

Video lockdown diaries during the Covid-19 crisis: A genre analysis

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Abstract

During the Covid-19 crisis, the number of individuals producing video diaries about their lockdown experiences for social media increased dramatically. In many ways, these video lockdown diaries are similar in nature to the type of vlog regularly produced, and subject to analytical scrutiny, prior to the 2020 Covid-19 epidemic, however in many ways they are also different. The objective of this research is to examine these lockdown vlogs to find out more about their content, the reasons for their production, and their typical generic structures. Ultimately, by drawing upon existing literature on the vlog, it seeks to establish whether they might be classified as a unique genre in their own right.

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Attestation of Authorship

I hereby declare that this submission is my own work and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, it contains no material previously published or written by another person (except where explicitly defined in the acknowledgements), nor material which to a substantial extent has been submitted for the award of any other degree or diploma of a university or other institution of higher learning.

Signed:

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.0 Covid-19 and the global pandemic

The novel coronavirus (COVID-19) was first reported in Wuhan in December 2019, and by early 2020 it had spread to almost all parts of the world. On January 30, 2020, the World Health Organisation (WHO) declared that the outbreak constituted a Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC), and by March 11, 2020, it confirmed that the COVID-19 outbreak was a global pandemic. WHO recommended that those with mild respiratory symptoms should be encouraged to self-isolate and that social distancing should take place. The organisation also stated that even countries with no reported cases should follow these recommendations (Cucinotta and Vanelli, 2020).

Earlier on January 23, 2020 the Chinese government had already imposed a lockdown on Wuhan, along with the entire province of Hubei, in an attempt to curb the virus.

This lockdown affected approximately 57 million people. At the same time, a number of countries had begun to impose flight restrictions on China (Lau et al., 2020).

Despite these restrictions, in just two months after first appearing in Wuhan, COVID-19 had infected over 5 million people globally (Bates et al. 2020). As a result, further interventions intended slow the spread of the pandemic were implemented worldwide, with up to 4.4 billion people (57% of the global population) estimated to be partially or fully locked down by 5 April 2020. As well as the use of lockdowns,

many governments around the world also imposed mandatory 14-day quarantines for people entering and leaving the country.

1.1 The impact of the lockdown

According to Amat et al. (2020), the pandemic has had (and is continuing to have), a major impact on people's everyday lives, in particular with regards to freedom of movement. Many still have to work from home, including students who are required carry out their studies online, as the long-term home isolation continues. A number of studies, however, have found that the extended lockdown causes immense psychological pressure, and can even lead to depression (e.g., Ocampo & Yamagishi, 2020; Pancani et al, 2021; Smith et al., 2020). Kumar and Dwivedi (2020) and Sangeetha (2020) also state that dramatic lifestyle changes occur as a result of prolonged home isolation. People tend to spend more time lying in bed, playing with their phones, engaging with social media, or watching television. Furthermore, there is also a considerable change to eating habits (Chen et al., 2020) and exercise habits (Kumar & Dwivedi, 2020). That is, people are inclined to exercise less, although interestingly, the number of people who actively participate in cooking increases.

According to Bates, Primack, Moraga and Duarte (2020), the pandemic has also had an impact on the environment. For example, there has been a rapid increase in the use of masks, disposable gloves, protective clothing and other plastic materials, along

with the suspension of bans on single-use plastics by many governments. This has resulted in a major increase in plastic waste (Klemeš, Fan, Tan, Jiang, 2020).

Importantly, pandemics also have a negative impact on the mental health of front-line health care workers (Preti, Mattei, Perego et al., 2020). This is because, given the rapid pace of the pandemic, health care workers typically have very little time to prepare mentally for the intensity of front line work, and are also constantly at risk of contracting the virus.

Home quarantine also has an especially negative impact on the elderly, who, because they largely remain unattached from online life, can experience a heightened sense of loneliness (Brown, Mossabir, Harrison et al., 2021). Furthermore, because the resistance of the elderly to the virus is lower than that of others, they choose not to go out or socialise in order to reduce the risk of contracting the virus, which contributes further to their sense of loneliness. As a result, most older adults also report health concerns and anxiety (Brown et al., 2021).

1.2 The video lockdown diary

Another impact of home isolation is that the number of individuals making video logs (vlogs) on social media has increased dramatically during COVID-19¹. Yang (2021)

¹ A vlog is a form of blog, but uses the medium of video rather than written text (Frobenius, 2010; Griffith and Papacharissi, 2010). Like a blog, the producer of a vlog (known as a vlogger) regularly posts short videos to the Internet in which they discuss their views on a subject, or talk about their thoughts or everyday experiences.

for example, has pointed out that during the initial lockdown, many residents of Wuhan began to create what she referred to as "lockdown diaries" in the form of video blogs (vlogs). Yang described these lockdown diaries as an art of endurance, and stated that they often contained details of the vloggers' daily lives to inspire others to persevere and cope with the lockdown. The lockdown vlog, however, was not limited to Wuhan. Wheatley & Buglass (2019), for example, have found a sharp increase in the number of the video lockdown diaries posted to social media platforms such as YouTube, Facebook, Weibo and Xiaohongshu from vloggers worldwide during the COVID-19 crisis. They stated that during the crisis, hundreds of thousands of vloggers became active every day.

The production of these pandemic related vlogs, which drawing from Yang (2021) are subsequently referred to as *video lockdown diaries*, caught my attention. In many ways, these vlogs, which comment on the pandemic and discuss lockdown experiences, are similar in nature to the types of video logs that were generated regularly prior to the COVID-19 outbreak in 2020, however in many ways they are also quite different. As such, I became interested in whether the video lockdown diary was an example of a new emergent social media genre. While more traditional vlogs are the subject of many academic studies, very little has been written specifically about the video lockdown diaries, and there has been no research to date exploring their characteristics as a unique genre. Consequently, this study will focus on the

video lockdown diary, in particular the analysis of the video lockdown diary as a new generic form. The main goal of this study is to examine these lockdown vlogs to find out more about their underlying purpose, content, and typical generic structures, and ultimately, by drawing on the literature available on vlogs, determine whether they can be classified as a genre in their own right. My research questions are therefore as follows:

- a) What are the primary purposes of video lockdown diaries created during the Covid-19 crisis?*
- b) What are the specific content foci of video lockdown diaries?*
- c) What specific structural elements do video lockdown diaries contain?*
- d) How do video lockdown diaries differ from traditional vlogs?*

1.3 Organization of chapters

The remaining six chapters are organized as follows. Chapter 2 provides a review of the literature, looking firstly at research focusing on the traditional vlog, in particular its generic characteristics, including purpose, content, and structure. The chapter also discusses emerging research on the video lockdown diaries. Chapter 3 provides an overview of the research methodology, genre analysis (Swales, 1990, 2004, Bhatia 1993, Paltridge 2012), used for the analysis of the video lockdown diary. This includes an introductory discussion of the concept genre. Chapters 4 to 6 identify and discuss the results of the genre analysis. Chapter 4 focuses on the purposes of the

video lockdown diaries, Chapter 5 focuses on the verbal and visual structure of the video lockdown diaries, and Chapter 6 focuses on the content of the video lockdown diaries. Finally, the main observations and implications of this study are discussed in chapter 7. This chapter also briefly discusses the study's overall contribution to knowledge, before critically evaluating the research process and discussing its limitations. The chapter concludes by identifying opportunities for future research, followed by some final reflections.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.0 Introduction

In contemporary society, the global use of online social networks (OSN), for example, YouTube and Facebook, has dramatically increased and they now play a major role in most people's lives (Fire, Goldschmidt, & Elovici, 2014). This growth has been aided by increasingly higher bandwidth and lower latency networks, which has made the use of OSNs more convenient. Importantly, it has expanded the use of video on social media platforms, and given rise to the video blog, often referred to as a *vlog* (Zhang, 2020). According to Zhang (2020), for example, in 2017, large numbers of Chinese students who were studying abroad made daily videos of their experiences and regularly published these videos on social platforms such as Weibo. Since then, celebrities have started using vlogs to record their daily lives and have been in the public eye ever since.

In 2019, the creation and popularity of vlogs in China increased exponentially as mainstream video platforms such as Douyin (Tik-Tok) and Weibo successively launched the 'Vlog billion traffic support plan' and other similar projects (Shi, 2019). The 'Vlog billion traffic support plan' was initiated by Douyin in order to encourage more creators to record their lives. To achieve this, the platform provided traffic support and Douyin "vlogger" certification, among other rewards, to vlogs and their creators (Hu, 2019). It also focused on the creation of the short-form video (one to

three minutes) believing that the typical vlog creation threshold of 5-20 mins was too high for ordinary users. These strategies have continued to bring more traffic and exposure to vlogging and the vlog, and have not only attracted more vlog creators, but have also led to a greater interest in vlogging by internet viewers (Berryman, & Kavka, 2017).

Frobenius (2010), defines the video blog or vlog² as “a relatively new multimodal genre of CMC, involving a speaker shooting video footage of him- or herself, which is later uploaded onto the internet” (p. 815), while Griffith and Papacharissi (2010) similarly define vlogs as “sites where authors post stories and/or information about themselves in the form of video, rather than text, as traditional blogs include” (para. 1). They also state that vlogs are public spaces for self-expression where the content published online is mainly controlled by the authors, a pointed reiterated by Gunelius (2012) and Biel, & Gatica-Perez, (n.d.) who identify vlogs as the video component of online broadcasts where *anyone* is able to create and publish content. According to Maulidah, (2017, August), the vlog can be regarded as both an audio-visual life documentary and as a communication tool, and for Sun (2019) a vlog is "a website where the author publishes stories or information on specific topics in the form of videos. Griffith and Papacharissi (2010) state that vlogs are representative of a new mode of self-expression for the contemporary communication environment and are

² The term Vlog is a portmanteau of video and blog, while blog stands for web and log.

therefore important as they can inform us about our lives. As a result, they are a valuable and interesting area of study.

2.1 The content of vlogs

According to Christian (2009), vlogs can be divided into three categories. The first category is the Personal Vlog, which mainly involves the sharing of personal stories or anecdotes about the vlogger's everyday life, or the recommendation of helpful items for personal use. Recently, it has become popular for college students to create their own personal vlogs (Chen, 2000). In terms of content, these usually discuss the students' daily personal experiences in college, including topics such as campus experience, learning and advice, travel and entertainment, work and internship, makeup, and appearance. Among these various key topics, Chen (2020) observed that the campus experience was the most frequently discussed and suggested that this may be because most of the viewers of these vlogs are students, and therefore are more likely to sympathize with, and follow, those vloggers who share familiar experiences. Chen observes that this familiarity can shorten the distance between the vlogger and the viewer, making the viewer more empathetic.

