An Analytic Study of the Evaluative Resources Used in American and Iraqi Opinion Columns

Ishraq Abdulredha Alsandeli
Department of English, College of Languages
University of Baghdad, Baghdad, Iraq
Corresponding Author: ishraqlami@gmail.com

Rihab Abduljaleel Saeed Alattar
Department of English, College of Languages
University of Baghdad, Baghdad, Iraq

Abstract
This study investigates how American and Iraqi writers utilize the evaluative resources in newspaper opinion articles (henceforth, op-eds) from a critical discourse analysis perspective. It explores how American and Iraqi writers of op-ed pieces draw on the evaluative resources to establish their attitudes, create rhetorical effects, and serve their ideologies in influencing readers' and addressees' feelings and attitudes towards certain subject matters. This study hopes to enhance the critical thinking of readers of an increasingly important journalistic genre in democratic societies. The main questions this study raises are: On which categories of attitude markers do American and Iraqi op-ed writers base their evaluation? Which types of referencing external voices are the most recurrent? And why? The researcher adopts Martin and White's (2005) appraisal theory and Van Dijk's (2006) ideology perspective to achieve the study's goals. After applying qualitative and quantitative analysis methods, the study finds that the significant ideological strategy of positive-self presentation and negative other-presentation significantly motivates the evaluative resources used by American and Iraqi op-ed writers. Both American and Iraqi op-ed writers use similar evaluative techniques in terms of distribution. The analysis also finds that there are variations concerning the overall frequencies and the frequencies of the sub-types of evaluative resources under examination across the corpus.
Keywords: Attitude markers, critical discourse analysis, evaluation, external voices, opinion articles

Introduction

Op-ed pieces are a significant platform of public discourse, especially in democratic societies. This journalistic genre functions to pass certain opinions over specific issues to the reader. It exhibits powerful sermons where individuals, including professionals, politicians, journalists, and academics, deliver arguments, evaluative beliefs, and direct evaluations. Those individuals usually reflect on various dialogistic and contentious issues of public interest.

Op-ed writers operate within a framework of a dialogic relationship to influence readers' feelings and construct or change their attitudes regarding specific topics. Hence, those writers strategically utilize specific linguistic features that reflect evaluative and attitudinal meanings. Op-ed writers deploy the interpersonal sense of attitude semantics, which contributes to revealing their opinions. According to Lihua (2009), one of the significant interpersonal resources in op-ed pieces is the appraisal meaning, most notably, the attitude lexis. Op-ed writers use this dialogistic heteroglossia repertoire to employ their legitimation, persuasion, manipulation, domination, etc. These attitudinal resources operate as markers that reflect the nature of the social relations binding the writer with their putative readership in the communication pattern. It is worth noting that every form of discourse has a distinct style for evaluation. The journalistic discourse, for instance, has various evaluative techniques correlating with the subgenres of journalism. Martin and White (2005) talk about different attitudinal styles in mainstream journalism. The journalistic attitudinal styles cover the 'reporter voice' and the 'writer voice.' The reporter voice style is associated with hard news reporting. On the other hand, the writer voice style includes the 'correspondent voice,' which is linked to the section of the analysis, and the 'commentator voice,' which is correlated with the opinion/comment section. In the reporter voice style, there are attitudinal restrictions because writers obscure their presence or their intersubjective positioning, at least, explicitly. There are no unmediated inscribed judgments but only implicit or invocations of judgment. The writer voice style permits a more individualized style of writing where writers use inscribed judgments discursively. Still, there are some attitudinal constraints in the correspondent voice style. In the commentator voice style, writers have full access to all types of attitudinal meanings, inscribed (explicit) or invoked (implicit) meanings.

The attitudinal resources received a vital attention in other journalistic genres such as hard news, news reporting. However, little CDA research has been conducted to examine the attitudinal resources and the engagement of external voices in op-ed pieces. Opinion pieces have become increasingly important as a communication channel between text producers and text recipients in light of the rapid cyberspace advances and freedom of expression democratic societies witness today. This study is an attempt to fill in this gap. The researcher seeks to enrich the existing literature by investigating the evaluative resources under the canopy of attitude semantics besides exploring the employment of the rhetorical device of referencing external voices. Referencing external sources apparatus also plays an evaluative role in the signed opinion journalistic articles. The study helps readers interpret what they read in such a genre with a critical eye. The current study strives to investigate the op-ed genre in two vastly different communities linguistically and culturally, drawing on Martin and White's (2005) appraisal theory and van Dijk's (1995, 1997 & 2006) ideology theory.

Given the flexibility granted to the writers of the op-ed genre in using all kinds of evaluation, the present study sets itself toward answering the following research questions:

1. Why do op-ed writers use evaluative meanings in their argumentations?
2. What are the similarities/ differences between American and Iraqi op-ed pieces regarding writers' employment of the various patterns of attitude markers and the types of referencing external voices?
3. Which categories of attitude markers do American, and Iraqi op-ed writers base their evaluation?

The present study aims to examine the micro-macro matching between the distinctive evaluative linguistic features and the ideological motives. The current study hypothesizes that the primary ideological strategy that motivates the use of the evaluative resources is the positive self-presentation and negative other-presentation. The study also aims to identify the distinctive linguistic features which characterize writers' journalistic evaluative styles in the American and Iraqi opinion pieces. Consequently, this study intends to reveal any similarities or differences between the two types of data in terms of attitude micro-semantics and referencing external voices. The study hypothesizes that American and Iraqi writers employ different evaluative resources to serve their motives.

Literature Review
Critical Discourse Analysis
Critical Discourse Analysis (henceforth, CDA) is an established international and heterogeneous linguistics paradigm. The CDA approach is interested in critically exploring language use as a social practice. However, CDA is not a particular method for applying discourse analysis. Instead, it is a transdisciplinary approach in which theories and methods from different linguistic and social disciplines may be used (Wodak & Meyer, 2008; Titscher et al., 2000, cited in van Dijk, 2011). Furthermore, CDA may deal with various areas within discourse studies, such as discourse grammar, conversation analysis, discourse pragmatics, rhetoric, stylistics, argumentation analysis, and so on.

The general properties of CDA, according to van Dijk (2011), can be seen as focusing primarily on social problems of political nature rather than simply analyzing discourse structures independently of their social and political contexts. Thus, instead of merely describing discourse structures, CDA attempts to explain them in relation to the features of social interaction, particularly social structures. Van Dijk (2011) suggests that "CDA focuses on the ways discourse structures enact, confirm, legitimate, reproduce, or challenge relations of power abuse (dominance) in society." (p. 467). The ways dominant groups use to control text and context and, hence, the mind are vital elements within the theoretical framework of CDA.

Weiss and Wodak (2003) refer to CDA as a school with a set of principles stressing that this field "cannot be viewed as a holistic or a closed paradigm" (p. 12). Moreover, there is a general conceptual framework of CDA within which most forms of CDA operate. The CDA framework consists of questions about how dominant groups employ particular discourse structures in the reproduction of social dominance. Hence, the typical notions that circulate in the theoretical framework of CDA include power, dominion, hegemony, ideology, class, gender, race, discrimination, interests, social structure, and social order (van Dijk, 2011). In addition, the context of language in use and language as social practice are crucial principles of CDA (Fairclough & Wodak, 1997).

CDA investigates the link between social and political practices against a backdrop of social values, norms, and social structures. CDA analyzes how interactants distort this interconnectedness in the relationships of dominance, discrimination, control and the subsequent inequalities (Fairclough, 1985, as cited in Wodak, 2001). Thus, CDA theorists are interested in studying meaning in terms of cognitive models on a societal level (Wodak, 2001). One of the CDA goals is to present a description of discourse in context. CDA also explains why and how discourse operates (Rogers, 2004). In other words, it aims to reveal why a given discourse looks as it is and what it tries to achieve (Rogers, 2011, as cited in Paltridge, 2012).

CDA analysts hold that there is no direct relationship between text and society. Instead, the social relationships of dominance and power mediate between text and society. Moreover, the ideologies of powerful groups operate in the legitimization of these social relationships. Most of researchers in this domain agree that language is ideological because it is not employed to articulate legitimations of power relations. Language is used as a medium to practice dominance and social power (Wodak, 2001). Henry and Tator (2002) define CDA as a tool to give a critique of the ideologies of the powerful groups like the mass media. They also hold that CDA is a tool to identify and clarify social, economic, and historical power relations between the interacting groups. In Al-Utbi's (2019) opinion, "this definition implies that in every CDA endeavor there is the question of how texts make a reproduction of the represented ideology of the world" (p. 26).

