

## **A Positive Discourse Analysis of Feminist Portrayal in the Iraqi October Protests 2019 in Some Western Media**

By

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### **Abstract**

The current paper is a positive discourse analysis (PDA) of the representation of feminism in some Western media during the 2019 Iraqi protests. The aim of this study is to look at the linguistic resources used by texts and speakers to convey, negotiate, and naturalise specific inter-subjective and ideological perspectives. Moreover, the paper focuses on how social phenomena and social actors are represented in discourse to identify and investigate how change occurs to promote hope and inspiration. The researcher adopts Martin and White's (2005) appraisal theory (attitude system) as a method to analyse the data. Additionally, a qualitative approach is used in data analysis. In this regard, the researcher selects 12 articles from some Western media websites concerned with how feminism is portrayed during the 2019 Iraqi protests. The analysis provides an answer to the question, which is: What are the lexical items used by the writers to construct a positive image of the role of women during the protests of 2019? The analysis showed that the writers utilise multiple attitude resources such as affect, judgment, and appreciation, and most of these attitudes are positive feelings.

**Keywords:** positive discourse analysis, feminist, Iraqi protests, appraisal theory.

### **Introduction**

The 2019 Iraqi protests in October were not just a political revolution against government corruption and economic exploitation; they were also a social revolution that attacked the exploitative condition of women and girls. While the participation was remarkable, many conservative groups criticised the feminist march, claiming that women's participation in demonstrations was immoral and unethical. However, the participation of women in the demonstrations had a wide global resonance in the media due to the violence and persecution practised by the authorities and societal norms against them. Furthermore, the media has played an essential part in bringing the issue of feminism to the public's attention; as a result, it has taken a real stand against any type of marginalisation.

Many researchers have been interested in the representation and framing of feminism in media discourse in recent years. For example, Mendes (2009), and Al Maghlouth (2017), by employing framing analysis, have produced important (non-corpus-based) reference studies on the framing of feminists and feminism. Framing analysis is a method for investigating how meaning is created and how political and social leaders, as well as the news media, use it to influence the public (Allen, 2017). Nevertheless, the scope of this study considers feminism as a struggle for women. It is a theoretical dimension for examining and revising women's situations, resisting oppression, and demanding their rights (IbrarUllah, 2018). Hooks (2000) defines feminism as "a movement to end sexism, sexist exploitation, and oppression." (p.8).

Hence, based on the gap that previous studies have addressed, from a PDA standpoint, the researcher argues for the need to conduct such a study to examine the image of feminism depicted in the Western media.

## **Review of Literature**

### ***Positive Discourse Analysis (PDA)***

#### ***Definition***

Martin and Rose (2003) and Martin (2004) propose a type of CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS (CDA) that emphasises the fact that CDA does not always have to be concerned with identifying hidden negative agendas or discourses that sustain unequal power relationships or mislead readers in some way. Positive discourse analysis implies that positive analyses of texts are possible, and that not all discourses are destructive or negative (Baker & Ellece, 2011).

Hughes (2018) defines PDA as a concerned progressive discourse that transforms the current condition into a better condition that is hopeful and healing. This new approach operates to promote hope, inspiration, motivation, strength and resistance of the oppressed groups in society (Darmayanti, Africa, & Mildawati, 2021).

#### ***Principles of PDA***

According to Bartlett (2017), the aim of PDA is to examine texts that illustrate inspiring discursive practices and methods by focusing on discourse that promotes the needs of marginalised groups or advances collective goals such as social equality, national unity, and political reconciliation (Habanabakize, 2020; Jermittiparsert, 2021).

PDA does not assume that social problems, such as racism or gender inequality, are resolved and that there is a need to "cool it down" (Majid, 2007, p.1). Instead, by emphasising and analysing discourses that aim to resist injustices such as prejudice and exclusion, PDA achieves its emancipatory goal by emphasising resistance as its object of analysis (Hughes, 2018). Resistance is considered as a social movement capable of bringing about progressive social change within PDA, not only as a reaction to injustice. As a result, analysing resistance discourses is "a generative project that treats analysis objects as resources for conceptualising and implementing emancipatory agendas" (Hughes, 2018).

#### ***Historical Perspectives***

Martin (2004, reprinted as Martin 2012a) came up with the term "Positive Discourse Analysis." Martin (2012b) cites the origins of the content of this article to a 1999 meeting of the "core CDA group" in Birmingham. According to Martin (2012b), the article makes the argument for a more interventionist approach to ideologically oriented discourse analysis, focusing on more than just deconstructing language in the service of power but also on analysing and participating in successful social change sites.