The second category of vlog is the Theme vlog. This type of vlog often involves a particular social theme of interest to the vlogger, who narrates the thoughts and social phenomena of a certain group of people. It can also have immediate social consequence. For example, the vlogs on Douyin (Tik-Tok) of a British national living

in China all involve random interviews with people on the streets of various Chinese cities, looking at their English level. This thematic focus on English access is relatively unique and has attracted widespread attention in China. According to Mandasari and Aminatun (2020), English learners can significantly improve their English proficiency through watching vlogs, and as seen in the interviews of the English vlogger, it also has impacts positively on individuals' enthusiasm for learning English. On a similar note, Wheatley and Burgrass (2019) suggest that even the moderate viewing of thematic vlogs can improve an individual's well-being and play a role in spreading positive messages and promoting positive attitudes to life.

The third category involves vloggers, such as celebrities or experts with an influence in a certain field. They often develop a large online audience. They also tend to have vlogging experience and advanced insights, copywriting skills, video thinking, and directorial skills. According to Zhang (2020), celebrities bring a lot of traffic to the vlog platform, and as result, are able to successfully promote goods and services. For example, the celebrity Nana Ouyang (a cellist) uses vlogs to recommend things that are useful for everyday life, such as makeup and shoes. As a result, vlogging has over time replaced the expert advice provided by brick-and-mortar stores. On this point, Diwanji and Lee (2017) point out that consumers are increasingly using vlogging to learn more about certain products. Vloggers, for instance, recommend or introduce movies or useful products, often in the form of personal diaries. In turn, these vlogs attract a lot of people who search for and might ultimately purchase the products or

services that these vlogs recommend. Within this context, Choi and Lee (2019) found that there was a surprisingly mutual trust between vloggers and viewers.

2.2 The purpose of a vlog

Swales (2004) suggests that the principal criterion for the identification of any genre is purpose, and hence it is of interest to consider the reasons why people vlog. Firstly, as indicated above, the vlog satisfies the vloggers' desire for self-expression and provides a means of satisfying a desire for self-actualization (Griffith & Papacharissi, 2010). Some vloggers use their vlogs as personal diaries, using videos to reflect on their lives and store memories. In contrast, there is also a type of vlogger who is not particularly diary-oriented and presents themselves in a narcissistic way through baseless self-promotion (Griffith, & Papacharissi, 2010).

Secondly, an increasing number of individuals post vlogs to evaluate the products they have purchased, such as clothing and cosmetics (Choi, 2019). One reason for this is that vloggers can increase their fan base through these types of product evaluation videos, which ultimately result in more revenue, due to blog monetization. On the other hand, Diwanji and Lee (2017) observe that it is now increasingly common for fans to obtain information about the objects they desire through vlogs. The state that a downside of this process, however, is that it forms an online shopping loop in which merchants supply goods to vloggers, and vloggers recommend these goods to their

viewers. Moreover, according to Huang, Kuippers, Li, Sha, Xia (2020), there has been a significant change in people's shopping habits. They are now more likely to shop online than in physical stores or supermarkets. The outcome results in a kind of mutually beneficial marketing mix between the vlogger and the retailer, with the vlogger making money by promoting a product that works for them; a win-win situation according to Choi, & Lee (2019).

Chen (2020) points out that often the ultimate purpose of vlogs is not always those anticipated by their creators. He suggests that while vlogging about their campus experiences, campus vloggers inadvertently promote their universities, and as such the vlog has become a very effective way to publicize a university. Interestingly, Chen (2020) found that videos with the university's logo were more popular than those that did not specifically identify the school. He suggests that viewers may be attracted by the particular campus life and experience of the vlogger and even decide to attend their university in the future. For Chen (2020), this may be because the images included in the vlog are warmer and more attractive than the official propaganda videos of the university.

Wheatley and Burgrass (2019) also point out that vlogging can have a positive impact on individuals. Today health concerns are widespread, and an increasing number of people desire a healthier lifestyle. As a result, there are now ubiquitous vlogs that focus on healthy living or help individuals seeking support of an illness (Parnell,

2019). Interestingly, private health vlog accounts run by ordinary people are visited more often than official video accounts (Simunaniemi, Sandberg, Andersson, & Nydahl, 2011), especially those offering dietary advice. However, as pointed out by (Neil, & Mbilishaka, 2019), self-judgment, rather than blind listening, is required by those viewing the vlog.

2.3 The structure of a vlog

Vlog structure is an important factor in attracting viewers and maintaining their interest. Many studies on the structure of vlogs focus on the vlog's openings. Griffith and Papacharissi (2010), for example, who believe that the structure of the vlog should be designed to attract the audience, suggest that, while vloggers should be focused on controlling the rhythm, language and self-expression of their videos, it is most essential that their opening structures are attractive to the audience. Similarly, Frobenius (2013) points out that the most significant structural component of the vlog is the way it begins. He states that vlog introductions tend to involve a trending topic opening, which encourages viewers to continue watching the vlog. Frobenius (n.d.) also noticed that the vlogger's first sentence is typically exaggerated and directly cuts into the topic, which he states is a good way to attract the attention of audience. Furthermore, he points out that the opening sequence of a vlog usually consists of a monologue. Tolson (2005) also identifies the importance of the initial greetings aimed at the vlogger's audience. As with these other studies, he also suggests that the use of

greetings, as a way of opening a vlog monologue, is an active way to make contact with the audience, and is crucial for stimulating their enthusiasm. In contrast, Garrod and Pickering (2004) suggest that vlogs often lack the necessary dialogic elements. They state that this is because, firstly, the vlogger is similar to a news anchor in the way that they talk directly to a typically static camera. This limits the speaker's movements within the camera frame. They point out that there is also often a lack of interlocutors involved in vlogs. This lack of interlocutors often means it is impossible to generate the communication and continuity of the topic (Frobenius, 2010).

A few studies examine the overall structure of vlogs. Riboni (2017), for example, carried out an analysis of the make-up tutorial vlog. She identified the typical structure as involving, i) greeting/welcoming, ii) a summary of the video content, iii) make-up application and advice, and iv) the leave taking section which she refers to as a call-to-action. She also states that the structure is quite fixed, and as a result it also provides a way for viewers to recognize the genre. Wood (2019) also investigated the typical structure of the vlog. She found that the vlogs she examined all began with opening greetings, after which the vlogger attended to the main business of the vlog, generally connected to the vlog's title. She points out that within this section, the vlogger regularly employed virtual branding and often used formulaic expressions or markers of engagement. Wood also states that her vlogs ended with a call to action, again using formulaic expressions such as 'Don't forget to like this video and subscribe!'

2.4 Visual characteristics of the vlog

A number of studies have referred to the visual characteristics of the vlog. Frobenius (2013), for example, identifies the use of gesture as a good way to focus the viewer's attention on the object being discussed and displayed. He states that:

Vloggers use pointing as a means to establish multimodal reference between elements of the Web site by pointing at objects on the Web site situated outside the video screen, thus projecting a gesture created in a three-dimensional space for its future, two-dimensional environment. (p. 2)

Pihlaja (2018) noted the importance of the vlogger's eye and camera position in attracting viewers. Similarly, Page, Busse and Nørgaard (2018) noted that the movement of the vlogger's gaze will direct the attention of the audience. For example, when the vlogger is in the middle of the camera, their eyes generally look directly at the audience, but when they introduce another object, their eyes turn to the object, which causes the viewer's eyes to move with the vlogger's eyes.

According to Maguire (2015) the thumbnails assigned to a vlog are an important visual component of vlogging. Thumbnails function to provide a comprehensive description of the vlog. They are a static picture, not unlike a book cover, and offer an effective method for attracting readers to open or click a vlog to watch. Maquire (2015) suggests thumbnails are an integral part of vlog marketing a vlog and obtaining an audience. Poor quality thumbnail images may not allow a viewer to determine the general focus of the vlog content, while viewers are more likely to open

a better-quality thumbnail. Wood (2019) suggests that the physical arrangement of the vlog's background is important. Vlogs are often recorded in the vloggers home with many personal items seemingly scattered about the background. However, as Wood states these are most likely strategically placed to construct a particular sense of identity. She provides the example of vlog with decorative surroundings containing many arts and craft projects within a clean and neatly adorned room, which she claims have been purposely designed to maintain the vlogger's identity as trendy and fashionable.

2.5 The video lockdown diary

During the COVID-19, period when a large number of people were isolated at home, or isolated in hotels after returning from abroad, many people began to develop negative emotions and an unhealthy lifestyle. Wheatley & Buglass (2019) have suggested that one way people responded to this abnormal lifestyle was through the production of vlogs. These special types of vlogs often resembled diary entries where people described their days during lockdown, or alternatively explained how to maintain a healthy lifestyle during the lockdown. Importantly, Wheatley and Buglass indicated that these vlogs, or video lockdown diaries were able to provide viewers with a sense of well-being. Besides Wheatley & Buglass (2019), however, there is a lack of research on the video lockdown diary and, as a result, my study is interested in finding out more about this new online development. In particular, the

study is interested in whether the video lockdown diary might be considered a unique genre in its own right, one that is distinct from the traditional vlog as described in the literature above. In order to find out more about the video lockdown diary and establish its uniqueness as an emergent genre I am interested in answering the following questions:

- 1. What are the primary purposes of video lockdown diaries created during the Covid-19 crisis?*
- 2. What are the specific content foci of video lockdown diaries?*
- 3. What specific structural elements do video lockdown diaries contain?*
- 4. How do video lockdown diaries differ from traditional vlogs?*

The next chapter will discuss in more detail the notion of genre and provide a description of the genre-based method used to approach these questions.

