and finally reached the summit (Figure 6).
Figure 6. A summary of vlog narrative from highly involving sessions in TESTV 官方频道 (2018)

Viewers expressed their deep engagement into the rolling narrative and their impulse for travelling to the same place:

*Audience A at 24:33, “只有无限接近死亡，才能体会生命的真谛 – Only by marching towards the death, one then understands the meaning of life.”*

*Audience B at 25:03, “风雨过后见彩虹 – After the storm, came a rainbow.”*

*Audience C at 25:23, “生平一定要去一次这种地方 – It is now a destination on my must-go list.”*

*Audience D at 25:40, “你太轻易得到时是不会有感悟和感恩的 – Things taken for granted breed no exclamation and appreciation.”*

*Audience E at 26:22, “想问一下费用有些想挑战一下自己–How much did you pay? I want to challenge myself as well.”*

Three features were observed from those points where travel intention expressions relate to vlog narratives. Firstly, the climax episodes of travel vlogs tend to stimulate travel intention expression. These episodes demonstrate achievements of vloggers’ own pursuits, commonly a memorable success in their on-site experiences. Secondly, the climax episodes often occur at the second half of a vlog following a positive turn in plot. In advance of the climax, vlogs tell stories in a mixture of both exciting and tedious encounters, both pleasant and frustrating attempts, and both humorous and painful events. Thirdly, video editing plays an active role in narrative-related elaborations. For
instance, background music tends to be impassioned or delightful in these sessions, and
guides viewers’ emotion to develop towards an impassioned direction.

4.3.2 Proposition 2: Tourist experiences $\rightarrow$ Identification (may or may not) $\rightarrow$

Travel intention expression

Well-produced tourist experiences also receive expressions of travel intention. Identification can be a driver for such phenomena. It enables viewers to connect with the characters in the video, imaginatively going to the destination and vicariously participating in on-site activities from a distance. Video content under this proposition are excellent representations of tourist experiences (Figure 7). Often recreational activities through creative shooting perspectives (e.g. point-of-view perspective or through underwater cameras) enable viewers to imagine the site and to better comprehend the flow experiences. The bullet comments from Audience G and Audience I serve as good examples of identification. Audience G expressed an imaginative action extending from the scene in the vlog; Audience I simulated a sense of presence being underwater.
Figure 7. Excellent representations of recreational activities (视角姬, 2018)

Audience F at 1:43, “逮虾户 – Déjà vu”

Audience G at 1:58, “回头一看......我岸呢? – Looking back now... where is the shore?”

Audience H at 1:58, “我也想玩 – I want to play as well”

Audience I at 5:52, “快拉我上去, 我要憋死了 – Pull me up, I am suffocating.”

Audience J at 6:06, “哇这水好清 – Wow, the water is crystal clear.”

Alternatively, high-quality video content can directly raise audience’s willingness to travel without identification. Clips of magnificent views often have such power (Figure 8). In this sense, the clips are sound representations and image constructions of the destinations. From bullet comment content we can conclude that such well-made vlog productions are perceived as closer to that of professional media productions (see bullet comments of Audience K and Audience P). They provide authentic scenes as resources for viewers to construct an imaginative destination (Gao, Zhang, & Decosta, 2012). The quote of Audience N is an example that the vlog enables viewers to imagine the place
featured by mystery.

Figure 8. Excellent representations of destination scenery (Vickysoupssss, 2018)

Audience K at 18:59, “可以当旅游宣传片了 – This vlog can be used as a travel promotion video.”

Audience L at 19:02, “下次回国要带男朋友去!! – Next time when I go back to China, I will go there with my boyfriend!!”

Audience M at 19:15, “有机会一定要去一次 – If I have a chance I will certainly travel there”

Audience N at 32:15, “这是什么神仙地方 – This is such a place of mystery.”

Audience O at 32:19, “BGM 也超级好听的耶 – The background music is super good.”

Audience P at 32:30, “泸沽湖旅游局请给涤纶打钱 – Lugu Lake destination management authority please pay a bill for this vlog production.”

Arguably, frame aesthetics is an important component in these cases as the destinations and on-site tourist activities can be well delineated. With beautiful vlog footages, viewers can more actively imagine the destination positively, and thus inspire their expressing travel intention. Creative shooting is also a part of frame aesthetics, which
reproduces the on-site activities. Moreover, as Audience O noted, background music, or the feature of video editing, is also influential in these clips, presenting a relaxing atmosphere for sightseeing and an intensive atmosphere for water sports.