CDA endeavors to diagnose the linguistic structures which establish power relations and help naturalize and manipulate social links. This linguistic paradigm uses different linguistic theories, most notably, the Hallidayan Systemic Functional Grammar, the Chomskyan grammar, social theories, and sociolinguistic theories (Wodak, 2001).

The researcher now turns to give a brief review of typical recent related studies. In their study entitled "*Talking War: How Elite U.S. Newspaper Editorials and Opinion Pieces Debated the Attack on Iraq*," Nikolaev and Porpora (2007) investigated how the elite press discussed the proposed American military intervention in Iraq in 2003. At the macro-level of analysis, the study examined the overall characteristics of the attitude of each piece. This macro-level analysis explored whether a given piece was with or against President Bush's policy towards Iraq or even neutral. Nikolaev and Porpora's investigation focused on disclosing each article's primary attitude, whether it was wholly moral or prudential or both. At the micro-level of analysis, Nikolaev and Porpora (2007) adopted Entman's (2003) model to analyze the data regarding the presence or absence of 67 argumentative points, assertions, or assertion-types in an attempt to figure out the nature of agenda-setting in the elite press. In her study "*Attitude and Subjectivity in Italian and British hard-news reporting: The Construction of a culture-specific 'reporter' voice*," Pounds (2010) compared between the British and Italian online versions of news reporting regarding writers' employment of subjectivity markers. The study aimed to explore and contrast the reporter style in Italian and British hard-news texts. The writer drew on Martin and White's (2005) attitudinal categories, in addition to other evaluative categories she found necessary in the analysis of both types of data. Those categories included colloquialisms, the distinction between event-related/non-event-related 'appreciations.' Wilson et al. (2012) conducted another study that dealt with op-ed pieces. The study was entitled "*Argumentation and fallacy in newspaper op/ed coverage of the prelude to the invasion of Iraq*." The analysis of the study centered on the Argumentation Theory from a CD perspective. The researchers of this study investigated how the writers of pro-war and anti-war op-ed pieces debated the U.S. resolution to invade Iraq. The study

labeled both the signed opinion pieces and editorials as op-eds. The corpus was composed of op-ed pieces retrieved from six elite daily broadsheet newspapers selected from Western countries and the Al-Ahram weekly newspaper as a representative of the Arab world. The study explored the fallacious arguments adopted by some widely-read newspapers, and examined how such macro-societal debates over war and peace were either bolstered or called into question by public discourse. In a study entitled "*Discoursal Analysis of Rhetorical Structure of an Online Iraqi English Newspaper,*" Shakeh et al. (2015) analyzed a set of op-ed pieces selected from the Azzaman: an Iraqi daily newspaper with English and Arabic pages. The analysis tackled the rhetorical structure of these pieces. The aim was to identify the patterns of the rhetorical structure adopted by the Iraqi writers writing opinion pieces in English as a second language. The study followed a qualitative method of analysis, and the topics selected were of political focus. The researchers used the rhetorical structure theory of Van Dijk (1993) and Katajamaki and Kosketa (2006) to achieve their research objectives. Al-Rickaby (2020) also made a CDA study entitled: *A Critical Discourse Analysis of Stance and Engagement Markers in English and Arabic Newspaper Opinion Articles in 2016.* Al-Rickaby's study investigated the patterns of stance and engagement markers in English and Arabic newspaper op-ed pieces to examine their role in the interaction between the text producers and text receivers. He followed Hyland's (2005) model and conducted a qualitative-quantitative analysis. S. H. Rasul (2021) carried out a recent study that dealt with evaluation language in news reports. The study was entitled: *Evaluation in Media Reporting: A Comparative Analysis in BBC, CNN, and Aljazeera Reports*. The topics of all the news reports selected tackled the fifth anniversary of the war against Iraq in 2003. The study sought to disclose the perspective of each media agency drawing upon Martin's (2008) Appraisal model.

Despite the crucial contributions made to opinion pieces and the language of evaluation, the existing literature needs enrichment of another kind. The previous studies focused either on analyzing the evaluation language in a broader sense with diversified categories as Al-Rickaby (2020) did or on exploring this genre for other points of inquiry, at least in Iraq. The current study deals with the language of attitude as a primary tool for evaluation and intersubjective meaning in op-ed pieces. Referencing external voices device also needs to be investigated with some detailed account. The op-ed genre deserves a limelight position by analyzing it from different perspectives in Iraq.

Ideology

The concept of ideology as a focal notion in CDA, dates back to late 18th century France. It was devised by Antoine Destutt de Tracey in the years following the French Revolution to denote a new system of ideas. De Tracey claims that people's ideas are not the product of God or nature but are the product of their social experience as grasped through their physical senses (McLellan, 1986, as cited in Richardson, 2007).

Traditionally, the concept of ideology was viewed as carrying negative connotations consisting of false beliefs. It was, thus, considered non-objective, only playing a role in the legitimization of dominant groups and their abuse of power when the dominant people embrace dominant ideologies dealing with them as natural and commonsense. However, at the advent of this concept around 200 years ago, ideology was not associated with this negative connotation. Instead, it started to refer to a new system of ideas. In its current use, ideology indicates a neutral approach of socially shared beliefs that could be positive or negative or may not be valued altogether, based on people's perspectives, group membership, or ethics (van Dijk, 2006).

Following Marx's (1998 [1848]) vision on ideology, Gee (1990) suggests that the discourse of the elite and powerful people does not reflect actual reality. But, their ideologies reverse and manipulate reality to make it sound the way they want it to be to maintain and promote their power and interests. Ideology, therefore, reflects relations, not a reality in its accurate picture; in other words, it reflects fact as perceived by powerful elites (Richardson, 2007).

Ideologies are based on norms and values; therefore, they cannot be right or wrong. Instead, people can judge ideologies as more or less efficient in protecting the interests of a group. From a cognitive point of view, ideologies constitute the basis of the mental representations shared by members of a social group. Ideologies help organize and coordinate the attitudes of social groups and specific discourses of group members besides other social practices. Hence, ideologies stand for the fundamental principles which dominate social judgments (van Dijk, 1997, 2006). Additionally, ideologies contribute to identifying the social identity of a group and its self-image and are associated with categories like membership, activities, goals, values, position, etc.

Since ideologies are socially-shared, they are discussed based on a socio-cognitive dimension rather than an emotional one. Emotions are personal and temporal; therefore, groups cannot share them continuously. Yet, in actual situations, members of social groups may apply or express ideologies in terms of emotions (van Dijk, 2006). Theoretically and analytically speaking, ideologies have two dimensions. The social dimension in which social communities and their members share ideologies, and a cognitive dimension, according to which ideologies are mental representations stored in the mind and long-lasting memory. It is worth noting that van Dijk (1997), in his approach to ideology, deals with this concept in terms of a socio-cognitive perspective.

Ideologies, being perceived in social norms and practices, are manifested in newspapers, novels, dramatic texts, etc., not only to direct the audience's attention to these ideologies as believed by Nasser and Khalil (2021) but also to affect their beliefs and attitudes. The main structure of ideologies which influences opinions and attitudes in text and talk is the polarization represented by Us vs. Them, Self vs. Others, that is, the positive self-presentation and negative other-presentation, exemplified in 'We are good and they are bad' (van Dijk 1997, 2006). The second primary ideological strategy is: mitigating Our wrong actions and Their good actions, and emphasizing Our good actions and Their wrong actions.

Genre

In rhetoric, literary theory, media theory, and linguistics, the concept of genre denotes a distinctive kind of text, For Chandler (1997):

> Conventional definitions of genres tend to be based on the notion that they constitute particular conventions of content (such as themes or settings) and/or form (including structure and style) which are shared by the texts which are regarded as belonging to them. (p. 3)

Traditionally, genres, in particular literary genres, are treated as fixed forms. The contemporary theory, however, emphasizes that genres are dynamic in terms of both their structures and functions (Chandler, 1997).

Genre is a social process that is both staged and goal-oriented. It is social because discourse users engage in genres with other people. Genre is also staged in that it usually takes them a few

steps to achieve their goals and is goal-oriented because participants use genres to get things done (Martin & White, 2005). According to some Marxist commentators, a genre is a tool of social control speakers/ writers use to reproduce the dominant ideology in society. In other words, genres position the audience in the text to naturalize the ideologies embedded in that text (Feuer, 1992). This ideological dimension of genres has led some theorists to redefine genres in terms of their purposes. In Swales' (1990) opinion, "the principal criterial feature that turns a collection of communicative events into a genre is some shared set of communicative purposes" (p. 46). Chandler (1997) emphasizes that the purposes of not only the producers of texts but also the interpreters of media texts as a genre are crucial dimensions in the analysis of mass media.