Chapter 3: Methods

3.0 Research Question

During the COVID-19 crisis, many people began creating and posting video diaries about their lockdown experiences on social media platforms such as Weibo and YouTube. These video lockdown diaries increasingly became a popular viewing genre for those who were similarly affected by the pandemic. In many ways, the video lockdown diaries are similar in nature to the type of vlog regularly posted to social media, and which have been subject to much analytical scrutiny, however in many ways they are also different. The objective of this research is to deepen our understanding of the video lockdown diary genre by finding out more about the purposes for its production, content, and typical generic structure, but also to ultimately establish whether the video lockdown diary might be classified as a genre in its own right. In order to achieve these objectives, this study attempts to answer the following research questions:

1. *What are the primary purposes of video lockdown diaries created during the Covid-19 crisis?*
2. *What are the specific content foci of video lockdown diaries?*
3. *What specific structural elements do video lockdown diaries contain?*
4. *How do video lockdown diaries differ from traditional vlogs?*

3.1 Genre and Genre Analysis

Genre

The methodological focus of the study involves the analysis of genre from an Applied Linguistics perspective, where the focus is primarily on the genre of non-fictional texts, rather than literary texts, as is typically the case in the field of literature (Freedman and Medway, 1994). As such, genre in applied linguistics focuses less on pre-determined conventions of form (for example the structure of the sonnet), and more on connecting the “recognition of regularities in discourse types, with a broader social and cultural understanding of language in use” (Freedman and Medway, 1994, p. 1). Studies of genre in applied linguistics have examined promotional brochures (Bhatia, 1993), research article introductions (Swales, 1990), artist’s statements (Hocking, 2021), vlogs (Grice, 2012), academic book reviews (Motta-Roth, 1996) Instagram posts (Lestari, 2019), and recipes (Taavitsainen, 2001) among many others. Genres can comprise written, oral, visual, gestural and other communicative modes (Hiippala, 2014).

Definitions of genre have been provided by a number of scholars in the field of Applied Linguistics. According to Martin (1984), for example, genre can be defined as "a staged, goal-oriented, purposeful activity in which speakers engage as members of their culture" (p. 25), while Swales (1990) states that:

A genre comprises a class of communicative events, the members of which

share some set of communicative purpose. These purposes are recognized by the expert members of the parent discourse community, and thereby constitute the rationale for the genre. (p. 58)

Importantly, Swales goes on to state that the rationale of a genre “shapes the schematic structure of the discourse and influences and constrains choice of content and style” (p. 58). Similarly, for Paltridge (2012), a genre is an activity that “people engage in through the use of language” (p. 64). He states that:

Instances of a genre often share a number of features. They may be spoken or written in typical, and sometimes conventional, ways. They also often have a common function and purpose (or set of functions and purposes). (pp. 62-63)

Miller (1984) also views genre as typification and emphasises that a genre is related to the particular social action that is being carried out. She states that genres usually take a typical form and have typical content, and that it is our recognition of this that we draw upon when we participate in the use of genres.

The consensus of these definitions and others, is that genres emerge as people develop conventional responses to recurring activities. They also concur that genres are primarily defined by their communicative purpose or purposes, and in order to meet these purposes, they often are structured in a similar way and have similar content.

However even though most genres are easily identifiable and have labels which are widely recognized (e.g., the news article), they often exhibit generic variations (Montgomery, 2007). A particular text, therefore, may be a typical instance of a genre, or it may be a less typical instance of the genre (Paltridge, 2012). Genres are also constantly in a state of flux. Bhatia (1993), for example, has argued that this is because generic conventions are often exploited by their users to achieve certain private intentions. Furthermore, as Paltridge (2012) states, new genres are always emerging from older more established genres, often in response to social or technological changes:

Genres change through time. This may, for example, be in response to changes in technologies or it may be as a result of changes in values underlying the use of the particular genre. The office memo is an example of a genre that has changed in response to technological changes. An office meeting may change when a new person takes over chairing the meeting who has a different idea from their predecessor as to how the meeting should be run. (pp. 62-63)

One focus of this study is to evaluate whether the video lockdown diary (VLD) genre is an example of a new genre that has formed from an existing genre, the vlog, as a result of changing social circumstances, i.e., the lockdown that occurred across many countries in 2020 in order to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

Genre analysis

Genre analysis (Swales 1990, 2004, Bhatia, 1993, Paltridge 2012) is a discourse-analytical method for analysing genre and is primarily based on John Swales' (1990) early analyses of research article introductions. The analytical process involves the collection of a group of texts that are seen to be representative of the genre being analysed, after which the texts are examined and broken down into discrete components, often referred to as 'moves', to establish similarities in their structure and content. A move is often determined by its particular social *function*. For instance, in the Rejection Letter genre, there is a move referred to as "preparation for bad news" whose function is to prepare the reader for the ensuing rejection, often by softening the impact of the bad news (Swales and Feak, 2000). According to Swales and Feak, the 'preparation for bad news' move is also typically *structured* just before the actual statement of rejection (the bad news) move, and just after the initial acknowledgement move. Linguistically the *content* of the 'preparation for bad news' move involves statements such as "we received an unusually high number of applications" and "unfortunately we had to limit the number we could accept" that reduce the severity of the bad news in the mind of the reader, while the *content* of the statement of rejection typically contains expressions such as "We regret to inform you ...". While some genres, such as the research article introductions are highly constrained and their structure tends to follow a particular sequence, other genres are much more fluid, and their structures and content are more dynamic.

Finally, as communicative purpose is such an important criterion for both establishing the different sub-functions of genre that help to identify its similarities in structure and content, as well as in identifying whether an individual text is overall an instance of an individual genre, a genre analysis may also focus on establishing the generic purpose of a genre, often in relationship to the social activity being performed by that genre (Paltridge, 2012). Overall, then, genre analyses conventionally focus on identifying and discussing patterns, or typicalities in the purposes, structure and content of a set of texts viewed as belonging to a unique genre, in order that some understanding of the prototypical nature of a genre and the social and cultural context in which it is written.

3.2 Data

In order to investigate the potential genre of the video lockdown diary, I collected 10 vlogs posted by vloggers during the 2020 COVID-19 lockdown that specifically focused on the lockdown and pandemic. While a total of 10 exemplars provides only a small corpus from which to develop an understanding of a particular genre, given the time constraints of this dissertation study, as well as the size of each video lockdown diary collected (each one was over 10 minutes) and the subsequent time required to analyse each diary, 10 was considered a suitable number for this exploratory study.

Table 3.1 provides details of the 10 VLDs and the social media platform they are sourced from.

Table 3.1 Details of the 10 VLDs and their source

| VLD | Source | Link |
|-------|-----------------|---|
| VLD1 | Douyin (TikTok) | https://v.douyin.com/eEc4Qaj/ |
| VLD2 | XiaoHongshu | http://xhslink.com/5tObMd |
| VLD3 | XiaoHongshu | http://xhslink.com/DQPbMd |
| VLD4 | XiGuashipin | https://www.ixigua.com/6809988166183813640 |
| VLD5 | Douyin | https://v.douyin.com/eEctCFJ/ |
| VLD6 | Douyin | https://v.douyin.com/eE31VMH/ |
| VLD7 | Douyin | https://v.douyin.com/eEcTWNq/ |
| VLD8 | XiaoHongshu | http://xhslink.com/VmbcMd |
| VLD9 | Douyin | https://v.douyin.com/eE31nxo/ |
| VLD10 | Douyin | https://v.douyin.com/eEco846/ |

The lockdown diaries were initially located using the search words *COVID-19* and *vlog* in the Search engines of Baidu, Douyin (TikTok), Xiaohongshu and Weibo. Due to New Zealand's closed borders, I could not return to Auckland from China to continue my study, and as a result of China's internet restrictions I could only access these Chinese-based platforms. While the search produced many results, the linguistic focus of my post graduate study was English, and the results of the initial search of these Chinese online platforms were all in Chinese. Subsequently, I added the

keywords *English* and *foreign* to the search in an attempt to limit the results to those vlogs using English communication. This effort resulted in a number of English language video lockdown diaries on the Chinese social media platforms. Besides the English language criterion, the other requirement for selection was that the content of the video had to have been produced during the outbreak. To enable a degree of systematic sampling, every 10th video lockdown diary that meet both the English and ‘production during lockdown’ criteria was selected, until I had a corpus of 10 video lockdown diaries in total.

3.3 Methods

As indicated in Section 3.2, the genre research in this study focused on analysing typicalities in the generic *purpose*, *structure* and *content* of the 10 collected samples. Initially, the English language COVID-lockdown vlogs on Chinese social media were closely watched in order to develop an overall understanding of their character. Once this understanding was obtained, the first analytical focus was on the purpose of the 10 samples. This involved repeatedly watching the videos in order to identify and list their purpose; that is, the vloggers motivations for producing their diaries. Purpose was often determined by the vloggers utterances in combination with the visual components of the video. For example, the purpose, *Incentivize people to maintain healthy habits* might be determined by the vlogger discussing the importance of healthy food during the lockdown accompanied by a video showing the viewer how to

prepare healthy food. Importantly, as suggested by Askehave and Swales (2000) genres often have different purposes, and these may be different for each participant. Furthermore, as Swales and Rogers (1995) state even a linguistically and rhetorically similar genre may exhibit differences in communicative purpose. Therefore, the analysis focused on identifying the different purposes for each of the exemplars. Once listed the results were tabulated and the commonalities and differences in purpose across the ten videos were summarized.

The structural analysis focused on identifying and listing the way the VLDs were organized, focusing in particular on the introduction, body and conclusion moves. As discussed above, these were identified functionally by taking the utterances of the vlogger into account, but also by observing the visual components. In many cases a major structural shift. i.e., from introduction to body, is signalled by a notable shift in the visual element of the vlog. Also taken into account were other multimodal interactional components (Miller, 1984; Norris, 2004, 2011) such as pointing, eye contact, and body position that typified the three main stages of the vlogs. The time lengths of the three primary moves were also considered in the analysis of structure.

The content analysis involved, again working through each VLD, to identify the different phenomena discussed or the different actions carried out by the vloggers. As with the analysis of purpose, these were summarized and listed into a table so that the main types of VLD content could be identified.

The final stage of the study involved bringing the main findings of the genre analysis together to discuss what might be understood as representing a prototypical video lockdown diary. This stage of the analysis (largely carried out in the discussion chapter) also identifies some of the more notable observations of the analysis, specifically with regards to the key characteristics of the genre. Ultimately, and by comparing the findings with previous research about the more general vlog genre (Chapter 2), this stage of the analysis concludes whether these video lockdown diaries could be seen as belonging to a genre in its own right, one with particular distinct generic characteristics of purpose, structure and content.