Martin is inspired by Kress's (1996) critique of the CDA's apparent concentration on exposing "inequitable, dehumanizing, and deleterious situations of affairs," as well as his demand for a shift from "deconstructive activity to productive activity" (p.15). Kress (2000) elaborates on this idea with the key concept of "design," which "sets aside past agendas and treats them and their products as resources in setting an agenda of future aims and in assembling means and resources for implementing that," rather than focusing on "the present through the means of past production" of others. Martin (2012a, p. 282) agrees with Kress in some basic terms but stresses the point that "design" needs to be based on studies of "how people get together and make room for themselves in the world in ways that redistribute power without

necessarily struggling against it." In the line where the word PDA first appears, Martin (2012a) emphasises this point again:

When we come to design better futures, we simply do not have enough information to move forward. Deconstruction is helpful, but not enough on its own – at least that is my experience in educational linguistics where a lot of guesswork had to go into designing possible worlds in the absence of helpful accounts of inspiring initiatives undertaken by others. The lack of positive discourse analysis (PDA) cripples our understanding of how change happens, for the better, across a range of sites (p. 283).

In 1999, Martin analysed Nelson Mandela's autobiography, which he described as inspirational and without a hint of bitterness or betrayal; rather, a message of hope and wisdom-grace personified. He described his method of analysis as exemplifying "a positive approach of discourse analysis that focuses on hope and progress as a complement to the deconstructive expose associated with critical discourse analysis" (Martin, 1999, p. 29). The key phrase here is "complementing." PDA is never meant to replace Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), but rather an invitation to broaden CDA's scope beyond texts implicated in oppression, exploitation, and abusive power relationships. Later, Martin wrote, "We need to move beyond a singular concentration on semiosis in the service of abusive power—and re-examine power communally, as it circulates through communities, as they re-align around beliefs and renovate discourses that enact a better world" (Martin, 2004, p. 197).

Luke (2002) shares a similar argument in favour of positive arms:

"CDA to move beyond a focus on ideology critique and to document "other" forms of text and discourse – subaltern, diasporic, emancipatory, local, minority, call them what we may – that may mark the productive use of power in the face of economic and cultural globalization (p. 98).

After that, Luke goes on to say that CDA "must be able to demonstrate both what "should be" and what is problematic with text and discourse in the world without identifying and documenting "preferred patterns of emancipatory discourse" and "analytically deconstructing positive and productive configurations of power and knowledge in discourse" (p.105).

Macgilchrist (2007) expanded on the PDA framework by focusing on voices in the news media that provide radically different viewpoints on the globe from traditional news frames. His research focused on how the Russian-Chechen struggle is portrayed in the media, and how some voices in the news contradict the one-sided mainstream narrative that portrays Russia as the villain and Chechens as the victims. In his extensive study of how Amerindian communities in Guyana recover their heritage by resisting mainstream development discourses that depict them as backward communities, Bartlett (2012) expanded on the framework of Positive Discourse Analysis.

In this sense, PDA facilitates the search for constructive uses of language that might serve as alternatives to mainstream discourses that the analyst believes to be negative or destructive.

### ***Feminism and Gendered Language***

Since feminism is a multi-faceted term with various definitions, theories, and movements, it coexists in today's society in various forms. Therefore, it is hard to agree on a single definition of feminism. However, the scope of this study considers feminism as a struggle for social change, progress, and hope. Hooks (2000) defines feminism as "a movement

to end sexism, sexist exploitation, and oppression." (p.8). A "mainstream" feminist is "a person who believes in the social, political, and economic equality of the sexes" (Adichie, 2014, p. 47). In other words, feminists strive to eliminate gender inequalities and promote emancipation (Mills & Mullany, 2011). In her introduction, Gamble (2006) gives a more detailed description of feminism: "The concept of feminism is the fight against the belief that women cannot be treated similarly to men because they are women." This entails the reality that society will be built on gender inequality, with masculine ideas and attitudes taking priority (cf. patriarchy). As a result, women are viewed as men's opponents since they symbolise everything that males are unable to be. Feminism also aims to eliminate gender stereotypes, particularly of women (e.g., males are strong and powerful, while women are weak and defenceless), and to provide women with equal representation in all aspects of society. In other words, the feminist movement aspires to end patriarchy and build a world without it (Gamble, 2006).