Within genres, participants in a text use specific modes of address such as a reader and a writer; a listener and a storyteller; an interviewer and interviewee; a person to be instructed and a person who instructs, etc. Participants have different possibilities for response and action according to their positionings within a text. Each written text represents authorial attempts to construct a reading position for the ideal reader (Chandler, 1997; Kress, 1988). Participants' positionings suggest that there are countless genres whose number in any society depends on the complexity and the diversity of that society (Miller, 1984, cited in Freedman & Medway, 1994). Print media, for instance, contains many genres, including books, small prints, pamphlets, newspapers, and journals. Writers readers can differentiate a set of sub-genres in terms of their format, content, subject matter, purpose, function, and readership. For instance, under the broad genre of newspapers, there are sub-genres, including editorials which are unsigned articles representing the publication's value position, op-eds which are signed articles by regular or guest writers) and letters to the editors (Nikolaev & Porpora, 2007). The present study focuses mainly on op-eds, which stand for "one of the central forums that constitute what Habermas (1989) referred to as 'the public sphere' (…) an institutionalized site (or sites) of citizen discourse operating between the state and market" (Nikolaev & Porpora, 2007, p. 8). In Habermas' (1989) opinion, this public sphere is an essential mechanism for democracy where language users can negotiate general judgments; however, it is often methodically distorted by agenda settings.

Opinion Articles

Opinion articles represent writers' opinions, critiques, and arguments about public socially shared news or any event of public concern. Writers usually express their attitude and stance in the written texts to share with readers the overall situation about specific issues (Thompson, 2001, cited in Swayer and Eesa, 2019). Thus, opinion pieces reflect writers' in-group ideologies, being members of particular social groups with social norms and values, which inevitably influence how they formulate their opinions (van Dijk, 1995).

Van Dijk (1995) suggests that language users may express opinions in many kinds of discourse, including everyday conversations, argumentative discourses, and any other type of discourse that involves agreement or disagreement. Van Dijk (1995) adds that "Opinions are mental, whereas much of their acquisition, uses and functions are social, and their expression and reproduction often discursive" (pp. 2-3). Accordingly, a satisfactory explanation of opinions must combine the three elements of cognition, society, and discourse. This integration is required to understand better the functions of ideologies and the patterns of intergroup social relations.

Opinions reside in mind, for having an opinion about something means having some mental representation. Moreover, opinions are not confined to their discursive constructions and context-

dependent manifestations. People may have opinions but not expressed, or they may hold the same opinion on different occasions. Thus, opinions are more than just discursive representations of context-dependent discourses (van Dijk, 1995 & 1997). Still, opinion's modes of expression are necessarily different, reflecting the context in which people express their mental representations. Thus, social opinions are stable as long as they are mental representations but variable only concerning their uses and ways of expression. Though opinions are located in mind, which also consists of emotive dimensions and cognitive ones, it is not necessarily the case that these opinions are affective or expressive. Thus, language users may formulate their opinions without showing any emotions, but this is not to deny the role of emotions in forming opinions (van Dijk, 1995).

Opinions refer to those beliefs that tell us that something is good or bad, right or wrong. Such beliefs are based on norms and values rather than on true or false premises in epistemology. Moreover, when a speaker or a writer bases their opinion on standards of social norms and values, this opinion is likely to be challenged in an environment that encompasses other competing opinions on a given issue. That is, people have their opinions at a time when other people may have different beliefs and attitudes (van Dijk, 1996). The concept of ideology serves as the basis for these evaluative social representations. Ideology, in social terms, is an abstract system of evaluative beliefs held by a social group (van Dijk, 1995a, as cited in van Dijk, 1995).

It is worth noting that opinion discourse, including press discourse in general, involves personal knowledge and socially shared group opinions. Thus, ignoring personal experiences and evaluations implies that all social actors in society would say or do the same thing (van Dijk, 1997). Personal opinions are a range of socially shared beliefs, personal experiences, and evaluations. A significant portion of these subjective opinions are also socially shared views people acquire from the socio-cultural context. Thus, individuals do not have a personal ideology but only a private use in concrete situations. It is worth mentioning that writers/speakers can communicate ideologically-loaded opinions in a text and talk using stylistic and rhetorical devices such as word choice, comparison, rhetorical contrast, lexical repetition, etc.

Methods
Data Description
The analysis of the study covers twenty op-ed pieces chosen equally from three American and three Iraqi daily newspapers to meet the study's objectives. The data selected fall within 2020/2021, with great focus on 2021, which witnessed many economic, social, and political challenges due to the COVID-19 pandemic and its repercussions. The American data consist of ten op-ed pieces from three authoritative and pioneered American newspapers, namely, *The Washington Post*, *The New York Times*, and *New York Daily News*. The Arabic data, on the other hand, are retrieved from three Iraqi well-reputed newspapers, namely, the *State Assabah* Newspaper, the independent *Azzaman* Newspaper, and the independent *Almadah* Newspaper.

It is worth noting that each publication has a different political orientation. For instance, the Washington Post is currently pro-conservative, while the New York Times is known as pro-liberal. Nevertheless, both of these publications, being so popular nationally and internationally, attempt to be objective and neutral in that they touch on others' views having different political orientations. New York Daily News is a Left-wing populist newspaper. As for the selected newspapers which make up the Iraqi corpus, the Assabah Newspaper always tries to adopt a neutral discourse that generally attempts to soothe the widespread discontent and prevalent turmoil since

it is a state publication. On the other hand, the independent Almadah and Azzaman Newspapers adopt anti-governmental discourse by fiercely criticizing the government's performance.

Tables one and two below describe the American and Iraqi data selected for analysis.

Table 1. *A Description of the American Data*

Title	Writer	Date of publication	Publication
1. Everyone Thinks Americans are Selfish. They're Wrong	Abigail Marsh	May 26, 2021	The New York Times
2. Covid's Deadliest Phase May be Here Soon	Zeynep Tufekci	May 28, 2021	The New York Times
3. Create a Jan. 6 Panel, Mr. President	Lance Cole	May 28, 2021	(New York) Daily News
4. Kamala Harris Speaks the Truth about Race, Unafraid	Jonathan Capehart	May 30, 2021	The Washington Post
5. If Biden Wants to Convince the Vaccine Hesitant, Give Trump Credit for the Vaccines	Marc A. Thiessen	July 6, 2021	The Washington Post
6. Dear Progressives: You Can't Fight Climate Change by Going Soft on China	Isaac Stone Fish	July 10, 2021	The Washington Post
7. How Politics is Tearing Families Apart: Partisan and Cultural Divides are Estranging us from the People we Love the Most	S.E. Cupp	Aug. 03, 2021	(New York) Daily News
8. Protests are Taking over the World. What's Driving them?	Zachariah Mampilly	Oct. 3, 2021	The New York Times
9. America's List of 'Undemocratic and Corrupt Actors' Just Keeps Growing	Christopher Sabatini	Oct. 5, 2021	The New York Times
10. Is our Government Buying our Data? We Need a Federal Investigation	Elizabeth Holtzman & Mark Udall	Nov. 18, 2021	(New York) Daily News

As for the details of the Iraqi data, they are presented in the table 2:

Table 2. *A Description of the Iraqi Data*

Title		Writer	Date of publication	Publication
الحريةفيعالمين 1. Freedom in Two Worlds		Meiyada Safar	August 28, 2020	Assabah Newspaper
محنةبلدالوالاستثمار 2. The Ordeal of the Country and the Investments		Hussein Rasheed	April 27, 2021	Assabah Newspaper
فشل المعالجةالتشريعية وثارها السلبية (حضانةالأطفال نموذجا) 3. The Failure of the Legislative Treatment and its Negative Impacts (Child Custody Law as an Example)		Salim Rodhan Al-Mousawi	July 4, 2021	Almada Newspaper