3.4 Issues

There are a potentially issues with this methodological approach, many of which are related itself to the lockdown situation and problems of not being able to carry out this research in Auckland, New Zealand as part of the Master of English and New Media Studies qualification at Auckland University of Technology. Firstly, these 10 video lockdown diaries are only found on social media platforms in China, and so they may be different from the video lockdown diaries found on other social platforms, for example, YouTube, Twitter and so on. Furthermore, the sample of 10 video lockdown diaries although systematically selected may not be representative of all types of video lockdown diaries. In order to better solve the problem of the representation, it is

possible that the same methods might be applied to the analysis of more video lockdown diaries in the future.

3.5 Summary

This chapter provided an introduction to the notion of genre and overview of genre analysis in the field of Applied Linguistics. It then discussed the data collected for the study and identified the methods of analysis. The chapter concluded with a cursory discussion of potential issues with the method. The next chapter involves and examination of the purposes of the 10 VLD exemplars collected for this study.

Chapter 4: Purpose

4.0 Introduction

According to Swales (1990, 2004) communicative purpose is the primary criterion for determining whether a text is an example of a particular genre, thus underscoring the particular significance of purpose for genre analysis. This is because purpose is one of the main contributors to the schematic structure of a genre, and also influences choice of style and content (Swales, 1990). However, rather than being characterised by a single purpose, a genre often has multiple purposes, and that these may be various for each of the participants involved (Askehave and Swales, 2001). Indeed, even individual exemplars of the same genre may have a set of distinct communicative purposes (Swales & Rogers, 1995), some explicit and others implicit (Fairclough, 2003). The English language COVID-lockdown vlog on Chinese social media provide an example of such a multi-purpose genre. These first appeared in 2020 during the first Covid-19 lockdowns, and although a specific product of this particular period, the set of purposes motivating each individual video lockdown diary, as well as the specific “hierarchy of purposes” (Fairclough, 2003, p. 71) are often very different. In this chapter, I will analyse the 10 VLDs selected from the different social platforms during the COVID-19 to establish their respective purposes and whether there is an overall primary communicative purpose (or set of purposes) that might provide a defining criterion for the video lockdown diary genre. I will also identify a range of other purposes, perhaps specific for individual vloggers, which might further

contribute to our understanding of the genre.

4.1 Analysis

In this section, a detailed description of each video lockdown is provided which focuses on the identification of their various purposes, including the teasing out of the more ‘implicit’ purposes. The range of different purposes identified are then summarised in Table 4.1. The section that follows will identify any patterns or similarities in the purposes, or sets of purposes, of the 10 individual video lockdown diaries.

Video Lockdown Diary 1

VLD1 foregrounds the fact that people have been home quarantined for some time due to COVID-19, and that their inability to go out and eat quality food has caused a large number of individuals to complain about their situation. The vlogger in VLD1 mentions that the main purpose of their video, therefore is to satisfy the psychological emptiness of those who cannot eat out and to popularise the idea of ordering take-out food in some cities during the pandemic. In the video, the vlogger shows the whole process of ordering food, receiving it and then eating it at a particular time. In the process of ordering the meal, the vlogger emphasized the ingredients of the Haidilao hot pot, and that the dipping material of hot pot is the essence and attraction of Chinese hot pot culture. He states that part of the reason many people crave hot pot is because of the dipping sauce and cilantro. In addition, when receiving takeaway food, the vlogger specifically displayed the essence of eating hotpot. Watching a host eat Haidilao, like the particularly popular eating broadcast at that time, may psychologically resolve people's desire for food. The video also mentions that Haidilao, a chain of hot pot restaurants, only delivers food to a small number of cities in the UK, and the vlogger's own city happens to be one of the delivery cities. The vlogger discusses the delivery of Haidilao in the UK and states that many restaurants are now delivering food. On the other hand, in the middle section of VLD1, interaction with the vlogger's Chinese grandma was also shown, and the current situation of COVID-19 in China and the UK was discussed, which to some extent may ease the anxiety of viewers.

Video Lockdown Diary 2

The vlogger begins by introducing the current situation of the COVID-19 to her fans, aiming to give them a comprehensive understanding of the situation in order to reduce their panic and anxiety. At the same time, she mentions several points of pandemic prevention, which can be used to increase the knowledge of this area to the vlog's viewers. The vlogger recommends some home activities that can help people relieve the boredom of the lockdown, for example, cooking and family concerts. In addition, the vlogger also recommends a healthy diet and exercises, in order to promote a healthy lifestyle for those staying at home for a long periods, which otherwise can easily lead to poor health. Finally, the vlogger provides some encouraging words to help their viewers get through the difficulties.

Video Lockdown Diary 3

The vlogger, who presents the events of her day in a documentary-like way, attempts to inspire people to lead healthy and fulfilling lives at home. The vlogger introduces her job and offers some constructive advice and encouragement to job-seekers during this difficult time. The vlogger shows off her takeaway, demonstrating that it is also possible to order takeout food during the pandemic. The vlogger makes a video call to her parents to explain the current situation of the pandemic and her inability to return home, perhaps hoping to encourage those who cannot return home, and to advise those in China to cherish the time spent with their families during the Spring Festival.

Video Lockdown Diary 4

The vlogger discusses the situation of the pandemic in order to reassure his family and viewers and reduce their panic and anxiety. The vlogger compares the COVID-19 virus with the size and spread of previous virus outbreaks. His vlog seeks to make people better aware of the seriousness of the pandemic and raises awareness of how his viewers might protect themselves. The vlogger mentioned that those in Wuhan, China, did not panic in the face of such a severe pandemic, and that the Chinese people managed to control the pandemic in an orderly way. The vlogger also mentioned the contribution of the people of Wuhan and the doctors and nurses to the pandemic. The vlogger encourages people to stay positive and optimistic through the tough times.

Video Lockdown Diary 5

At the beginning of VLD5, the vlogger jokes with his viewers about the colour he has dyed his hair during the COVID-19 lockdown primarily to firstly create a light-hearted atmosphere within such a serious wider context. He then introduces how to do the COVID-19 elimination test, so that viewers at home might have a better understanding of this process and the COVID-19 situation more generally. The vlogger wears a mask and goes out for a COVID-19 test to show the testing process for her viewers with the aim of reducing their anxiety and panic about what is for many an unknown situation. He also advocates for people to wear masks and use other protective measures when they venture outside.

Video Lockdown Diary 6

The vlogger in VLD6 help others to vent their feelings by complaining that there is still a small minority those who believe that COVID-19 is primarily the fault of China, and in particular the people of Wuhan. The vloggers introduce the important contribution of the medical workers in Wuhan and state that during the pandemic there were many from Wuhan who were discriminated against all over China. The vloggers themselves are originally from Wuhan, but now live abroad, have also suffered some discrimination. So the main aim of this video is not only to introduce information about the COVID-19 situation to their viewers, but also to provide support those who have been discriminated against.

Video Lockdown Diary 7

The vlogger documents her daily life in hotel quarantine after returning from abroad, in order help viewers better understand the current situation of the pandemic and China's protection and security measures. According to the vlogger, those with a better understanding of long-term isolation will be able to reduce their fear and anxiety regarding the situation. The vlogger also shows off her skincare regimen, suggesting useful products. She also discusses the requirement for good coffee. When it comes to coffee and daily necessities. The vlogger states that the isolation hotel allows relatives to drop off items, but they have to hand them over to the staff for disinfection and collection. The vlogger also explains that those in isolation receive three meals a day at the hotel. Furthermore, she points out that takeout food is also available, and shows her viewers the feasibility of ordering takeout food during the pandemic by buying Starbucks coffee, including the process of temperature checks on the packaging of takeaways providing those viewers considering the purchase of takeaways peace of mind. In addition, the vlogger also presents an overview of their daily isolation activities like yoga, reading, and watching TV to urge those in isolation to keep physically and mentally healthy.

Video Lockdown Diary 8

By showing the contents and practices of her three meals a day, the vlogger attempts to encourage those viewing VLD8 to maintain a healthy diet and pay greater attention to aspects of nutrition during the lockdown period. Many were unable to go outside during COVID-19, so they could not get the food they desired. As a result, the vlogger instructs viewers how she produces the kind of food he craves in the video, with the purpose of telling fans that they can make their own food with healthier ingredients, and can also confirm the content and safety of the ingredients. Her belief is that cooking can also enrich one's life and reduce the anxiety caused by long hours at home.

Video Lockdown Diary 9

The background to VLD9 is that many have been quarantined at home for a long time due to the pandemic. A large number of people want to go out and play sports, such as basketball, but are afraid of catching the virus. In response to fans' demands, the vlogger recommends social isolation basketball as a way to alleviate boredom, enrich

life, reduce anxiety about staying at home for long periods of time and keep fit. But the vlogger also indicates that there are risks involved, so in order to show its feasibility, the vlogger documents the process, beginning with the location of the court. The vlogger mentions stresses measures for pandemic prevention and discusses current situation of the pandemic.

Video Lockdown Diary 10

The background to VLD10 is that the vlogger could not return to China due to the pandemic, but he gave all his food to his friends before was informed of this. This video is a record of the whole process of the vlogger's shopping in the supermarket during lockdown period. From a series of protective measures, such as wearing a mask and gloves before going out, we can see the vlogger aims of informing his viewers about pandemic prevention. The vlog shows viewers that safe supermarket shopping is possible during the lockdown if attention is paid to protection. After watching the video, the vlogger hopes that viewers will reduce their panic and anxiety of living in isolation for a long time. During the shopping process, the vlogger also shares some of his favourite foods and recommended them to his viewers.

4.2 Discussion

Drawing upon the focused descriptions provided in the previous section, Table 4.1 below provides a summary of the various purposes of the 10 vlogs analysed for this study.