Ropers-Huilman (2003) proposes the following three feminism principles:

- 1) Every aspect of the world benefits from the contributions of women.
- 2) Because they have been oppressed, women have been unable to reach their full potential, obtain prizes, or fully participate in society.
- 3) Feminist research should aim for more than just criticism; it should also work toward social reform.
- 4) The first principle states that women cannot be discriminated against because of their gender. They have the ability, intellect, and potential to make a difference in every corner of the globe. They cannot be confined to the confines of their own homes. As a result, the first principle expands the range of vocations and activities available to them while emphatically condemning and rejecting their subordination to housework. In the second point, the author claims that women's lower achievement is due to fewer options available to them. They can be of equal service to the country and humanity if given the proper opportunities. The third principle encourages feminist activists to examine and combat women's oppression in addition to recognizing and categorizing it (Ropers-Huilman, 2003).

Feminists took language into account while criticising the man-made world, which is reflected in man-made language. According to Sunderland (2006), language was a crucial tool for resisting patriarchal gender philosophies at all stages of the feminist movement. For example, "The fundamental semantics of the language reflects [women's] condition," said the American feminist, Robin Morgan. "We don't even have our own names; we use the father's until we exchange them for the husband's."

In brief, feminism is a quest for women's rights, an endeavour to highlight their strengths and accomplishments, and a strong and serious resistance to oppression and discrimination. Most significantly, the majority of these feminist philosophies utilise language to communicate their perspectives while also criticising language for expressing gender-biased identities. As a result, discourse is a crucial keyword for encompassing gender beliefs, and feminist activists cannot disregard it.

### ***Iraq's Protest of 2019: Women of Social Change***

The Iraqi protests of 2019 were a series of demonstrations, marches, sit-ins, and civil disobedience in Iraq. It began on October 1, 2019, a date selected by civil activists on social media to protest corruption, unemployment, and ineffective public services across Iraq's central and southern provinces. The protests soon turned violent, with calls to overthrow Iraq's government. Live bullets, expert shooters, hot water, hot pepper gas, and tear gas were used by the government, backed by Iranian-sponsored militias, against demonstrators, resulting in

numerous deaths and injuries. The demonstrators demanded that the sectarian political system, which was imposed by the US following the US-led invasion in 2003 and has been characterised by sectarian divisions between Shias and Sunnis, as well as other sects, be abolished. The protests were the largest incident of civil unrest in Iraq since the invasion in 2003 (Foltyn, 2019).

Since October 2019, anti-government protests in Iraq have started a movement led by youth, notably young women, demanding an end to corruption, improved services, and job opportunities for all Iraqis. The increased visibility of women at protests during the so-called October revolution is notable, bringing to light a large wave of female participation and engagement. Women have been given a vital space and have made a mark on the movement, contributing strength in voice and numbers, supported by the men in their communities and invited to actively engage. As a result, Iraqi women have emerged as positive examples in the movement, occupying space in a society that has mostly failed to advocate for their issues (Gabriela, 2020).

While protests take place all around the world and attract people of all genders, what has happened in Iraq is extremely remarkable, especially for the Middle East. The movement has brought about a "generational upheaval of patriarchal structures," according to political analyst Hafsa Halawa, which has given women exceptional space and visibility. Protesters, according to Halawa, are asking that the government meet the most pressing needs in their areas; while some villages require basic services, others are concerned about women's rights and political involvement. Furthermore, Halawa emphasises that male counterparts' support in welcoming women's engagement is a significant source of sustainment for their participation; also, she highlights the differences in women's roles in protest movements across the Middle East. In addition to the reforms already outlined, gender equality, representation, economic independence and employment, and safety from domestic violence are among the primary demands made by women (Gabriela, 2020).

As evidenced by the October Uprising's sheer scale and persistence, this generational difference is not restricted to the women's movement in Iraq. However, it has a significant impact on the emergence of a growing women's movement in the country, which is sorely needed. Furthermore, younger women who are involved in or leading areas of the protest movement benefit from the support and enabling environment provided by their male counterparts. Unlike previous generations, younger women have found it relatively easy to participate in civic life, which is a unique feature of the new generation of civic actors. Young men are actively debating with their female counterparts online the necessity of a feminist agenda and how male supporters' empowerment of women might shape women's active involvement. According to anecdotal evidence, some older men support their young daughters' involvement in activism and civil society. Moreover, young mothers have actively involved their young children, both girls and boys, in this social movement (Halawa, 2020).