ثقافة الإلكترونية وانعكاساتها على الحياة الأسرية 4. The Electronic Culture and its Effects on Family Life		Ghazwan Al-Mu'nes	July 25, 2021	Azzaman Newspaper
الآفاق الاستراتيجية في مجابهة تداعيات جائحة كورونا 5. The Strategic Prospects of Confronting the COVID Pandemic		Dr. Ahmed Abdulrazaq Shkarah	August 8, 2021	Almada Newspaper
لبس مدوّ الجيش وأطوّع بالجندية 6. Put on a Military Uniform and Enlist in Military Service		Faa'ez Jawad	Sep. 10, 2021	Azzaman Newspaper
المروءة وفي البلاش مامة 7. The Absence of Magnanimity		Mohammed Salih Al-Badrani	Sep. 15, 2021	Azzaman Newspaper
جنوح النيار الاقتصادي عن COVID-19، ولن يتحسن القتصاد باللقاحات 8. The Economic Crash Results not from COVID-19, and the Economy Will not Improve with Vaccines		Dr. Shawqi Al-Tal	Sep. 25, 2021	Almada Newspaper
المهاجرون الكرد .. ظاهرة خطيرة وليست عابرة 9. Kurds' Immigration .. a Dangerous Phenomenon that is not Transitory		Havaal Zakhewi	Nov. 16, 2021	Azzaman Newspaper
ادمان المعاملات الورقية 10. Paperwork Addiction		Basheer Khaz'el	Nov. 16, 2021	Assabah Newspaper

The Research Design

In Martin and White's (2005) opinion, a common practice in discourse analysis is to carry out either a top-down analysis which begins with the broader context towards the study of the specific linguistic realizations, or a bottom-up analysis which starts with the local realizations towards the analysis of their interaction with the wider context. The present study exercises both methods. It considers analyzing the macro-semantics of the selected texts and the prosody of the fundamental attitudes in a given text. The study also explores the attitude markers and their interaction with the general mood of the text and their potential effects on the broader ideologically-loaded attitudinal meanings.

The present study is mainly qualitative. Dawson (2009) proposes that qualitative research explores individuals' attitudes, behavior, and experience, allowing the researcher to gain an in-depth understanding of how individuals think, feel, or behave. However, in MacDonald and Headlam's (2008) opinion, a qualitative method is insufficient as it does not make clear how many individuals feel or think the way they do. Therefore, the qualitative method must be accompanied

by what is traditionally called the quantitative method. Accordingly, the study is quantitative, for it tends to give a statistical account of the various linguistic features utilized in the texts under analysis.

Model of Analysis
Martin and White's (2005) Appraisal Theory

Appraisal theory has been developed within Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) and seeks to establish its evaluative and interpersonal analytic tools. Appraisal theory examines language's interpersonal function not just in terms of interaction but also in terms of its meaning potential to communicate and share feelings. The appraisal approach is one of three central semantic systems that convey an interpersonal meaning alongside negotiation and involvement. It contributes to disclosing the speaker/writer's feelings, values, and authority, social status, and identity (personae). Rhetorically, writers/speakers invest the appraisal meanings in establishing social relations of alignment, power, or solidarity with readers/listeners. By using appraisal meanings, speakers and writers can establish communities of shared feelings, values, judgments, and emotions. The appraisal covers three interacting categories: attitude, engagement, and graduation. As for attitude, the approach to feelings is meant to "move beyond linguistic construal of emotion into domains where attitude is deployed to control behavior and manage taste" (Martin & White, 2005, p. 36). Engagement, on the other hand, is interested in how the writer/speaker positions themselves and engages with others while graduation deals with grading feelings; that is, how strong or weak a sense is.

Among the three metafunctions of language proposed by the Hallidayan SFL, the interpersonal metafunction is the most relevant to the attitude system because the attitudinal meaning has an interpersonal potential of meaning-making. Thus, the masterwork on attitude has developed within the general theoretical framework of SFL as it abounds in descriptions of lexicogrammar, discourse semantics, register, and genre (Martin & White, 2005). Attitude is located mainly in discourse semantics. The resources of appraisal meaning-making could be various levels of lexicogrammar (meaning within the clause) and discourse semantics (meaning beyond the clause). Both cooperate to give the prosodic nature of attitude realization and the general mood of the text. In addition to the attitude lexis, Martin and White (2005) refer to invocations of attitude. That is when the selections of ideational meaning invoke attitudinal meanings.

For Martin and White (2005), attitude semantics covers three types of feelings: affect, judgment, and appreciation. *Affect* revolves around feelings of happiness or sadness, confidence or anxiety, interest or boredom. On the other hand, *judgment* and *appreciation* represent institutionalized feelings in communities of shared values. Those communities make judgment meanings formally accepted as rules and regulations about how one should or should not behave. In contrast, appreciation is related to feelings that estimate the value of things, whether they are worthy or not.

Martin and White (2005) classify judgments into two subtypes: social esteem judgments and social sanction ones. Assessments of social esteem consist of three categories: normality (how unusual someone is), capacity (how capable someone is), and tenacity (how resolute someone is). Iedema et al. (1994) propose that social esteem is a system of positive and negative values in the eyes of the public. Social sanction judgments, on the other hand, cover two categories of feelings veracity (how truthful someone is) and propriety (how ethical someone is), as clarified by Martin

and White (2005). People make judgments of social sanction against a social background of moral ethics, which establishes what good or bad behaviors are.

According to Martin and White (2005), the authorial voice can choose to expand the dialogistic space or contract it. Speakers/writers can expand the dialogistic space by using attribution or entertaining (modality). On the other hand, contraction, which indicates that the textual voice excludes different positions, relies on sub-categories of disclaiming and proclaiming, the last of which includes the endorsement of external agents.

Referencing external voices is one of the fundamental and strategic ways in which the internal agent engages with other agents in a dialogistic relationship to activate certain authorial attitudes through expanding the alternative points of view or contracting them. The types of referencing used for the expansion cover acknowledgment and distancing. In acknowledgment, the authorial voices dissociate themselves from the external agent's proposition as in using reporting verbs (say, state, report, declare, think, believe, etc.) or nominalizations, or formulations like 'according to X,' or in X's view, and so forth. Distancing indicates those formulations when the authorial voice explicitly distances itself from the external voice's proposition. It is conveyed by the meaning of the reporting verb 'to claim.' Martin and White (2005) indicate that the co-text signals can help reveal the author's position towards the attributed material if that position is not made overt elsewhere in a discourse. On the other hand, endorsement represents the cases when the internal voice refers to the proposition of some external source to introduce it as valid, proven, and highly warrantable. Endorsement is realized by verbal processes or nominalizations, such as 'show,' 'prove,' 'demonstrate,' 'find,' and 'point out,' etc. Hence, the authorial voices implicate their subjectivity in the external source's attitude.

The current study deals with the inscribed attitudinal meanings at the micro-level. However, an examination of the concrete elements of the text is insufficient to uncover the genuine textual attitude. To better arrive at the ideologies that motivate those evaluative meanings, the researcher needs to relate the implications of the inscribed attitudes to the general mood of the text by connecting the micro-semantics to the macro-semantics of a given text. In other words, the lexico-grammar realizations with the discourse semantics of a whole text contribute to a complete understanding of the textual attitude (Martin & White, 2005). Moreover, the current study deals with the scope of expansion/contraction of the dialogistic space only in terms of referencing external voices' propositions as in acknowledgment, distancing, and endorsement.

Data Analysis

Before delving into the quantitative and qualitative analyses of the American and Iraqi data, a brief account of the contextual circumstances, which represent the macro-level structure of the texts, is necessary.

In the American op-eds, some of the topics discussed are of global concern, while others are local issues. Moreover, some op-eds are comments on current events that are of public interest and under social debate, such as the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic and the Jan. 6 attack on the United States Capitol. Other texts are arguments about controversial social and cultural issues. There are some other texts which straddle the way between politics and socio-cultural issues, such as the racial treatment against the American Blacks and how officials deal with this contentious issue. The texts of this intersection try to highlight the social and cultural effects of some

politicians' actions and policies. For instance, the Republican and Conservative hesitance to take Covid-19 vaccines and the downplay of the pandemic severity by political Conservatives and some political figures.

The Iraqi op-eds analyzed also deal with current controversial issues. Some of these issues are of local concern, while others discuss global issues. Some texts cover political and socio-cultural issues, whereas other texts embody an intersection between political decisions and social effects.

Results

The statistical analysis of the overall attitude lexis, and references to external voices in both types of data suggests that the language of American op-eds allows for more invocations of attitude through references to external agents. The evaluative resources in the American data make up (52.74%) compared to the Iraqi writers' use of these evaluative resources, which amount to (47.25%), as shown in Table three.

Table 3. *A Comparison of the American and Iraqi data in terms of the evaluative sources used*

Type of Data	Overall Frequencies of the evaluative sources	
	No.	%
American Data	250	52.74
Iraqi Data	224	47.25
Total	474	100.0

A close inspection of the types of evaluative resources reveals that the language of the Iraqi op-eds is more attitudinal than that of the American ones. The Iraqi data abounds in attitude markers which have recurred in (212) instances, making up (94.64%) of the real data. For the American data, the attitude markers have been detected in (181) instances, only constituting (72.4%). Furthermore, the analysis shows a significant disparity between the American and Iraqi op-ed writers regarding their referencing external voices. In the American data, referencing external agents constitutes (27.6%), having been detected in (69) instances. In the Iraqi data, the apparatus of referencing external agents has recurred (12) times, only making up (5.35%), as illustrated in Table four below. Perhaps, this indicates the foregrounded authority of Iraqi writers and the power of their discourse where they foreground their opinions and attitudes.