Table 4.1 The list of purposes in the 10 video lockdown diaries

| VLD | Purpose | Video Lockdown Diaries | | | | | | | | | |
|-----|---|------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|
| | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| 1 | Encourage a reduction of lockdown panic and anxiety | | X | X | X | X | | X | | | X |
| 2 | Solve individuals' desire for food not easily obtainable during the lockdown. | X | | | | | | X | X | | |
| 3 | Incentivise people to maintain healthy habits | | X | X | | | | X | X | X | |
| 4 | Reduce the anxiety | X | X | X | X | X | | X | X | X | X |

| | | | | | | | | | | | |
|----|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | about staying at home for long periods of time | | | | | | | | | | |
| 5 | Help viewers better understand the current situation of COVID-19 | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | | X | X |
| 6 | Demonstrate the feasibility of ordering takeout food during an pandemic | X | | X | | | | X | | | |
| 7 | Provide an understanding about protection procedures during the pandemic | | X | | X | X | | | | X | X |
| 8 | Recommend activities to relieve boredom | | X | X | | | | X | X | X | |
| 9 | Provide effective advice for viewers looking for a job during this difficult time | | | X | | | | | | | |
| 10 | Raise awareness of personal protection | | | | X | | | | | X | X |
| 11 | Explain the contribution of Wuhan and doctors and nurses to reduce discrimination | | | | X | | X | X | | | |

4.3 The characteristic purposes of the video lockdown diaries

By enumerating all purposes of these 10 VLDs, it can be found that the purposes ‘Reduce anxiety about staying at home for long periods of time’ and ‘Help viewers better understand the current situation of COVID-19’, are some of the more common purposes that motivate the production of the video lockdown diary. The prominence of these purposes is most likely because the pandemic has quarantined people at home

for long periods of time and in doing so prevented them from socialising in person or finding out first-hand details (i.e., outside of mainstream news sources) about the pandemic and how isolation might be managed. As a result, an increasing number of people sought information related to the pandemic from the Internet, including the first-hand insights and experiences from those who have produced video lockdown diaries.

The purposes ‘Encourage a reduction of lockdown panic and anxiety’, ‘Reduce anxiety about staying at home for long periods of time’ and ‘Help viewers better understand the current situation of COVID-19’ also appear to be important for the vloggers for a number of reasons. Firstly, the vloggers appear to be aware that the entire world is greatly affected by COVID-19, both in terms of their individual lives and life and the wider economy. Furthermore, many people are continuing to live in self-isolation for ever-longer periods with no end in sight. When people's lives are affected and they lack contact with, and knowledge about, the outside world, it is inevitable that they will develop a degree of anxiety. The vlog with its rise in access and popularity has provided an opportune resource that can, in some small way, contribute to resolving these issues, particular given that people are becoming increasingly accustomed to using vlogs to gain knowledge (Yan, 2021). Hence, one of the main purpose of the vloggers is to record their isolation, so that others might come to understand that their situation is not uncommon, and also effectively create a type of online dialogue in the process.

By comparison, ‘Incentives people to maintain healthy habits’, ‘Learning about prevention during the pandemic’, ‘Understand the knowledge of protection during the pandemic’ and ‘Recommend some fun activities to relieve boredom and enrich your life’ were less frequent than the main purposes, but still relatively important. The first of these is perhaps informed by the rapidly emerging tradition and popularity of short vlogs produced by fitness experts, which both encourage and explain to viewers how to remain healthy (Sokolova, & Perez, 2021). It is likely that the elements of this tradition have naturally been drawn upon as a resource during the COVID-19 lockdown period, although the focus has shifted to the maintenance of fitness during lockdown isolation. Similarly the tradition of health or medical vlogs, hosted by those with medical or health knowledge, has been drawn upon by Video Lockdown Diary vloggers as a way of contributing to pandemic prevention.

4.4 Conclusion

Through a summary purposes of the 10 different types of video lockdown diaries, it can be found that among the many different purposes, almost all the vloggers have a common purpose to help viewers better understand the current situation of COVID-19, in order to reduce the boredom, fear and anxiety of those who have been isolated at home for a long time. Following the view that communicative purpose primarily determines whether a text belongs to a specific genre (e.g., Swales 1990, 2004), it might be concluded that these primary purposes shape the particular generic structure

and content of the video lockdown diary and provide some preliminary evidence that it might be categorised as a unique category of vlog genre. In order to explore the generic characteristics of the video lockdown diary further, the next chapter examines the characteristic structure of the 10 exemplars collected for this study.

Chapter 5: Structure

5.0 Introduction

While genres are often recognised by their internal structures (Swales, 1990), it is widely accepted that the communicative purposes of a text are the most important criterion for its identification as a member of a class of genres (Swales, 1990, 2004, Bhatia, 1993, Paltridge, 2012). Nevertheless, as Bhatia (1993) points out it is the shared set of communicative purposes which “shapes a genre and gives it an internal structure” (p. 13). While, the previous chapter examined the purposes of the video lockdown diary (VLD), this chapter specifically examines its typical internal structure. In order to carry out this examination, each of the ten video lockdown diaries are closely examined and their individual structures are analysed. Following this individual analysis, recurring structural patterns are identified across the 10 individual genres in order to identify commonalities in the typical structure of the video lockdown diary genre. Because the video lockdown diary is a multimodal communicative event (O’Halloran, 2011), the structural analysis in this chapter takes into consideration the visual component of the video lockdown diary.

The structures of genres are typically identified as a sequence of different ‘moves’ (Swales, 1990, 2004; Bhatia 1993). A move is defined as a component in a genre which has a unique communicative intention, often involving different rhetorical strategies, which is usually subservient to the overall communicative purpose of the

genre (Bhatia, 1993). Following this definition, the different structural events listed for each of the individual video lockdown diaries below are identified by their communicative intention. This typically occurs in three moves. Firstly, the lockdown vlogger introduces the vlog, after which they provide an account of events that have taken place in their life during lockdown, and finally they conclude the vlog.

Given the extremely large number of vlogs now posted online, Griffith and Papacharissi (2010) have emphasised the significance of the introduction move of the vlog, and in particular the initial interaction and self-expression of the vlogger. According to Griffith and Papacharissi, the introduction is the first point where vloggers present themselves to their audience, and therefore when one starts a vlog for the first time, the strengths of the vlogger and the topic of the video must clearly and immediately emerge. It is during this introductory move where viewers receive their first impression of the vlog's author, which they suggest is often a constructed image and strategically created by a vlogger. Pihlaja (2018) observed the importance of the vlogger's eyes and the location of the camera for attracting viewers. Using the positioning concept of Bamberg (1997) to describe the interaction between storyteller and storyteller, Pihlaja's analysis showed that speaking directly to the audience is an important factor in attracting the audience as a member of the audience and as a character in the narrative of a vlog. His research draws attention to the important relationship between vlog structure and visual image. As a result, the structural analysis in this chapter will also examine the visual organisation of the different vlog

moves, focusing in particular on the representation of social distance and size of frame, gaze, as well as the visual relationship between the vlogger and vlog viewer as participants in the video image (Kress and Van Leeuwen, 1996; Van Leeuwen, 2005)

5.1 Analysis

The following 10 tables select the video lockdown diaries published by different vloggers on different social platforms during the pandemic period. These 10 tables respectively provide the overall “Structure” and “Visual Structure” characteristics of these 10 vlogs.

Table 5.1 *Video Lockdown Diary 1*

| Moves | Time | Move structure | Visual structure |
|---------------------|--------|---|---|
| Introduction | 26’’ | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The vlogger introduces that the video is about Haidilao. He states that he and his family had not eaten Haidilao for a long time because of the pandemic. 2. He introduces the takeout delivered by Haidilao that they will show in the vlog. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. At the beginning of the video the vlogger stands in front of the house to get takeaway food. A guiding gesture transitions to the delivery of Haidilao takeaway food. 2. When introducing Haidilao takeout, the camera turns to the food, and the vlogger is not visible in the camera. 3. While introducing background details that he has not eaten Haidilao for a long time, the vlogger walks around with takeaway food before entering the camera frame with his mother to show his excitement. |
| Body (main section) | 3’33’’ | The whole process of eating Haidilao at home is interspersed | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Most of the time there's no vlogger in the video, it |

| | | | |
|------------|------|--|--|
| | | with clips of eating Haidilao in physical stores before the pandemic, clips of doing Haidilao free nails at home, and clips of calling Chinese grandmothers to talk about the pandemic situation. | <p>is all about food, because it is a video lockdown diary of a food vlogger. The food will be placed in the centre of the camera, and most of the time is seen from the perspective of the family eating the food.</p> <p>2. In the middle of the vlog, a short video about eating in Haidilao before the pandemic was inserted. In the video, the vlogger was in the centre of the frame, showing the whole process of eating. However, the vlogger looks up and introduce the food from time to time.</p> |
| Conclusion | 97'' | <p>1. The vlogger sums up by suggesting that because of the pandemic, restaurants in the UK are not operating as normal. He states that an increasing number of restaurants are doing takeaways, and Haidilao takeaways are delivering takeaways in many cities.</p> <p>2. Interview family members about their favourite food of the day.</p> | <p>The vlogger and his family gathered around a table to discuss the current state of the food delivery industry. No-one looked directly at the camera, giving the vlog a documentary feel.</p> <p>The camera shows the vlogger's mother. The vlogger interviews her mother about her favourite dish, but the vlogger himself does not show up.</p> |

Table 5.2 *Video Lockdown Diary 2*

| Move | Time | Move Structure | Visual Structure |
|--------------|------|--|---|
| Introduction | 56'' | <p>1. The vlogger first introduces the current situation of the pandemic and then introduces the topic of the video.</p> | <p>The vlogger speaks directly to the camera, using a mid-range shot. There are overlays of text that reinforce the main points that will be discussed.</p> |

| | | | |
|---------------------|--------|---|--|
| | | 2. Since the vlogger cannot go out, he shows the quarantine life of different families to show the nature of quarantine living during the pandemic. | |
| Body (main section) | 3'77'' | The vlogger's daily quarantine activities at home were filmed in the form of records, and several independent clips of relatives, friends and neighbours' activities at home during the pandemic were used. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The vlogger does not appear on the camera, but we can see the family, friends and neighbours of the vlogger living in isolation. 2. Occasionally, the vlogger will highlight certain items by pointing them out. |
| Conclusion | 26 '' | The vlogger sum up the current situation of the pandemic and urges everyone to face it with a positive attitude, believing that the pandemic will soon pass. | The vlogger speaks directly to the camera and sits unusually straight, with a serious look, but smiles as he inspires others. |