These societal growth and development centres do not represent the majority of the population, and there is no general belief that women should and could participate equally in a variety of public and formal venues. To disregard the appeals for change and reform that do exist, both within society and within the protest movement, would be to dismiss what exists, however diminutive. While the women's movement as a whole must continue to deal with the considerable obstacles that society has erected in the way of women, of which there is no full list, it is critical that the chance to change and confront society's mindset not be missed (Halawa, 2020).



Iraqi women are a powerful symbol in the global campaign for gender equality. They have been shown to be powerful voices, bringing the priorities of their generation and gender to the forefront. Therefore, the chance to better serve the public interest by including more women in political life must be prioritized. This is an example that should be emulated globally, particularly for minority women—despite the barriers and conservative communities they may live in; opportunities must be created to achieve goals that are beneficial to the community and country as a whole (Gabriela, 2020). Therefore, the current study will shed light on feminism during the Iraqi protests of 2019 and its essential role in conveying a complete picture of Iraqi women during the protests and the societal change that this vital role produced.

### *Appraisal Theory*

The speakers' and writers' opinions on a phenomenon are expressed through language. In this language, opinion can be used as a source of evaluation units (appraisal). Through Systemic Functional Linguistics, an appraisal theory was developed. Halliday divides Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) into three metafunctions: ideational, interpersonal, and textual. The ideational metafunction is concerned with what is going on, such as who is doing what to whom, where, when, and why, and how the logical relationships are developing. Interpersonal meaning is concerned with how they interact, the social reactions they negotiate, and the emotions they seek to express. The way ideational and interpersonal connections are connected is explored in intertextual meaning (Martin & Rose, 2003; Martin & White, 2005).

The appraisal is a system of interpersonal meanings. Appraisal resources are used to negotiate social interactions by expressing feelings about things and individuals to listeners or readers (Martin & Rose, 2003). According to White (2001),

Appraisal theory is concerned with the linguistic resources through which texts and speakers come to express, negotiate, and naturalise particular inter-subjective and, ultimately, ideological positions. Within this broad scope, the theory is concerned more particularly with the language of evaluation, attitude, and emotion and with a set of resources that explicitly position a text's proposals and propositions interpersonally. That is, it is concerned with those meanings that vary the terms of the speaker's engagement with their utterances, which vary what is at stake interpersonally both in individual utterances and as the text unfolds cumulatively.

Martin and White (2005) developed the appraisal theory by concentrating on one metafunction of language, namely interpersonal metafunction. In semantic discourse, appraisal is part of interpersonal metafunction. The purpose is to examine the complex relationships that exist between speakers and hearers, as well as between writers and readers. Martin and White also stated that appraisal theory concerns the subjective presence of writers and speakers in texts as they adopt stances towards the material they present and those with whom they communicate. Moreover, appraisal is concerned with "evaluation" — the kinds of attitudes that are negotiated in a text, the strength of the feelings involved, and the ways in which values are sourced and readers aligned (Martin & Rose, 2003, p. 25). Finally, it concerns how speakers or writers approve or disapprove, enthuse and abhor, applaud and criticize, and how they position their readers or listeners.

Based on Figure 2.1, appraisal is divided into three subsystems. "Attitude," "Engagement," and "Graduation." Attitude refers to how you feel (affect) and how you judge other people's behaviour (judgments) or how you evaluate things (appreciation). It is concerned with how the speakers/writers activate positive and negative assessments. Engagement deals with sourcing attitudes and the play of voices around opinions in discourse. It is concerned with

the source of the attitude, which may not be the speaker himself, but narrated by others. Graduation attends to grading phenomena whereby feelings are amplified, and categories are blurred (Martin & Rose, 2003).

The system adopted in this study is the attitude system since, according to White (2001), attitudes can be characterised as "praising" or "blaming," indicating that writers or speakers express positive or negative opinions about people, places, things, events, and states of affairs, which goes in line with the objectives of this research. Thus, the attitude system was chosen by the researcher to concentrate on positive attitudes through media discourse.

### ***Attitude System***

Attitude is a framework for mapping feelings as they are construed in English texts (Martin & White, 2005, p.42). According to White (2001), attitudes can be characterised as "praising" or "blaming," indicating that writers or speakers express positive or negative opinions about people, places, things, events, and states of affairs. This system involves three semantic regions, covering what are traditionally referred to as emotions, ethics, and aesthetics. Therefore, attitude can be divided into effect, judgment and appreciation.