4.3.3 Proposition 3: Fandom and parasocial-initiative content → Similarity, affinity and parasocial interactions → Travel intention expression

Most sampled vlogs are produced by vloggers who are followed by more than thousands, even millions of, social media audiences. Consequently, there is a clear routine that fans engage actively in these media productions. It happens intensively when vloggers initiate parasocial interaction, and viewers, especially fans, respond enthusiastically. Under these circumstances, the bullet comment content centres around the vloggers – about who they are, what they have done and viewers’ affection for them. The appreciation of the travel destination can be a by-product of viewers’ anchored preference of the vlogger. More specifically, the expressions of travel intention under this proposition occur mainly when vloggers were interpreting where they were, what they did and how they felt. Figure 9 is an example of how interpretations of food in travel vlogs result in viewers’ response with travel intention expression. We infer that because fans share a closer parasocial relationship with the vlogger, fans deem the vlogger with higher credibility (Reinikainen, Munnukka, Maity, & Luoma-aho, 2020), and thus would believe in their interpretation and judgement of the destination and on-
site activities. The parasocial interaction is a pathway for how such reactions may derive.

**Figure 9. Vlogger’s interpretation of Luosifen dining experiences (党妹，2019)**

*Audience Q at 31:08, “你怎么这么会吃！全是柳州比较好吃的螺蛳粉店！— You are so good at restaurant hunting! Where you have been are all good-quality Luosifen restaurants in Liuzhou!”*

*Audience R at 31:19, “我决定了明天螺蛳粉—I have decided that I will have Luosifen tomorrow”*

*Audience S at 31:39, “我想去柳州了!!— I want to go to Liuzhou!!”*

*Audience T at 31:40, “你太可爱了哈哈哈哈— You are so cute hahahaha”*

5. Discussion and conclusion

Before discussing implications and drawing conclusions, some limitations in this study need to be considered. Firstly, due to the application of the bullet comment system, our investigation is confined within one video-sharing platform and single cultural context. Future research may extend the scope into a wider space and context. Secondly, we recognise the intention-behaviour gap, and our investigation only focuses on the
expression of travel intention. Thus, we expect future work can bring travel vlogs offline into on-site tourist experiences and behaviour examinations. Thirdly, as an exploratory study, we focused on a general exploration of video content and audience involvement. Consequently, neither the proficiency of vloggers nor the repeated behaviours of the viewers were analysed in this study. The quality of a vlog production can be affected by the former, whereas the level of intensity in reactions in bullet comments may be different due to the latter. Future opportunities lie in studying audience involvement across various types of vlog producers and vlog consumers.

The first research question, what types of content are presented in highly involving sessions, was answered by a five-category typology of travel vlog content. The typology encompasses frame aesthetics, video editing, fandom, humour and tourist experiences. Importantly, a vlog clip may simultaneously contain multiple categories of content. In this perspective, the categories of frame aesthetics, video editing and humour help construct multi-dimensional representations. For instance, sophisticatedly designed frames are sometimes integrated into the vlog content of sightseeing, so the destination can be well demonstrated. The content of humour, as a tool to raise viewers’ mindfulness (Pearce & Pabel, 2015), can be incorporated into representations of important travel information, such as tourist spending and on-site activities. Video editing helps create a multi-sensory representation of a site, and thereby contributes to
the construction of imaginative geography of destinations; background music is one
typical example.

A rather different type of content is fandom, as it often focuses on showing vloggers
themselves and their relationships with the audiences therefore constructing social
networks. These two practices are distinct features of vlogging regardless of various
contexts (Balleys, Millerand, Thoër, & Duque, 2020). Fandom content enables both
vloggers and viewers to capture self-recognition, and to establish social connections.
Throughout the process, the circulation of video content can be accelerated. A
comparison can be conceptualised here to illustrate how fandom content impacts vlog
circulation. Both travel vlogs (user-generated) and destination promotion videos
(professional-generated, often made by DMOs) are representations of a tourism
destination, but made by two distinct cohorts of creators. In circulation, promotional
destination videos may rely on the attention of people who are interested in the place.
Travel vlogs, however, may circulate faster through the social networks incorporating
intended tourists, and furthermore the communities of vloggers’ fandom groups. Such
social network values of vlogs and fandom content should be noted.

In this study, since the sampling procedure filtered video clips where viewers actively
commented and engaged, the labels and themes within the typology implicate popular
travel vlog content (a full list of the typology is in Appendix A). Deconstructing the
whole video into categories also overcomes the complexity and difficulty in examining travel vlogs. Future inquiries may use this typology to analyse and explore individual types of travel vlog content, such as the creation of a type of content and how such content may impact viewers’ perception of the place and travelling.