Table 4. *A Comparison of the American and Iraqi data in terms of types of the evaluative sources used*

Type of Data	Overall Frequencies of the evaluative sources		Total
	Attitude Markers	References to External Voices	

	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
American Data	181	72.4	69	27.6	250	100.0
Iraqi Data	212	94.64	12	5.35	224	100.0

On the other hand, the negative values of the attitudinal meanings outnumber the positive ones in both American and Iraqi data, where the negative values have a recurrence amounting to (125) and (180) instances, respectively. In contrast, the positive values recurred (56) and (32) times in the American and Iraqi corpus, respectively, as shown in Table five below. This heightened negativity may depend on the nature of the topics discussed in these pieces. The topics echo the unrest experienced by both American and Iraqi peoples towards their local or global issues. Moreover, it reflects that those writers employ the ideological strategy of negative Other-presentation more often than that of the positive Self-presentation. However, the researcher observes that the negative attitudinal values in the Iraqi data exceed those in the American data. Thus, the prevalent negative attitudes are due to socio-cultural factors.

Table 5. *A comparison of the positive and negative values of the attitude markers detected in the American and Iraqi data*

Type of Data	Type of Value			
	Positive values		Negative values	
	No.	%	No.	%
American Data	56	30.93	125	69.06
Iraqi Data	32	15.09	180	84.90

As for the types of attitude markers, Table six below elucidates that both American and Iraqi op-ed writers utilize similar evaluative strategies. Both writers base their attitudinal evaluations primarily on judgment and appreciation rather than affect. Moreover, judgmental assessments are the most prevalent category in both data types. This similarity is possible because op-ed writers are typically professionals, not laypersons, so they assume the eligibility to evaluate others' behaviors and events instead of reducing their evaluations to emotional reactions.

Table 6. *A comparison of the American and Iraqi data in terms of the attitudinal Resources Detected*

Type of Data	Overall Frequencies of Types of Attitudinal Resources			
	Judgment	Appreciation	Affect	Total

	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
American Data	85	46.96	68	37.56	28	15.46	181	100.0
Iraqi Data	136	64.15	66	31.13	10	4.71	212	100.0

Table seven below elaborates on types of judgment detected. The researcher observes that social sanction judgments outnumber those of social esteem in both American and Iraqi kinds of data. The rate of social sanction judgments in the American corpus is (62.35%) against (37.64%) of social esteem judgments. In the Iraqi corpus, the disparity between the frequencies of social esteem and social sanction judgments is even more significant. Social sanction realizations score (74.26%) versus (25.73%) of social esteem markers in the Iraqi data. The significant employment of social sanction suggests that both American and Iraqi op-ed writers judge people and their behaviors in relation to moral regulations and norms. They attempt to release more severe criticisms against the textual Otherness.

Table 7. *A comparison of the American and Iraqi data in terms of the judgment markers used*

Type of Data	Overall Frequencies of Judgement Markers				Total	
	Social Sanction		Social Esteem			
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
American Data	53	62.35	32	37.64	85	100.0
Iraqi Data	101	74.26	35	25.73	136	100.0

The statistical analysis also revealed that the category of propriety highly overweighs that of veracity in both American and Iraqi texts under the umbrella of social sanction judgments. As illustrated in Table eight below, propriety constitutes (83.01%) and (95.04%) in the American and Iraqi data, respectively. In contrast, veracity has a frequency rate of (16.98%) and (4.95%) in the American and Iraqi data, respectively.

Table 8. *A comparison of the American and Iraqi data in terms of the types of social sanction markers used*

Type of Data	Overall Frequencies of Types of Social Sanction Markers				Total	
	Propriety		Veracity			
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
American Data	44	83.01	9	16.98	53	100.0

Iraqi Data	96	95.04	5	4.95	101	100.0

As Table nine below shows, the quantitative analysis of the corpora revealed that capacity is the most frequent category among the three types of social esteem, scoring (81.25%) and (80%) in the American and Iraqi data, respectively. The quantitative analysis illustrated that American and Iraqi op-ed writers do not use normality and tenacity strategically. Normality rates are (12.5%) and (17.14%) in the American and Iraqi data, respectively. For tenacity, it is up to (6.25%) and (2.85%) in the American and Iraqi corpus, respectively. This statistical description indicates that op-ed writers prefer to use capacity in their social esteem judgments. Those writers may find capacity more effective in meeting their ideological goals and in convincing the reader of the in/capability of the agents under criticism. The foregrounded capacity type may also confirm that those writers' evaluations are more focused on the textual Otherness behaviors and actions more often than evaluating the Otherness in terms of inner characteristics as implicated in the meaning of tenacity.

Table 9. *A comparison of the American and Iraqi data in terms of the types of social esteem markers used*

Type of Data	Overall Frequencies of Social Esteem Markers						Total	
	Capacity		Normality		Tenacity			
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
American Data	26	81.25	4	12.5	2	6.25	32	100.0
Iraqi Data	28	80	6	17.14	1	2.85	35	100.0

Finally, a further elaboration on the statistical results of the types of referencing external sources used in the analyzed data clarifies that acknowledgments are the most frequently utilized device in both American and Iraqi data. These increased acknowledgments suggest that American and Iraqi op-ed writers expand the dialogistic space rather than contract it. As for endorsements, they hold close ratios in the American and Iraqi data. In the former, their rates are (28.98%) while in the latter, endorsements recur (33.33%) of the total referencing instances. Distancing has a close ratio in both types of data, where it occurs thrice in the American data and twice in the Iraqi ones. It scores (4.34%) and (16.66%) in the American and Iraqi corpus, respectively, as detailed below.

Table 10. *A comparison of the American and Iraqi data in terms of the types of reference to external voices*

Type of Data	Acknowledg-ments	Endorsements	Distancing	Total

	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
American Data	46	66.66	20	28..98	3	4.34	69	100.0
Iraqi Data	6	50	4	33.33	2	16.66	12	100.0

The following presents a qualitative analysis of the selected data. Due to the limited space, the qualitative analysis includes some examples of the most frequently appearing categories in the corpora, as elucidated below. Positive and negative values of attitude are annotated with (+ve) and (-ve). The parenthesized details attached to each excerpt give the order of the op-ed pieces analyzed in Appendix A and Appendix B. The abbreviated word *para.* with the following number represent the order of paragraphs that contain the excepts under analysis in the original texts.

The American Data

In the op-ed piece entitled "Dear Progressives: you Can't Fight Climate Change by Going Soft on China," the writer discusses the environmental crisis of climate change and the progressives' demand for partnering with China to resolve this crisis. The writer challenges the need for collaboration, arguing that confronting China rather than cooperating with it is the efficient way to fix climate change. As the text proceeds, the writer describes China as "the world's largest polluter." To persuade readers of his attitude and align them into a community of shared feelings, the writer draws on this attitudinal resource of propriety by positioning China as unworthy of this cooperation. Thus, the writer focuses on controversial issues to blame the textual Otherness, as shown in the excerpt below. This employment of propriety operates within the ideological strategy of positive Self-presentation and negative Other-presentation.

> The United States, they write, has long "scapegoated China as an excuse to avoid global climate commitments." The letter absolves China of its human rights abuses [-ve propriety] and the national security threat it poses to the United States, and instead claims that the two countries can partner to "support international best practice" human rights standards …
> *(Article 7, para., 2)*

The two extracts below belong to the op-ed piece which is entitled "Protests are Taking over the World. What's Driving them?" in which the attitudinal meaning related to the modern governments' inability to handle crises is saturated in a prosodic structure to instill this idea in readers' minds. The genuine attitude of the text is that the "upsurge" of current protests over the world does not only relate to the Covid pandemic impacts. The worldwide protests also reflect the populations' continuous anger with the overall ineffective policies global governments adopt in handling public crises. In the second extract, the writer employs capacity to denote a positive value. The positive value of capacity manipulatively precedes the subsequent negative criticisms to prepare the ground for accepting with little objection the negative attitude. That way, the writer sketches himself as neutral and objective in assessing the pros and cons of people and their behaviors.