Affect (emotions; reacting to behaviour, text/process, phenomena) "is concerned with registering positive and negative feelings: do we feel happy or sad, confident or anxious, interested or bored" (Martin & White, 2005, p.43). According to White (2001) affect is typically realised through mental processes of reaction (*This pleases me, I hate chocolate*) and through attributive relational of affect (*I am sad, I am happy, She is proud of her achievements, he is frightened of spiders*). Through ideational metaphor, they may, of course, be realised as nouns – e.g. *His fear was obvious to all*.

As stated by Martin and White (2005), the conscious participant experiencing the emotion is an Emoter, and the phenomenon responsible for that emotion is a trigger (p.46). Furthermore, they categorized affect into six factors in order to serve as a guide for classification and as a tool for those who want to analyze evaluation in discourse.

- The first factor is whether these feelings are construed by the culture as positive ones (good vibes that are enjoyable to experience) or negative ones (bad vibes that are better avoided).
- Positive affect            *the captain was happy*
- Negative affect            *the captain was sad*
- The second factor is that the feelings are realised as a surge of emotion involving some kind of embodied paralinguistic or extra-linguistic manifestation, or more internally experienced as a kind of emotive state or ongoing mental process.
- Behavioral surge            *the captain wept*
- Mental process/state      *the captain disliked leaving/the captain felt sad*
- Grammatically, this distinction is constructed as the opposition between behavioural (e.g. *She smiled at him*) versus mental (e.g. *She liked him*) or relational (e.g. *She felt happy with him*) processes.
- The third factor is that the feelings are construed as being directed at or reacting to a specific emotional trigger, or as a general ongoing mood.
- Reaction to other            *the captain disliked leaving/leaving displeased the captain*
- Undirected mood          *the captain was sad*
- Grammatically, this contrast is made by contrasting mental processes (*she likes him/he*

*pleases her*) against relational feelings (*she's happy*).

- The fourth factor, the feelings are graded – towards the lower valued end of a scale of intensity or towards the higher valued end, or somewhere in between.
- low        *the captain disliked leaving*
- median    *the captain hated leaving*
- high       *the captain detested leaving*
- The fifth factor, feelings involving intention (rather than reaction), with respect to a stimulus that is irrealis (rather than realis). Grammatically, this distinction is constructed as the opposition between desiderative and emotive mental processes (*I'd like to* vs *I like it*).
- realis      *the captain disliked leaving* (involves a reaction to the present (actual)).
- irrealis    *the captain feared leaving* (involves intentions with respect to some stimulus).

The final factor in our affect typology divides emotions into three categories: un/happiness, in/security, and dis/satisfaction. The un/happiness variable includes emotions related to 'heart affairs' such as sadness, hate, happiness, and love; the in/security variable covers emotions concerned with ecosocial well-being – anxiety, fear, confidence, and trust; the dis/satisfaction variable covers emotions concerned with telos (the pursuit of goals) – ennui, displeasure, curiosity, and respect.

- un/happiness    *the captain felt sad/happy*
- in/security        *the captain felt anxious/confident*
- dis/satisfaction   *the captain felt fed up/absorbed*

2. Judgement (ethics; evaluating behaviour) “deals with attitudes towards behaviour that we admire or criticize, praise or condemn. Thus, judgement refers to the evaluation of human behavior positively or negatively with respect to social norms”. Judgement divided into social esteem and social sanction. Social esteem is the value that is shared with family, colleagues, and friends, and is commonly employed in oral culture (chat, gossip, jokes, and stories). Social sanction refers to the shared principles that underpin civic duty and is commonly seen in edicts, rules, regulations, and laws. Judgements of esteem have to do with ‘normality’ (how unusual someone is), ‘capacity’ (how capable they are) and ‘tenacity’ (how resolute they are); judgements of sanction have to do with ‘veracity’ (how truthful someone is) and ‘propriety’ (how ethical someone is) (Martin & White, 2005, p.52).

3. Appreciation (aesthetics; evaluating text/process, natural phenomena) “involves evaluations of semiotic and natural phenomena according to the ways in which they are valued or not in a given field” (Martin & White, 2005, p.43). We use meanings to construct our evaluations of 'things' when we show appreciation. Appreciations can be divided into our ‘reactions’ to things (do they catch our attention; do they please us?), their ‘composition’ (balance and complexity), and their ‘value’ (how innovative, authentic, timely, etc.).