The second research question, what types of audience involvement can be observed within the bullet comments of these highly involving sessions, has been addressed by the thematic analysis. Both of the two major categories, audience involvement with narratives and that with media characters, were identified; the latter is more prevalent. More specifically, the component of parasocial interaction, and that of similarity and affinity, are dominant. Since similarity and affinity are antecedents of parasocial interaction, it can be concluded that parasocial-based involvements are in the majority. Previous studies suggested that parasocial interactions and parasocial relationships are crucial for influencing marketing practices (Reinikainen, Munnukka, Maity, & Luoma-aho, 2020; Sokolova & Kefi, 2020). Since vloggers are often internet influencers, the parasocial interactions surrounding their vlogs will be noted, which also links to the above discussion about the video content typology of fandom.

Additionally, the concept of participatory culture is relevant to this discussion. It indicates consumers of media content participate in the creation and circulation of new content (Burgess & Green, 2018). In the Chinese context, a term ‘fandomisation’ was
proposed to describe an overwhelming trend across online video and television platforms, where viewers play a stronger role in swaying media production (Fung, 2019). A reflection of both participatory culture and fandomisation into travel vlogs is that vlog productions may potentially accommodate audience’s preferences, and if so, travel vlogs are thus co-creation by vloggers and online viewers. In this regard, how viewer-audience communication may impact travel vlog production and the outcome of such impact remain open for future investigations.

In addressing the last research question, how audience involvement links to various types of video content and how these linkages contribute to the expression of travel intention, three propositions were proposed by examining the co-occurrence patterns between video content and bullet comments.

- **Proposition 1** implies that narrative construction in travel vlogs makes the audience actively engage, and thereafter express travel intentions. As Tussyadiah and Fesenmaier (2008) suggested, narrative construction in blogs enables readers to better understand a destination and hypothetically ‘rehearse’ a journey. Arguably, travel vlogs with a narrative representation can likewise benefit viewers in this manner.

- **Proposition 2** suggests clips that are more capable of generating audience
identification are ideal exhibitions of on-site activities and destinations. These creative and appealing representations of on-site experience in vlog can help construct imagination (Gao, Zhang, & Decosta, 2012; Tussyadiah, Fesenmaier, 2009) and trigger expressions of travel intention. This links to the work of Hsiao, Lu and Lan (2013) that aesthetics in travel blogs increase readers positive perception of a destination and intention to travel.

- Proposition 3 indicates that travel intention expressions also relate to viewers’ attachment to the vlogger, giving an account of fandom culture. This proposition links to the literature of internet-influencer marketing in the tourism context (Gretzel, 2018; Jang, Kim, Kim, & Chun, 2020). Furthermore, such attachment towards vlog figures may be related to source credibility; if viewers are members of the fandom group, they may be more likely to trust the vloggers and appraise what vloggers presented as credible (Reinikainen, Munnukka, Maity, & Luoma-aho, 2020)

5.1 Theoretical contributions

Overall, the contributions of this work to the literature are: firstly, our work deepens the understanding of the travel vlog phenomenon through the perspective of audiences. Secondly, we propose the typology of vlog content, which classifies the complex
information in popular travel vlogs. The theoretical value of the typology lies in disassembling a whole video into components and segmenting future research orientations by each category of the content. Meanwhile, we also recognise that our typology is based on highly involving sessions, so we also encourage future research to revisit the categorising system and to apply it to video content beyond sessions where people actively generate involvement. Thirdly, the video-audience involvement patterns provide a clear insight into how people appreciate and engage with travel vlogs. Three propositions of how these patterns contribute to travel intention are articulated. These propositions are a further supplement to the work of Cheng, Wei and Zhang (2020), explaining how travel vlog content generates a promotional effect. Moreover, we found that identification with media figures is capable of stimulating travel intention, which aligns with the conclusion of Riley and Van Doren (1992), but not with that by Kim and Richardson (2003).

5.2 Practical implications

Practical implications are provided mainly for travel vloggers and travel marketing practitioners. For travel vloggers, the typology of vlog content and the video-involvement patterns are useful in planning and guiding their production. The categories of frame aesthetics provide clear directions for vlogging skill cultivation. Moreover, judicious use of humorous content can be incorporated to entertain audiences.
In terms of the content of tourist experience, future research may consider specifically examining viewers’ sentiments towards the different themes under the category, which may provide an even clearer map to produce effective travel vlogs.