> Put simply, the governments of today seem **incapable** of offering both representative and effective governance. And ordinary citizens have had enough *(Article 1, para., 4)* … While many demonstrations explicitly invoke the pandemic, the bigger, latent concern is the

> **inability** of modern governments to serve the majority of their populations, especially the middle and poorer classes. This **failure** is made visible by … [-ve capacity] *(para., 7)*

> This is why both South Africa, once a model of neoliberal democracy now mired in corruption, and Cuba, a paragon of welfare authoritarianism that initially **overperformed in its Covid response** [+ve capacity], have recently faced substantive challenges to their leadership. *(para., 11)*

As for the op-ed piece entitled "Is our Government Buying our Data? We Need a Federal Investigation," its two writers discuss the process of purchasing personal data from Tech and apps brokers by the U.S. governmental agencies. The two writers describe the process of buying Americans' data via their digital trails as "unscrupulous businesses" and "unregulated industry," regarding it a "breach" of the Americans' privacy. The writers imply that such acts are particularly hazardous because they come from the government, whose duty is supposed to be the protection of citizens' privacy. Furthermore, they nominalize their attitude towards this issue as a "threat" to magnify their criticisms of the textual Otherness, namely, the U.S. government agencies. In doing so, they provoke negative feelings in readers towards this act and its perpetrator in an attempt to emphasize the potentially damaging impacts of breaching their privacy. This attitudinal meaning incarnated in appreciation negative value in the excerpt below works within the ideological strategy of negatively presenting the Other.

> But ironically, **the gravest threat** [-ve appreciation] to our privacy comes not from unscrupulous businesses, but from a customer with the biggest wallet in the world, the U.S. government. *(Article 10, para., 4)*

The op-ed piece "How Politics is Tearing Families Apart: Partisan and Cultural Divides are Estranging us from the People we Love the Most" displays an instance of how affect operates. In the excerpt below, the writer sketches Gosar (a Republican member of U.S. Congress) as a person who lacks affection in treating his siblings. A complete reading of this piece makes it clear that the writer exploits the attitudinal meaning of affect to serve her ideological goals and to reveal her genuine attitude. She intends to present the Otherness negatively and provoke certain attitudes in readers. This text expresses the writer's disapproval of right-wing politics in general and the politics of Trump in particular. She argues that such politics has "corrosive effects" on political life and families as it leads to political estrangement and even worse divisions inside the families which follow such politics. She, then, intends to give a negative image of the Republicans that they lack decency towards their own families and others as they are ready to sacrifice their own country driven by party loyalty. So, this example clarifies how the ideological strategy of negatively presenting Others and positively presenting the Self operates.

> Gosar has previously responded to their laments **without much affection** [-ve affect], telling CNN in 2018, "These disgruntled Hillary supporters are related by blood to me but like leftists everywhere, they put political ideology before family. Lenin, Mao and Kim Jung Un (sic) would be proud." (Article 9, para., 11)

The extract below, which belongs to the op-ed piece "Everyone Thinks Americans Are Selfish. They're Wrong" is an instance of acknowledgment. Here, the writer presents two opposing views on whether individualism is something to be proud of or something that arouses concerns. The writer

acknowledges both points of view as alternatives in the current communicative context. Thus, she opens up the dialogistic space to accommodate various viewpoints on the topic and encourages readers to formulate their opinions and choose to agree or disagree. Since the writer explicitly announces elsewhere in the text that the more individualist a country is, the more charitable and generous it will be, she chooses to go with the first view. Referencing external voices, then, acts to activate certain authorial opinions indirectly.

> Whether America's individualism is a source of pride or concern varies. **Some people extol** this mind-set as a source of our entrepreneurial spirit, self-reliance and geographic mobility. **Others worry that** our individualism is antithetical to a sense of social responsibility whether that means refusing to wear masks and get vaccinated during the pandemic or disrupting the close family bonds and social ties seen in more traditional societies. (Article 2, para., 2)

The Iraqi Data

In the excerpt below included in the piece "حضانة الطفل كنموذج فشل المعالجة التشريعية وآثارها السلبية" / "The failure of the legislative treatment and its negative impacts (Child Custody Law as an example)," the writer points to the recent legislative amendment to the Child Custody Law. The revision focuses on withdrawing mothers' custody over the child and granting it to the father after the child reaches the age of seven. While trying to develop an attitude opposing this amendment, the writer argues that this amendment is unjust to the child before it is unjust to the mother, for the children after the age of seven are in greatest need of their mothers to help them pass the critical period of puberty. As the text unfolds, the writer implies that mother custody is not the reason behind children's homelessness and "their moral and social deviance," as was believed to be the cause for this proposed amendment. This legislative step will not solve the problem; on the contrary, it will make matters worse, the writer implies. The writer uses the propriety meaning in this extract to appeal to the reader. He portrays himself as impartial and objective because he is ultimately standing with the innocent children rather than either the mother or the father. It is a persuasive move to win the readers over and align them into the genuine attitude of the text.

> **إجحاف** بحضانة الطفل بالسبب مرسين العلم من علية سن السجل ان [-ve propriety] حق قبل ونحضون القالمحقل
> ... أخرى نسي أي من كاثر المديدة شحاج تكونبإليكونظال ةلظفتنونشخريمذاالعمر الرفي، ألم، الحضانة لاح
> *(Article 10, para., 3)*

> Making the age of seven a reason to take away the mother's custody is **unfair** to the child under control before it is unfair to the custodial mother because, at this age, the child's personality starts to take shape. Therefore, s/he is in dire need of their mother, more than any other age [...]

In the excerpt below, which belongs to the op-ed piece نتحسن ولن 19 كفيد عن الاقتصادي النيار منجم لم "الاقتصادية حاتاللق / "The economic crash results not from COVID-19, and the economy will not improve with vaccines" the writer saturates the meaning of incapacity with several examples of a negative capacity. These realizations of incapacity function to attack the textual Otherness fiercely. The writer criticizes the world lawmakers' failure to handle the economic crisis in the world. Further reading proves that the intended Otherness is the capitalist economy. The writer describes the capitalist nations as incapable of solving the international economic crisis witnessed under the Covid pandemic. He degrades the wealthy capitalist countries by describing them as not

perspicacious to imply their incompetence and inadequacy for leadership. This meaning of negative capacity enhances the strategic ideology of negatively introducing the Otherness and works to persuade the reader of the text's primary attitude.

الأغنياء وممثلوهم السياسيون والإعلاميون **ليس بإستطاعتهم إيجاد مخرج من ألزمة ال حالي**ة فهم لم يتخطوا البعد أزمة عام ...وبعبارة اخرى يعمل الثري ي المشكل بطريق تبتزيد مشكلهم بخر ب (*para., 6*) [ve capacity-] 2008 أوآثار ألز ماتل سابقة ...لقد ثبت الثرياء وأنصارهم، وخاصة (*para., 7*) وجش عن وأنانيين[ve capacity-]ألذاتأ ن همض ي رول نظر *Article* وغير راغبين في حال المشكلال خطيرة،...[ve capacity-]أحزاب ه السياسية، مرارأ وتكرار أ أنهم غير قادرين 9, para.,8)

> The wealthy and their political and media representatives are incapable of finding a way out of the current crisis. They never got over the 2008 crisis or the impacts of previous problems […]. In other words, the wealthy are increasingly working in a self-damaging way because they are not perspicacious but greedy and selfish […]. The rich and their supporters, especially political parties, repeatedly prove their inability and unwillingness to solve severe problems […]

The two excerpts below spotted in two different op-eds exhibit examples of attitudinal appreciations. In his article "الثقافة الكترونية وانعكاساتها على الحياةالسرية" The electronic culture and its effects on family life," the writer uses the negative appreciation to instill feelings of fear and jeopardy in readers towards the risks of modern technology and social media applications. He describes modern technology and cyberspace world as (الوباءepidemic). The writer intends to provoke specific actions in the addressee through raising awareness of the electronic risks and the importance of bolstering parental censorship in this regard. So, the writer negatively assesses modern technology to attack those misusing it. The second excerpt presents an instance of positive appreciation. In his op-ed entitled "البس مدوال جيش واطوعالجنية" Put on a Military Uniform and Enlist in Military Service," the writer appreciates the military service seeking to attach tremendous importance to it. He argues that this service will create genuine men through increasing youth's patriotism, strengthening the spirit of sacrifice for the sake of the country, and teaching the youth how to comply with regulations, disciplines, and the laws of life. The appreciation in this sample functions to positively present things to serve a specific ideology, a persuasive move to appeal to the reader.