Table 5.3 *Video Lockdown Diary 3*

| Move | Time | Move Structure | Visual Structure |
|---------------------|--------|--|--|
| Introduction | 13'' | The vlogger introduces the time, as well as the working at home situation, along with the general content of this video. | The vlogger appears in the centre of the video, but instead of looking directly the camera, she is presented to the audience as a figure in a documentary. |
| Body (main section) | 1'53'' | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The vlogger is followed as she goes about her daily routine, from washing, to dressing, to coffee, and so on. 2. The first segment takes the viewers to the work area and introduces the work to be done during the day. 3. While working on her tasks, she answers the viewers' questions about her work, and encourages viewers to leave messages with new questions, | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Most of the time is viewed from a third party perspective, with the vlogger taking or setting the camera aside to record the video. 2. However, in the middle of answers about her work, the vlogger appears in the centre of the picture, and introduces herself directly to the camera |

| | | | |
|------------|--------|---|--|
| | | 4. The vlogger introduces her lunch. | emphasising with hand gestures. |
| Conclusion | 1'47'' | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. She sums up her day's work and then calls her parents in China. 2. She expresses her view that because of the pandemic she cannot go back to China for the New Year. 3. She consoles fellow citizens who also have no way to return home, and reminds those who have returned, to cherish the time with their families. She then sends New Year wishes. 4. Finally, she says goodbye to the audience. | In the conclusion move, the vlogger was always at the centre of the video, summarizing and expressing her views in front of the camera and emphasising them with gestures from time to time. |

Table 5.4 *Video Lockdown Diary 4*

| Move | Time | Move Structure | Visual Structure |
|---------------------|---------|--|--|
| Introduction | 52'' | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Using the form of documentary, the vlogger starts with a short clip of life to attract the attention of the audience. 2. The vlogger introduces the background of COVID-19 and the reason for keeping the lockdown diary, the reassurance of his family. 3. The vlogger greets the fans and introduces himself. He then introduces what he is going to talk about in his vlog. In the middle of the introduction, he includes a paragraph about the closure of the Wuhan city news. | At the beginning of the documentary, the vlogger appears in the picture but does not look at the screen. After that, the vlogger is in the middle of the frame and looks left towards the camera, introducing the main content of the video. |
| Body (main section) | 3' 10'' | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The vlogger lists a number of historically significant virus campaigns and gives a | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The vlogger is in the middle of the picture almost the whole time, |

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| | | <p>detailed analysis of their global impact.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. The vlogger compares the transmission levels of these viruses and the prevention measures of other periods with those in the COVID-19 period and then explains why it was correct for Wuhan to be sealed down. 3. The vlogger shows the everyday life of the people quarantined in the "Fang Cang" in Wuhan. | <p>the camera position is fixed, and his eyes are look directly at the camera.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. A considerable amount of data and historical background snippets are inserted in the middle of the body move. 3. In the middle of the video, when the transmission capacity of COVID-19 is mentioned, the camera image moves closer to the vlogger and they produce a look of surprise. |
| Conclusion | 37'' | The conclusion focuses on the story of the sacrifices made by Wuhan and China during the pandemic. It also encourages Fang Cang people to be active, and positive during the lockdown. | The vlogger speaks directly into the camera, positioned in the middle of the image with a serious facial expression. At the end of the conclusion, when he encourages people to endure the difficult times, he smiles and uses hand gestures. |

Table 5.5 *Video Lockdown Diary 5*

| Move | Time | Move Structure | Visual Structure |
|--------------|------|---|--|
| Introduction | 58'' | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The most important part of the video (self-service nucleic acid testing) is placed at the beginning of the introduction, in order to capture the attention of viewers. 2. The vlogger introduces herself briefly and states she just got up, making fun of her hair colour and hairstyle. 3. The vlogger introduces what he is going to do during the day. | The vlogger speaks directly into the camera, but the camera does not seem to be fixed, it follows the movement of the vlogger, not unlike a documentary. The vlogger, however, looks directly at the camera. |

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|---------------------|---------|--|---|
| Body (main section) | 3' 40'' | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The vlogger documents his skincare steps and clothing tips for getting ready to go out. He also shared his feelings about the huge number of views on his vlogs. 2. The vlogger records the whole process of self-help nucleic acid testing. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The vlogger speaks directly into the camera, which is fixed using a mid-range lens to more clearly show the whole skincare process. 2. When the vlogger goes out, he is always in the camera frame, but the camera changes with the vlogger's trajectory, similar to a documentary. |
| Conclusion | 8 '' | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The vlogger simply thanks the viewer for watching and then states goodbye. 2. In the end they place their home page information as a screenshot. | The vlogger speaks directly to the camera. |

Table 5.6 *Video Lockdown Diary 6*

| Move | Time | Move Structure | Visual Structure |
|---------------------|--------|--|---|
| Introduction | 8'' | The vlogger angrily talks about some of the outrageous questions asked by foreigners during the COVID-19. | The vlogger is right in the middle of the video, staring into the camera and slapping her hand hard on the table to make her point. |
| Body (main section) | 1'59'' | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Some foreigners are still biased against Wuhan and China in the case of COVID-19. They introduce Wuhan's contribution to the COVID-19. 2. The vlogger carefully explains the origin of the virus and angrily introduces her hometown (Wuhan) | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The vlogger is always in the middle of the picture, the camera position is fixed, the vlogger is always staring to express her anger, she occasionally rolls her eyes to express her disdain. 2. The vlogger often uses hand gestures, such as clapping vigorously, to express anger. |
| Conclusion | 13'' | He encourages viewers to read more books, in order to broaden their horizon. | The vlogger speaks directly to the camera. |

Table 5.7 *Video Lockdown Diary 7*

| Move | Time | Move Structure | Visual Structure |
|---------------------|--------|---|--|
| Introduction | 30'' | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The vlog intro begins with a snippet of the vlogger being quarantined at the hotel. 2. They then introduce the theme of the video. That is, the hotel quarantine diary. 3. The vlogger emphasises the exclusive nature of their video lockdown diary, stating that it only represents their own lockdown experience. | The camera is fixed, but the vlogger does not show his face throughout the entire vlog. In the image, only the vlogger's body, gestures and food can be seen. |
| Body (main section) | 9'48'' | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The vlogger documents a complete day in isolation at the hotel, from waking up and carrying out skincare to eating three meals a day, working out, studying, and so on. 2. In the morning, when she gets up for skin care, she recommends some skin care products, after which she introduces what she eats for three meals a day. 3. She explains how to buy supplies and get them delivered by family members if necessary. 4. She laments that China's lockdown logistics system is very good during the pandemic, as is the isolation environment and the overall management system of staff. 5. She explains how she orders a Starbucks delivery at her hotel in isolation and notes that the temperature of the worker would be marked when ordering a delivery. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The vlogger is almost always physically present in the image, which is shot from the neck down. 2. On occasion, the whole body of the vlogger is depicted, for example, when working out or reading a book. 3. Sometimes the vlogger will appear in the middle of the camera image and talk directly to the camera. 4. A documentary style is employed to record the vlogger's day in isolation in the hotel. A considerable number of gestures were used for emphasis when introducing the recommended articles and food. |

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|------------|------|--|--|
| | | She shows the whole process of going to the online class in the hotel and mentions that it is the vlogger's birthday. Students from abroad send their best wishes to the vlogger. | |
| Conclusion | 20'' | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The vlogger simply thanks the viewer for watching and then states goodbye. 2. At the end the vlogger's personal web page appears | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The vlogger speaks directly to the camera. 2. In the bottom right corner of the screen the vlogger's social platform number, can be seen, and the vlogger's name is placed in the top left corner. |

Table 5.8 *Video Lockdown Diary 8*

| Move | Time | Move Structure | Visual Structure |
|---------------------|--------|---|---|
| Introduction | 10'' | The vlogger introduces herself and then lists the three healthy meals she wants to show in her vlog. | The vlogger speaks directly into the camera, accompanied by greeting gestures and smiles. |
| Body (main section) | 4'30'' | The vlogger shows the process of making the three healthy meals in their kitchen. The vlogger eats the meals with their family members. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A camera is placed in front of the kitchen and the vlogger is almost always looking at it as he explains the cooking process. Occasionally, however, the camera will be directed towards the food and the vlogger is absent from the picture. 2. The eating of each meal is shot in the form of a documentary, and the vlogger and his family members appear in the centre of the picture, eating without acknowledging the camera. |
| Conclusion | 21 '' | The vlogger recommends low-calorie snacks for the | The vlogger speaks directly into the camera. When |

| | | | |
|--|--|--|--|
| | | viewers after the meal, then simply thanks them for watching and says goodbye. | displaying the low-calorie snacks, he directs his gaze towards them and points for emphasis. |
|--|--|--|--|

Table 5.9 *Video Lockdown Diary 9*

| Move | Time | Move Structure | Visual Structure |
|---------------------|------|---|---|
| Introduction | 18'' | The vlogger introduces himself and then lists what he wants to do in his vlog. He states that because of the pandemic, people have been indoors for a long time and have not gone out or played basketball. So the vlogger presents a safe way to play basketball during the lockdown - isolation basketball. | The vlogger always sits in the middle of the camera, facing the camera and gesturing for emphasis. |
| Body (main section) | 50'' | The vlogger documents the car journey to find the basketball court. | The vlogger depicts themselves driving a car and looking out of the window for the basketball court. They are positioned in the centre of the camera frame and look directly to the camera to document the process. |
| Conclusion | 20'' | The vlogger concludes by considering whether his isolation basketball idea can be implemented, thanks the audience for watching, and then says goodbye. | The vlogger speaks directly to the camera |

Table 5.10 *Video Lockdown Diary 10*

| Move | Time | Move Structure | Visual Structure |
|--------------|------|--|---|
| Introduction | 10'' | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A summary of the video is shown in the form of a picture at the beginning of the video. 2. The vlogger explains what she is going to do in the | The vlogger holds a camera and in the middle of the frame looks into the camera and introduces the gist of the video. |

| | | | |
|---------------------|------|--|---|
| | | vlog. | |
| Body (main section) | 48’’ | The vlogger states that she thought that she was going back to China, so she gave all her food to her friends. However, she states that she did not leave because of the COVID-19 situation. She films the whole process of buying emergency supplies and food in a supermarket. | Although filmed in the form of a documentary, the video is shot from the first-person perspective of the vlogger. Only in the middle of the video, when the vlogger complains that the outbreak had delayed her plans to return to China, did she appear on camera accompanied by emphatic hand gestures. |
| Conclusion | 1’’ | The vlogger simply thanks the viewer for watching and then states goodbye. | The vlogger speaks directly to the camera. |

5.2 Typical structure of Introduction

The analysis of the 10 video lockdown diaries shows that the introduction move at the beginning of the video lockdown diaries primarily involves an introduction to the pandemic situation, a self-introduction of the vlogger, and the main content of this video. Tolson (2005) mentions the importance of a vlog’s opening content as crucial for attracting viewers. He states it should highlight the theme of the video and what it is related to. At a time when many people are particularly concerned about the pandemic and searching the internet for advice and support, an introduction that immediately foregrounds the pandemic topic is vital for attracting interested viewers. In the usual Internet context, vlog viewers who tend to regularly watch specific vloggers speaking about specific subjects (e.g., make-up application), are often referred to as *communities*. However, those interested in the video lockdown diary are less likely to be representatives of vlog communities and instead members of a more

general audience looking for information on the pandemic. Hence, the introductions of pandemic-focused vlogs are different from the introduction of the traditional vlog opening, which are more inclined to focus on the personality and interests of the vlogger at the beginning, rather than directly cutting into the topic (Riboni, 2017; Wood, 2019). For this reason, the introduction of the topic of the pandemic in the introductory move of the video lockdown diary is particularly important.