## Methodology

The current paper employs a qualitative approach, which is defined as the “study of things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of or interpret phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them, and it usually employs observational evidence such as case studies, interviews, life stories, interactional, and visual texts” (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994, p.2).

Furthermore, the current study's data collection method is internet-based. The researcher surfed the most well-known global and reliable agencies looking for data that tackled the role of women during the Iraqi protests of 2019. Among these agencies were the



BBC, France 24, the Independent, and the Daily Mail, among others. Moreover, the data of the present study has been purposefully selected. Purposeful sampling, according to Maxwell (1997), is a type of sampling in which certain settings, persons, or events are purposefully chosen for the essential information they can supply that cannot be obtained as effectively from other options.

Finally, the researcher has found it relevant to apply the appraisal framework to the analysis since appraisal theory is concerned with alternative discourses in which dominant attitudes are challenged and renegotiated. In addition, it is more susceptible textually than other approaches to the role of affect and emotions in collective identities and actions. The attitude system has been chosen by the researcher to concentrate on positive attitudes and to examine the interpersonal meanings of the phrases and sentences under investigation that lead to social change.

## Data Analysis

Attitude indicates that writers or speakers express positive or negative opinions about people, places, things, events, etc. There are three types of attitudes that are found in the whole texts, i.e., affect, judgement, and appreciation as follows:

**Table 1** *Types of appraising items*

Types of Attitudes	Types of Appraising	Frequency	Percentage
Affect	in/security	5	9.43%
	dis/satisfaction	1	1.89%
	un/happiness	1	1.89%
Judgement	Normality	2	3.77%
	Capacity	5	9.43%
	Tenacity	4	7.55%
	Veracity	1	1.89%
	Propriety	8	15.09%
	Reaction: impact	7	13.21%
Appreciation	Reaction: quality	4	7.55%
	Composition: balance	3	5.66%
	Composition: Complexity	2	3.77%
	Valuation	10	18.87%

The texts indicated the highest percentage of positive feelings, which is 69.81%, while the negative feelings found were 30.19%. Consequently, the writers use the attitude resources to more positively represent the role of feminists. Furthermore, appreciation attitudes, which involve evaluating semiotic and natural events, have the highest frequency and percentage, making 49.06%, with 26 times out of 53 attitudes found in the analysis. Then, in the attitudes that deal with our appreciations of behaviour that we admire, criticize, praise or condemn, there are 20 attitudes of judgement, which make 37.74% of the analysis, as the second highest result found. Finally, affect attitudes concerned with registering positive and negative feelings are found 7 times with the lowest percentage, which is 13.21%.

Based on the frequencies and percentages shown above in Table 1, the valuation resource, which is associated with the value of things, has the highest percentage and frequency, which is replicated 10 times out of 53 resources. Consequently, the writers use meanings to construct evaluations of semiotic and natural phenomena. Thus, after being depicted as victims, the positive portrayal of feminists and the protests of 2019 were reproduced

by the writers to increase acceptance and support for women in a patriarchal society that refused their participation in the protests. Therefore, the writers describe the participation of women as a phenomenon to emphasize that something extraordinary is happening and to emphasize their influential role during the protests of 2019.

The second highest recurrences are the propriety resources, and they are used 8 times, as shown above, which involves how ethical someone is. The use of the propriety resource indicates evaluations of human behaviour either positively or negatively with respect to social norms. Thus, the writers use propriety resources to demonstrate that Iraq's October 2019 Revolution was not only a political revolution against government corruption and economic exploitation, but also a social revolution challenging the exploitative status quo of the poor and destitute, as well as women and girls. As a result, the writers vary in how they use attitudes in the texts, the intensity of the feelings involved, and how values are sourced and readers aligned. Thus, they come to express, negotiate, and naturalise specific inter-subjective and ideological positions.

## Conclusion

The results indicated that the writers utilise multiple attitude resources in the texts that represent the role of women during the Iraqi protests of 2019, showing opinions and mapping feelings as they are constructed in the texts. Further, diverse attitudes such as affect, judgment, and appreciation are used, and most of these attitudes are positive feelings, with a percentage of 69.81%.