مما يتوجب العراف ب**خطورة** هذا الموضوع وانعكاساته على السرة فتغيرك لمئير يتطلب بالوقوفبشرك لجدي امام هذا**ل وباء الكترون**ي. دور السرة اله د انيكون فعال التقاليل ا بجو تقبين رب السرة والبناء من خالل الحيث عن هذه **لمخاطر** ...ة الكترونية]-ve appreciation] (*Article 2, para., 5*)

> The risk of this issue and its impacts on families must be acknowledged. It requires a serious stand in the face of this electronic epidemic. Families and parents must play an influential role in reducing the communicative gap with their children through explicating for them these electronic risks.

... خدم ةال تأهتيت جعل ف ن ه **رجالحاكل لجعا**ن يت وعلم ضلف ةال ى حبال وطن وتتض حيفة من الى ملكان لك علم ه النضبا ط وال تزام ة ال قوانين الجيبية[ve appreciation] (*Article 3, para., 1*)

The military service creates genuine men with all meanings, strengthens the patriotic spirit inside youths, teaches them how to sacrifice for their country, and teaches them how to adhere to disciplines and laws of life.

The op-ed الافاق الاستراتيجية في مجابهة تداعيات جائحة كورونا "The strategic prospects of confronting COVID pandemic" displays examples of how writers use affect markers for particular ideological ends. In the excerpt below, the op-ed writer utilizes the affectual meanings to provoke the addressee, i.e. the wealthy countries, into taking a specific action. He calls upon rich nations to supply developing countries with financial aid. In his use of the expressions "التخوف/fearing" and ليوشكل ميع /horribly" the writer intends to raise alarms about the seriousness of the situation to elicit the desired action and convince the readers that such a horrible situation deserves to initiate a specific action.

إتساع وإتساع سرعة إنتشار الجائحة خلق شرارة مخاوف **للتخوف** [-ve affect] من عدم إمكانية إنجاز أهداف التنمية المستدامة لحلول 2030   للجائحة وتداعيتها التي أثرت سلباً بشكل ميع **للوشكل** [ve- affect]على تقدم الكثير من دول العالم خاصة الفقيرة والمحرومة من مستلزمات البقاء الانساني. *(Article 8, para., 7)*

The overall transmissibility of the pandemic arouses fears that the sustainable development goals cannot be achieved by 2030 […] the pandemic and its repercussions, which negatively affected the progress of many countries, especially the developing countries are deprived of the necessities of human survival.

  As an instance of acknowledgment embodied in the excerpt below, the writer in his op-ed piece "محنة البالد والاستثمار/ The ordeal of the country and investment," seems to dissociate himself from the attributed viewpoint leaving readers a space to judge. Although the semantics of this phrase indicates that the writer has not identified his attitude towards this viewpoint, it bears an implicit dis-alignment and criticism of the Otherness, namely, the investors of the strategic public projects. Moreover, the co-text and the general prosodic structure of the genuine attitude suggest that the writer argues against the performance of the current investments allocated to set up strategic projects. Hence, the meaning denoted in this excerpt, "[…] what they call it an investment," reinforces the writer's ideology of negatively introducing the Otherness.

-[…] ما يسمونه استثماراً *(Article 6, para., 1)*
- […] which they call an investment

Discussion

    The present study endeavors to examine the patterns of the evaluative resources in the American and Iraqi op-ed pieces. The study has revealed that both American and Iraqi op-ed writers invest the attitudinal semantics and the strategy of referencing external voices to achieve specific ideological, persuasive goals. Writers of opinion pieces resort to these interpersonal and rhetorical devices to construct dialogistic relationships of dis/alignment and power or solidarity.

    Evaluation is a significant type of interpersonal meaning that the op-ed writers systematically use to exercise social power, i.e. the symbolic power. The symbolic power comes through persuading, manipulating, and influencing readers' minds, the way they represent the world, and indirectly their behaviors (van Dijk, 2011). The privileged access to public discourse and the full attitudinal and evaluative reservoir those writers have, make them exploit this platform to establish their ideologically-motivated social relationships and express their explicit opinions of the world.

As far as a critical discourse analysis is concerned, the access may incur social inequalities when writers negatively or severely criticize or condemn the targeted audience. According to van Dijk (2006), whenever the discursive control upon others' minds is in the best interests of the speakers or writers and against the best interests of the recipients, an illegitimate source of power occurs. To persuade readers, op-ed writers utilize specific evaluative features, among which are the attitude semantics and rhetorical referencing. Being well-informed individuals, op-ed writers address readers as laypersons with poor access to forms of public discourse; hence, they have the space to exercise symbolic power of mind and feelings control.

As a global genre, American and Iraqi op-ed pieces share major commonalities and preferences of specific patterns in the writing conventions of this genre amid the differences of language and culture.

Conclusions

Investigating the patterning of attitude markers and the reference to external voices as two areas of inquiry has revealed convergent distribution and divergent frequencies. First of all, both American and Iraqi op-ed writers invest the attitudinal semantics and the strategy of referencing external voices to achieve specific ideological persuasive goals. Moreover, the evaluative resources operate within the ideological framework of positively presenting the Self and negatively presenting the Other. The study has found that both American and Iraqi op-ed writers usually base their attitudes on judgments and appreciations more than affect. Both types of writers are inclined to judge people and behaviors against a social background of moral norms and values. This reliance on moral norms and regulations is evident in the foregrounded social sanction judgments, which outnumber the social esteem ones. Those writers deploy social sanction judgments to construct more powerful and effective assessments. Propriety and capacity as two sub-categories of social sanction and social esteem, respectively are the most frequent in both types of data. Among the categories of referencing external voices, acknowledgment is the most frequent category in both the American and Iraqi op-ed articles. From the discourse perspective, the language of Iraqi op-eds is more attitudinal than the American ones. The Iraqi op-eds abound in a rich reservoir of attitude markers. These markers allow writers to exercise their ideologically-motivated social relationships and release their judgments to influence readers' minds and induce them to take specific actions concerning the issues dealt with in these articles. Yet, in terms of rhetorical referencing, the analysis has found that referencing external voices is more characteristic of American op-eds than Iraqi ones, which foreground the authorial voice and background any external voices. As for the frequencies of the positive and negative attitude values in the analyzed corpora, the study has found that the negative values of attitude considerably surpass the positive ones to varying degrees in both American and Iraqi op-eds. This heightened negativity reflects the prevailing ideology of the Self's positive-presentation and the Other's negative presentation. This disparity, however, is more significant in the Iraqi articles than it is in the American ones. The controlling negativity associated with the attitude markers conforms mainly to the macro-semantics of the selected articles, which deal with problematic issues characterized by a lot of blaming, accusations, and negative attitudes. This negativity is necessarily influenced by socio-cultural factors.

About the Authors:
Ishraq Abdulredha Alsandeli got her BA degree in the English language at the College of Languages, the University of Baghdad in 2011. She had worked as a translator for the independent All Iraq News Agency (AIN) and is currently a teacher at a preparatory school in Baghdad. This research paper is a partial requirement for obtaining an MA degree from the Department of English of the same college and university. ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-5935-6656

Dr. Rihab Abduljaleel Saeed Alattar received her Ph.D. from the College of Arts, University of Baghdad in 2006 with a dissertation on Gricean maxims of conversational implicature. Her fields of research are pragmatics and stylistics. She is an assistant professor at the department of English/College of Languages and has been teaching pragmatics, semantics, and many other MA courses since 2008. ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8388-7038

References
Al-Rickaby, A. (2020). A Critical Discourse Analysis of Stance and Engagement Markers in English and Arabic Newspaper Opinion Articles in 2016. (Vol. 28, pp. 182- 194). *Journal of University of Babylon for Humanities*.

Al-Utbi, M. (2019). A Critical Discourse Analysis of Hate Speech. *Journal of the College of Languages (JCL)*, (30), (pp. 19-40). University of Baghdad: College of Languages.

Chandler, D. (1997). *An Introduction to Genre Theory*: Available at http://www.aber.ac.uk/media/documents/intgenre/intgenre.html/

Dawson, C. (2009). *Introduction to research methods: a practical guide for anyone undertaking a research project* (4th Ed.). Oxford: How to Books.

Fairclough, N., & Wodak, R. (1997). Critical Discourse Analysis. In T. A. van Dijk (ed.), *Discourse as Social Interaction* (Vol. 2, pp. 258-84). London: Sage.

Feuer, J. (1992). Genre Study and Television. In R, C., Allen (Ed.): *Channels of Discourse, Reassembled: Television and Contemporary Criticism*. (pp. 138-59). London: Routledge

Freedman, A., & Medway, P. (Eds.) (1994a): *Genre and the New Rhetoric*. London: Taylor & Francis.