For destination and travel marketing practitioners, the implications are twofold. Firstly, the three propositions can function as guiding principles when destination managers take vlogs into marketing consideration. Travel vlogs embedded with narratives, first-person filming, and quality frame aesthetics should be prioritised. Alternatively, while destination managers collaborate with professional vloggers, they could recommend preferred video content to vloggers. Secondly, the fandom culture and communities that surrounds these professional vloggers must be considered in marketing practices. Destination managers, if they work with professional vloggers, should be mindful of their fandom groups (e.g. which countries/regions they come from; on which platform they gather and socialise). Such a profile of vloggers’ fandom groups may determine how the destination image (the travel vlog) can be distributed.

5.3 Methodological development

This study adopted the bullet comments system to assist the analysis of travel video content. It is a response to the call for methodological development in using videography as data for tourism research (Decrop, Frochot, & Masset, 2020). Because
the system allows viewers’ comments to be displayed in real-time of video playing, the linkages between viewer reaction and video content can be located. This method can be adopted beyond the Bilibili context, which has been manifested by the work of Hao, Xu and Zhang (2019). Additionally, the bullet comment system can also be employed to study live streaming, an emerging leisure activity (Huertas, 2018; Taylor, 2018). Additionally, since streamers developed the commercial use for advertising and product-selling (Wongkitrungrueng & Assarut, 2018), our method may help determine the consumption patterns and effectiveness of live-streaming and advertising.

Apart from methodological considerations, based on our observation and previous research (Hao, Xu, & Zhang, 2019), we argue that the presence of bullet comments may influence viewer perception of and attitudes towards the video content. Such an effect should be further investigated, and can help understand travel media users and their behaviours. Bullet comments themselves are eye-catching, and in some extreme cases, they can even fully occupy the whole screen (Figure 2). The messages in bullet comments can sometimes enrich the watching experience as audience viewing is further enhanced by other audience members’ involvement, enriching their experience with the comments of others as they view and connect with the media figure. When audience share their expectations, experiences and memories about where the videos were shot, other viewers can obtain this information and integrate it into their cognitive activities.
Future work may follow this pathway to determine whether bullet comments construct
destination images independently or jointly with the video content in travel vlogs or live streaming.

Reference


Nudd, T. (2016). Google Tested 3 Versions of This Honey Maid Ad to See Which Worked Best Online. *Adweek.* Retrieved from https://www.adweek.com/brand-marketing/google-tested-3-versions-honey-maid-ad-see-which-worked-best-online-170775/


Appendix

Appendix A. The coding scheme of travel vlog content

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categories</th>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>Video content labels</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Filming techniques or skills</td>
<td>Underwater filming*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frame aesthetics</td>
<td></td>
<td>Time-lapse photography</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Aesthetics composition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Drone</td>
<td>Transition effects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Transition effects</td>
<td>Slow-motion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Image colour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Frame beautification</td>
<td>Romantic music</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Relaxing music</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Patriotic music</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Paranormal music</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Background music</td>
<td>Intense music</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Video editing</td>
<td></td>
<td>Encouraging music</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Animation</td>
<td>The opening session of a vlog</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The opening session of a vlog</td>
<td>Gift lottery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Telling jokes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fandom</td>
<td>Vlogger-initiated parasocial interaction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal characteristics</td>
<td>Interpreting destination</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Greeting to audience</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Feeding audience</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Making complains to the audience</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cheering audience</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Giving birthday information</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Selfie filming</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advertisements</td>
<td>Products irrelevant to tourism</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Wrongly speaking another language/dialect</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Setbacks in recreational activities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Vloggers are scared</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Unable to interact with other media figures</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Vloggers’ hat was blown away</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Disappointing haircut service</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Exotic (unacceptable) Food</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Falling onto the ground</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Failure to be punctual</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Being hit by bird faeces</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humour</td>
<td>Spending at a restaurant</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Spending for on-site activities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Spending at bars</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Spending on accommodation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Seaside</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mountain area</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Grass plain</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bird-eye viewing from aircrafts</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sightseeing</td>
<td>Architecture</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Making wish</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Watching show</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Going to a theme park</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Watching Sunrise</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SPA</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Skiing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Seaside sports</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Poem game</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Playing with snow</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Picnic</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Photo taking</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tourist experiences</td>
<td>Vlogger-engaged recreational activities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Adventure in jungle</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unpack suitcases</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Watching TV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mundane lifestyle in travelling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Going to toilet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Putting on makeup/dress-up</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A tour around the accommodation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Having haircut within destination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grocery shopping</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service provider</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Companions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Animals</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Further explanation:

An example was provided to help illustrate how we identify and label the content. In the video of 视角姬 (2018) from 5:20 to 6:00, the vlogger applied underwater filming, and we labelled such content with this feature. Other labels were generated following the same pattern.