However, while the specific content of the video lockdown diary introductions is unique in that they focus less on the vlogger, and more on the specific topic of discussion, they still employ the traditional ‘news anchor’ visual organisation of traditional vlogs. This typically involves the use of a medium close-up image, which parallels ‘close personal distance’ in everyday social relations, i.e., a distance that one can touch the other person and represents close friendship (Kress and Van Leeuwen, 1996). In this particular camera frame, the vlogger is generally positioned in the centre of the image and speaks directly to the viewers. As such and drawing upon Horton and Wohl’s (1956) description of TV hosts’ practice of speaking directly to their audiences, these VLD introductions, like most vlogs, could be described as examples of ‘para-social interaction’. For Tolson (2005), the function of these para-social greetings are:

... a way of reaching an active audience, a basic form of eliciting an active audience. In the vlog openings, these statements give the video text an interactive element to persuade viewers to respond using the site's

various features: write a comment, rate a video, send a personal message, or post a video response. (p. 10)

These opening para-social moves also attempt to construct the monologue as a type of interaction with the viewers. Vloggers clearly want to make their videos more interesting to their audience, engaging them by discussing relevant topics and addressing them directly, or persuading them to engage in two-way interaction through channels other than video. This is because the first moment of the video is highly relevant to the viewer's decision whether or not to continue watching, which consequently impacts on the vlogger's motivation to make their opening prologue particularly relevant to the viewer. The use of direct gaze (Kress and Van Leeuwen, 1996) also evident in the opening moves of the video lockdown diaries contributes to the interactivity. In this respect, the VLD is very similar to a traditional vlog.

5.3 Typical structure of body of video lockdown diary

What was of specific interest was that the body move of many video lockdown diaries was shot in the observational style of a documentary (Rabiger, 2014). It appears that most vloggers prefer to employ the form of documentary to film their quarantine diaries during the COVID-19. Following the documentary observational style, the vlogger does not look directly at the viewer, but is instead followed by the camera which records the actions and emotions of the vlogger. However, some vlogs also use fixed lenses. For example, in VLD 1, the camera is fixed when the family is having

dinner at home. Although people appear in the image, they do not look at the camera. Only the vlogger occasionally says a few words directly to the camera when introducing the dishes. The camera moves along with the vlogger's actions, and the vlogger does not look at or acknowledge the camera except when wanting, on occasion, to emphasize something. In Vlog 9, for example, when the vlogger is driving, the VLD is filmed in the style of a documentary, which makes the video more appealing and immersive. On the other hand, some lockdown diaries use a fixed camera and an anchor sitting in front of the camera who speaks directly to the audience. This is more like a self-report, and often lacks any interaction with the viewer.

5.4 Typical structure of conclusions

In addition to simply saying goodbye to their viewers at the end of the video, the distinctive feature of the VLD concluding move is that the vloggers will mention the pandemic situation and encourage the fans to persevere amid the pandemic uncertainty and maintain a healthy lifestyle. Some of the expressions used by the vloggers in this regard include:

- i. Strength and power
- ii. The victory will come to us.
- iii. When proud-pied April, dress'd in all his trim, hath put a spirit of youth in everything.

- iv. We are in this together especially during this unprecedented time.
- v. Make sure you take good care of yourself eat well and sleep well.
- vi. Let's take a page from their book and try to keep our spirits high.

During the pandemic, whether viewers watched video lockdown diaries to ease their fear, or learn more about the situation, they were generally somewhat anxious about being isolated for long periods of time (Pietrabissa and Simpson, 2020). The VLD loggers are aware of this situation and ultimately conclude their videos with the aim of alleviating, at least to a small degree their viewers' concerns.

5.5 Conclusion

The analysis of the 10 video lockdown diaries' structures found that the vast majority of vloggers will choose what could be seen as a 'Conclusion-Details-Conclusion' structure to organize the video lockdown diary. In this cyclic structure, the vlogger immediately foregrounds the main COVID-19 content of the video as a way of attracting the viewer's attention. The introduction then identifies the specific content of the vlog, focusing in particular, on the diary like elements to be presented. In the concluding move, the vlogger will summarize the video content and then encourage people to persevere amid the pandemic uncertainty and maintain a healthy lifestyle. In terms of the visual structure, most vloggers use a minimal number of fixed shots (where the vlogger speaks directly into the camera) and primarily use the observational style of the documentary.

Chapter 6: Content

6.0 Introduction

With a growing number of COVID-19 infections in 2020, individuals were increasingly being quarantined at home or in hotels for extended periods of time. The result was an unprecedented change in people's social lives, including those of children and adolescents, who were suddenly withdrawn from school. Long-term isolation also directly impacted on mental health, resulting in increased anxiety, diet changes, fears, and failure to resolve problems (Pancani et al., 2021; Smith et al., 2020). Living indoors for long periods of time also has a significant impact on mental health, even leading to depression (de Figueiredo et al, 2021). During this time, many COVID-19 related vlogs were posted to the Internet. As indicated in the methodology, 10 video lockdown diaries posted during the 2020 pandemic period were selected for a genre-based analysis of their typical content. In order to draw some conclusions about the nature of the video lockdown diary genre, this chapter provides a detailed analysis of the content of these 10 vlogs.

6.1 Analysis of content

This section focuses first on listing the more specific content elements of the 10 video lockdown diaries; that is, what the vlogger (or others represented in the vlogs) specifically did or said. Each individual content element is listed in the order in which

they occur for each video lockdown diary. Drawing upon this analysis, an overall summary and subsequent discussion of the key characteristic content elements (i.e., complaining about the pandemic, keeping fit, etc.) of the video lockdown diary will follow. However, in order to identify more generalised patterns of content type in the video lockdown diary, each unique content element is also subsequently grouped into higher order categories determined by the overarching focus or function of the specific content element. For example, a complaint about COVID-19, or a discussion about the seriousness of the pandemic is categorised as a ‘comment’, while the display of a skin care process, or a cooking presentation is categorised as an ‘exemplification’. These higher order content categories include:

- i. *Comment*: the offering of a statement, observation or evaluation about some phenomenon (involving the vlogger or some other party).
- ii. *Description*: the verbal account of some activity, object or process (not a value judgement).
- iii. *Exemplification*: the presentation of some object (e.g., food that has been purchased) or some pre-determined phenomenon (e.g., the process of cooking a meal).
- iv. *Action*: the carrying out of some primary activity or endeavour (i.e., not a presentation of pre-determined phenomenon)
- v. *Dialogue*: interaction or conversation with another about some phenomenon (involving the vlogger or some other party).

- vi. *Encouragement*: a comment specifically aim to inspiring or motivate the viewer.

A summary discussion of the higher order content categories will follow the discussion of the more specific characteristic content elements below.

Summary of the content of Vlog 1

- a. The vlogger talks about the family not eating eat Haidilao since the outbreak of Covid-19. [COMMENT]
- b. Sets up a mock Haidilao hot pot takeaway and shows the menu. [EXEMPLIFICATION]
- c. Shows the food and the Haidilao gift of rubber bands and free snacks. [EXEMPLIFICATION]
- d. A flashback shows the whole process of getting a takeout during the pandemic. [EXEMPLIFICATION]
- e. Shows his father praising the rich taste of Haidilao beer. [COMMENT]
- f. The two brothers take turns serving as waiters, make hotpot dips for everyone in order to make the family feel like they are in Haidilao. [ACTION]
- g. The father recalls the variety of hotpot dips served in Haidilao and complains that his son's dips are not as good as those in the restaurant. [COMMENT]
- h. The vlogger chats with a woman in China about the pandemic and the current situation from the perspectives of both cultures. [DIALOGUE]
- i. He recommends a lot of food they ate in China and a lot of dishes that are good to eat when eating hot pot. [COMMENT]
- j. Everyone makes fun of the mother's clothes. Haidilao always offers a free manicure. The young son pretends to be a waiter and gives his mother a manicure. [ACTION]
- k. The vlogger talks about the closing of restaurants in the pandemic. He states that the takeout industry is now prevalent, and that Haidilao, for example, was previously available only in London, but is now available in nine cities across the United Kingdom. [COMMENT]
- l. The vlogger talks about Haidilao's favorite food and marvels at how delicious the crayfish are. [COMMENT]

Summary of the content of Vlog 2

- a. The vlogger explains the seriousness of the current pandemic, the current situation of the COVID-19 in China (which has been brought under control) and states what citizens can do for the COVID-19, i.e., stay at home and not gather together. [COMMENT]
- b. Shows the whole process of making organic, veg and chicken scones for her dog. [EXEMPLIFICATION]
- c. Pokes fun at dogs exercising after eating. [ACTION] Asks family members if they would take their dogs to play table tennis. [DIALOGUE]
- d. Shows that the vlogger's nephew in Beijing has been exercising at home for 35 days. [EXEMPLIFICATION]
- e. Explains that the vlogger's uncle was an architect, who, in addition to working on his business during his isolation at home, does something he had not done in 50 years - cook. And he developed a great interest in cooking. [COMMENT]
- f. Talks about how her aunt makes protective mask creative food. [DESCRIPTION]
- g. Talks about how her dad drinks with his friends online. [COMMENT]
- h. Shows other skills that other families learn during the COVID-19. [EXEMPLIFICATION]
- i. Introduces the good meaning of hair cutting on February 2nd in China, and mentions the current situation that people cut their hair at home during this period because of the pandemic. [COMMENT]
- j. Illustrates how the third uncle and his family make a model of their ideal home. [EXEMPLIFICATION]
- k. Shows the cousin and his parents had a 'concert' at home. [EXEMPLIFICATION]
- l. Complains that people do not see many people during the pandemic, [COMMENT] and images of people standing on balconies with their neighbours and singing with their Windows open. [EXEMPLIFICATION]
- m. Encourages everyone to have a good state of mind, encourages everyone to unite, as soon as possible through the difficulties. [ENCOURAGEMENT]