Regarding the affect system, which is associated with registering positive and negative feelings, the (in/security) resource has the highest frequency and percentage. Consequently, the writers intend to shed light on women protesters as they are marginalized groups, sad and frustrated but still determined to see their homeland shed government graft and sectarian politics.

In terms of the judgement system, which deals with the evaluation of human behaviour positively or negatively with respect to social norms, the writers show that the feminist march was received criticism from some conservative groups who believe that women's participation in protests is immoral and unethical, claiming that their voices are "a flaw" and need to be silenced. Therefore, protesters have challenged these conservative groups in the country by sharing living spaces and ensuring that both sexes participate equally.

According to the analysis of the attitude system, appreciation attitudes are the most frequent and have the highest percentage. The biggest proportion and frequency are linked to valuation attitudes, which are associated with the value of things, and are replicated 10 times out of 53 resources. Consequently, the writers use meanings to construct evaluations of semiotic and natural phenomena. Thus, after being portrayed as victims, the writers use the positive portrayal of feminists to promote acceptance and support for women in a patriarchal society that refused to allow them to participate in the protests. As a result, the writers refer to women's participation as a phenomenon in order to emphasize that something unique is taking place and to emphasize their crucial position throughout the 2019 protests.

The second highest category is propriety resources, which refers to a person's ethical behaviour. As a result, the usage of the propriety resource reveals evaluations of women's behaviour during the 2019 protest. Changing the perception of Iraqi women's status in a patriarchal society that views women coming to the streets with men as immoral was one of

the women's most important challenges during the 2019 protests. The women, on the other hand, defied these stereotypes and offered powerful images of their strength, role, and position, which were not inferior to those of men.

Finally, among the most prominent sources of attitudes that writers have used extensively in texts is the (reaction: impact) resource, which indicates our 'reactions' to things. Thus, during the so-called October revolution, women became more visible at demonstrations, bringing to light a massive wave of female participation and engagement. Additionally, women have been given crucial space and have made a mark in the movement, adding strength in voice and numbers, with men in their communities supporting them and inviting them to fully participate. As a result, Iraqi women have emerged as movement role models, filling a position in a society that has largely failed to advocate for their problems.

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## Appendix

**Text One: Iraq protests: The women rising up on Baghdad's walls**

<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-50756004>

**Text Two: Women in Iraq are rising from the ashes of war to join protestors calling for political change**

<https://www.independent.co.uk/voices/iraq-revolution-women-protests-iran-lebanon-a9186141.html>

**Text Three: 'We Are Not Going To Leave': Iraq's Protests Escalate**

<https://www.npr.org/2020/01/22/798492825/we-are-not-going-to-leave-iraqs-protests-escalate>

**Text Four: Women and men stick together in Iraq after cleric al-Sadr criticizes protesters' 'immorality'**

<https://www.dw.com/en/women-and-men-stick-together-in-iraq-after-cleric-al-sadr-criticizes-protesters-immorality/a-52372819>

**Text Five: Under Tahrir, young Iraqi artists paint revolutionary road**

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/wires/afp/article-7665103/Under-Tahrir-young-Iraqi-artists-paint-revolutionary-road.html>

**Text Six: Iraqis hold largest anti-government protest yet**

<https://beta.dw.com/en/iraq-anti-government-protesters-hold-largest-rally-since-demonstrations-began/a-51087850>

**Text Seven: Iraq protests: UN and US call for reforms to help end unrest**

<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-50374393>

**Text Eight: 'They Have Stolen Everything From Us': Iraq's Anti-Government Protests Continue**

<https://www.npr.org/2019/11/05/776051741/they-have-stolen-everything-from-us-iraqs-anti-government-protests-continue>

**Text Nine: Women protesters in Iraq defy radical cleric, take to street**

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/wires/ap/article-8001165/Women-protesters-Iraq-defy-radical-cleric-street.html>

**Text Ten: Women in Iraq defiantly take to the streets despite fears they 'could die at any moment'**

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/middle-east/iraq-protests-women-streets-death-torture-revolution-tahir-square-a9213976.html>

**Text Eleven: From Baghdad to Basra, the faces of Iraq's 'October Revolution'**

<https://www.france24.com/en/20191211-from-baghdad-to-basra-the-faces-of-iraq-s-october-revolution>

**Text Twelve: Hundreds of Iraqi women defy cleric to protest authorities**

<https://www.france24.com/en/20200213-hundreds-of-iraqi-women-defy-cleric-to-protest-authorities>