Henry, F., & Tator, C. (2002). *Discourse of Domination: racial bias in the Canadian English-Language* Press. Toronto: Toronto University Press.

Iedema, R., Feez, S., & White, P. (1994). *Appraisal and Journalistic Discourse*. Sydney: Disadvantaged Schools Program, NSW Department of School Education.

Kress, G. (1988). *Communication and Culture: An Introduction*. Kensington, NSW: New South Wales University Press.

Lihua, L. (2009). *Discourse Construction of Social Power: interpersonal rhetoric in editorials of the China Daily*. Discourse Studies: Sage Publications, Vol. (11), (pp. 59-78).

Macdonald, S., & Headlam, N. (2008). *Research methods handbook: Introductory guide to research methods for social research*. Manchester: UK Centre for Local Economic Strategies.

Martin, J., & White, P. (2005). *The Language of Evaluation: Appraisal in English*. London & New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Nasser, A., A., & Khalil, S. (2021). A Critical Discourse Analysis of Martin Crimp's Piece "*Advice to Iraqi Women*." *Journal of the College of Education for Women* (Vol. 32, pp. 26-39).

Nikolaev, A., & Porpora, D. (2007). *Talking war: How elite U.S. Newspaper editorials and Opinion Pieces Debated the Attack on Iraq*. (Vol. 40, pp. 6-25). Sociological Focus: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group.

Paltridge, B. (2012). *Discourse Analysis* (2nd ed.). London & New York: Bloomsbury Publishing PIc.

Pounds, G. (2010). *Attitude and subjectivity in Italian and British hard-news reporting: The construction of a culture-specific 'reporter' voice*. (Vol. 12, pp. 106-137). Sage Publications

Rasul, S. H. (2021). *Evaluation in Media Reporting: A Comparative Analysis in BBC, CNN and Aljazeera Reports*. (Published master thesis), University of Liverpool

Richardson, J. (2007). *Analysing Newspapers: An Approach from Critical Discourse Analysis*. London & New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Rogers, R. (2004). *An Introduction to Critical Discourse Analysis in Education*. New Jersey & London: Mahwah, NJ: Laurence Erlbaum.

Shakeh, N., Maher, R., & Dumanig, F. (2015). *Discoursal Analysis of Rhetorical Structure of an Online Iraqi English Newspaper*. (Vol. 3, pp. 10-16). International Journal of Foreign Language Teaching & Research.

Swales, J. M. (1990). *Genre Analysis*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Swayer, M., A., H., & Eesa, M., R., (2019). Evaluative Resources in Medical Research Articles Written by Medical Writers. *Al-Adab Journal* (Vol. 131, pp. 71-88). English Language Center/University of Technology: Baghdad

Van Dijk, T. A. (1995, December 14-16). *Opinions and Ideologies in Editorials* [Paper presentation]. The 4th International Symposium of Critical Discourse Analysis, Language, Social Life and Critical Thought, Athens.http://www.discursos.org/unpublished%20articles/Opinions%20and%20ideologies%20in%20editorials.htm

Van Dijk, T. A. (1997). Opinions and Ideologies in the Press. In A. Bell, & P. Garrett (1998*). Approaches to Media Discourse*. (pp. 21-62). Blackwell.

Van Dijk, T. A. (2006, December). *Politics, Ideology, and Discourse*. Research Gate. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/304041340_Politics_Ideology_and_Discourse

Van Dijk. T. A. (2011). Critical Discourse Analysis. In D. Tannen, E. H. Hamilton, & D. Schiffrin (eds.), *The Handbook of Discourse Analysis* (2nd ed., pp. 466-480). UK: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

Weiss, G., & Wodak, R. (2003). *Critical Discourse Analysis: theory and interdisciplinarity*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.

Wilson, J., Sahlane, A., & Somerville, I. (2012). *Argumentation and fallacy in newspaper op/ed coverage of the prelude to the invasion of Iraq*. (Vol. 11, pp. 1-30). Journal of Language and Politics: John Benjamins Publishing Company

Wodak, R. (2001). What CDA is about – A Summary of Its History, Important Concepts and Its Developments. In R. Wodak & M. Meyer. *Methods of Critical Discourse Analysis*. London: Sage Publications, (pp.1-13).

Appendix A: Op-ed Articles of the American Data

The New York Times

Article 1: "Protests Are Taking Over the World. What's Driving Them?" (3 Oct. 2021)
 https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/03/opinion/covid-protests-world-whats-driving-them.html
Article 2: "Everyone Thinks Americans Are Selfish. They're Wrong" (26 May 2021)
https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/26/opinion/individualism-united-states-altruism.html
Articles 3:"Covid's Deadliest Phase May Be Here Soon" (28 May 2021)
https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/28/opinion/covid-vaccine-variants.html
Article 4: "America's List of 'Undemocratic and Corrupt Actors' Just Keeps Growing" (5 Oct. 2021)
https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/05/opinion/us-sanctions-venezuela.html
The Washington Post
Article 5: "Kamala Harris speaks the truth about race, unafraid" (29 May 2021)
https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2021/05/29/kamala-harris-speaks-truth-about-race-unafraid
Article 6: "If Biden wants to convince the vaccine hesitant, give Trump credit for the vaccines" (6 July 2021)
 https://www.aei.org/op-eds/if-biden-wants-to-convince-the-vaccine-hesitant-give-trump-credit-for-the-vaccines
Article 7: "Dear progressives: you can't fight climate change by going soft on China" (10 July 2021)
https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2021/07/10/pandering-to-china-isnt-the-way-to-fight-climate-change
(New York) Daily News
Article 8: "Create a Jan. 6 panel, Mr. President" (28 May 2021)
 https://www.nydailynews.com/opinion/ny-oped-biden-should-appoint-a-jan-6-commission-20210528-qijp4pifhnbtxhr6fpeugzys54-story.html
Article 9: "How politics is tearing families apart: Partisan and cultural divides are estranging us from the people we love the most" (3 August 2021)
 https://www.nydailynews.com/opinion/ny-oped-how-the-republican-party-lost-its-way-20210803-vu3l2funyrbzhpnh2cvcnyjltq-story.html
Article 10: "Is our government buying our data? We need a federal investigation" (18 Nov. 2021)
https://www.nydailynews.com/opinion/ny-oped-is-our-government-buying-our-data-20211118-hxv6ri52efdczfawrtyz5l3bby-story.html

Appendix B: Op-ed Articles of the Iraqi Data
Azzaman Newspaper
Article 1: "هامة الشبابيّ ومروءة الـ" (15 Sep. 2021)
الجبدراني اللصمحم – هامة الشبابيّ ومروءة الـ| Azzaman
Article 2: "السريّة الاجماعاىل كسغ ولروني الالكترة الوقفل" (25 July 2021)
سنالمانزوغ – السريّة الاجماعاىل كسعاك ولروني الالكترة الوقفلا|Azzaman
Article 3: "الجنيّة العيطوا شمحود مهسّ الّ) (10 Sep. 2021)
جواد فـائز الجنيّة العبلّطوّأ وشمحودم مهسّ الّ | Azzaman
Article 4: "علدرة تهيّنولت خطيرة ظاهرة .. الكرد ونهاجرالم" (16 Nov. 2021)
زاخيي حفال– علدرة تهيّنولت خطيرة ظاهرة .. الكرد ونهاجرالم|Azzaman
Assabah Newspaper
Article 5: "نهعالينيقحريالّ" (28 August 2020)
http://alsabaah.iq/29494/نهعالينيقحريالّ
Article 6: "مارواالستثن والدالهاقلبنحم" (27 April 2021)
http://alsabaah.iq/45431/ماروالاستثن والدالهاقلبنحم
Article 7: "الورقيّة املتامعلمناادم" (16 Nov. 2021)
 http://alsabaah.iq/58122/ة-يقرلالتامعملنادمإ
Almada Newspaper
Article 8: "اونروكةالجلح مىتدامعات ملهلجيّ مىتلوتيساقفاالا" (8 August 2021)   *(not full text)*
https://almadapaper.net//view.php?cat=243904#.YieDda8bvzA.whatsapp
Article 9: " عن اديالاقتص النيار جممنهلنيق COVID-19 احاتقاللالصاحسننيلقيّولو" (25 Sep. 2021)
https://almadapaper.net//view.php?cat=248759#.YieCS3AW7uY.whatsapp
Article 10: "(لموذجاال الطفال حضرنال)ليبيّة الاله وثار ويّةعيش علجمالال شنّ (4 July 2021) *(not full text)*
https://almadapaper.net//view.php?cat=241066#.YieSMnF-U2I.whatsapp