Summary of the content of Vlog 3

- a. Talks about her current situation of working from home for a long time [COMMENT], and explains the content of the vlog. [DESCRIPTION]
- b. Discusses the shift from Starbucks to instant coffee during the pandemic. [DESCRIPTION]
- c. Complains that Monday is going to be a busy day with lots of online meetings and things to do. [COMMENT]
- d. Talks about her work at the bank and her responsibilities [DESCRIPTION], and what motivated her to work. [COMMENT] And she says viewers can leave her a message with questions and she will answer them. [ENCOURAGEMENT]
- e. Shows what she ordered for lunch. [EXEMPLIFICATION]
- f. Talks about the content and feelings of sharing the video with her parents in China (she is very happy but sad since she will not return to China because of the COVID-19, so she cannot be with them, especially the Chinese New Year is coming soon). [COMMENT]
- g. Encourages individuals like her who cannot return to China for the Spring Festival because of the pandemic to make more videos with their families; Bless those who go home for the New Year, play less mobile phone, more to accompany the family, sigh with emotion. [ENCOURAGEMENT]

Summary of the content of Vlog 4

- a. Introduces the seriousness of the spread of the pandemic [COMMENT], and states that the vlog will share some topical news and information about the daily life of self-isolation in China in order to let his family and everyone rest assured. [DESCRIPTION]
- b. Talks about the inner fear of Wuhan sealed city feelings and reasons. [COMMENT]
- c. Introduces the history of human development [DESCRIPTION], says that viruses are not rare, includes the 1918 Spanish flu, the American influenza pandemic, smallpox virus, SARS coronavirus and Ebola virus, etc. [COMMENT]
- d. Discusses the death situation of novel coronavirus compares it with the scale of the death of the Spanish influenza. Using the Spanish instance, explains why they believe COVID-19 will lead to the closure of Wuhan. [COMMENT]

- e. Explains the reasons for the closure of Wuhan through scientific reasoning. [COMMENT]
- f. Explains the significance of human intervention, the purpose of people taking protective measures. [COMMENT]
- g. Shows the ‘square cabin’ built for the pandemic in Wuhan and the life of the quarantined people inside. [EXEMPLIFICATION]
- h. Encourages everyone to maintain a positive and healthy attitude and overcome the difficulties together. [ENCOURAGEMENT]

Summary of the content of Vlog 5

- a. Teases his fans about his hair colour in a positive light. [COMMENT]
- b. Explains that he is going to get a test for the new crowns today (the one that does not get out of the car), and then happily jokes that he looks like a Chinese sketch actor all the time. [COMMENT]
- c. Shows all the skincare steps and recommends some products that work well. [EXEMPLIFICATION]
- d. Shows what he wears [EXEMPLIFICATION] and chats with his fans about being regularly viewed on YouTube and Bili Bili, and he talks about his feeling of being a vlogger. [COMMENT]
- e. Shows himself wearing a mask when going out for a nucleic acid test [EXEMPLIFICATION], and meeting his friends to receive a birthday cake that another friend has kept for him [EXEMPLIFICATION]. Laments the difficulty of this year's New Year because of the pandemic. [COMMENT]
- f. Shows the process and important things to consider of the nucleic acid detection test. [EXEMPLIFICATION]

Summary of the content of Vlog 6

- a. Complains about the pandemic becoming increasing worse, and states that many people still have prejudices against China and Wuhan. [COMMENT]
- b. Talks about the story of Wuhan, her hometown [DESCRIPTION], and the view that Wuhan has contributed to the pandemic. [COMMENT]

- c. Remarks angrily that people in Wuhan do not drink bat soup and confers that Wuhan is the epicentre of the outbreak and not the source of the virus. [COMMENT]
- d. In an emotional performance, states that those who see Wuhan as the source of the virus will ask ‘ridiculous’ questions to Wuhan people that they meet living abroad. [COMMENT]

Summary of the content of Vlog 7

- a) Claims that her vlog only represents her personal experience of concentrated isolation, which otherwise varies from person to person and region to region. [COMMENT]
- b) Complains about the jet lag. [COMMENT]
- c) Shows her process of skin care [EXEMPLIFICATION], during which she describes good things for personal use. [DESCRIPTION]
- a. States that during the initial stages of the pandemic, after returning to China from abroad, she stayed in the quarantine hotel and breakfast was delivered at 8 am every morning. [DESCRIPTION]
- b. Explains the breakfasts that had been served to her during the quarantine, one by one. [DESCRIPTION]
- c. Discusses that the family brought mineral water and kettle, a cup of hot water and a cup of coffee to her while she was in quarantine [DESCRIPTION]
- d. Shows items that would improve the quality of life [EXEMPLIFICATION], and complains that she was down to her last packet of eared coffee. [COMMENT]
- e. States that if she bought new coffee online, her mother would bring it to her while she was in quarantine. The quarantine area allows the delivery of food. [DESCRIPTION]
- f. Talks about her feelings about the current logistics in China, and suggests that the domestic logistics has been restored. [COMMENT]
- g. Shows the whole process of making coffee and introduces the origin of the coffee mug. [EXEMPLIFICATION]
- h. Discusses the TV series she watched and the tea she drunk and recommends a snack. [DESCRIPTION]
- i. Discusses the times of her exercise. [DESCRIPTION]

- j. Shows the contents of lunch. [EXEMPLIFICATION]
- k. Talks about taking a nap and doing some reading. [DESCRIPTION]
- l. Shows the contents of the take-away meals. [EXEMPLIFICATION]
- m. Shows the whole process of ordering Starbucks and explains after getting it that the Chinese text on the cup is a safety reminder about the normal temperature of production staff. [EXEMPLIFICATION]
- n. Explains that on the ninth day of quarantine, it was her birthday. [DESCRIPTION]
- o. Talks about the plays she watched recently and what she did this morning. [DESCRIPTION]
- p. Recommends a book [COMMENT] and introduces the general story. [DESCRIPTION]
- q. Shows her dinner [EXEMPLIFICATION] and laments the quality of China's lockdown food supply. [COMMENT]
- r. The new day, introduces the morning meeting general content. And explains some knowledge of finance. [DESCRIPTION]
- s. Shows the contents of the meeting and the birthday wishes from her classmates. [EXEMPLIFICATION]

Summary of the content of Vlog 8

- a. Introduces cereal and yogurt for breakfast, and shows what the ingredients are in each step and what should be noted (for example, the food that has been eaten before, but the content is not particularly healthy). [EXEMPLIFICATION]
- b. States that lunch does not take long, and is easy. He discusses his like of burritos, citing a recent move to Los Angeles as the reason for his obsession with Mexican food. [COMMENT]
- c. Introduces her own Burrito invention and all the materials used. [EXEMPLIFICATION]
- d. Shows the recipe and all the seasonings used. [EXEMPLIFICATION]
- e. Emphasizes the need to consider a balanced diet of fibre, vegetables, and protein. [COMMENT]

- f. Since the vlogger is a supermodel, she emphasizes that supermodels also eat snacks, but prefer healthy snacks [COMMENT], shows the snacks they eat. [EXEMPLIFICATION]
- g. Prepares raw materials and seasonings [EXEMPLIFICATION]
- h. Shows the whole process of cooking dinner, including heat and seasoning. [EXEMPLIFICATION]
- i. Describes the nutritional content of dinner. [DESCRIPTION]

Summary of the content of Vlog 9

- a. Complains about how hard it was to play basketball during the pandemic, but he wants it so badly that he came up with the idea of playing basketball without putting anyone's health at risk (social isolation basketball). [COMMENT]
- b. He drives to a park [EXEMPLIFICATION] and laments the fact that it was so sunny and people have to be isolated at home. Everyone has to come out and enjoy the California sunshine and nature.
- c. He arrives at the designated spot, talks about maintaining 'social distance' and shows how few people are in the parking lot and on the basketball court. [EXEMPLIFICATION]
- d. Shows the whole process of playing social isolation basketball. [EXEMPLIFICATION]

Summary of the content of Vlog 10

- a. Talks about going to the supermarket to buy necessities and food. [DESCRIPTION]
- b. Talks about she could have gone back to China, so she gave all the food away. But because the pandemic did not return to China, they had to buy more food for a rainy day. [DESCRIPTION]
- c. Shows the food to buy, as well as loots toilet paper, diapers and medical alcohol. [EXEMPLIFICATION]

6.2 Typical content of the Video Lockdown Diary

Table 6.1 provides an overall summary of the most common content activities in the 10 vlogs. This was carried out by looking for recurring patterns in the descriptions of content in Section 6.1.

Table 6.1: Content elements of the video lockdown diaries.

| Content element | Video Lockdown Diaries | | | | | | | | | |
|--------------------------------------|------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| Complaining about the pandemic | x | x | x | | x | x | | x | x | x |
| Complaining about other areas | x | | x | | x | x | x | | | x |
| Discussing food | x | x | x | | x | | x | x | | x |
| Showing food | x | x | x | | x | | x | x | | x |
| Talking about the pandemic situation | x | x | x | x | x | x | | | x | |
| Talking about work | | | x | | | | | | | |
| Talking about study | x | | | | | | | | | |
| Talking about take-away meals | x | | x | | | | x | | | |
| Motivating viewers | | x | x | x | | | | | | |
| Keeping fit | | x | | | | | x | | x | |

It can be seen from the table that three of the most frequently occurring areas of content in video lockdown diaries during the pandemic, are ‘Complaining about the pandemic’, ‘Discussing and showing food’, and ‘Talking about the pandemic situation’. Each of these will be discussed in more detail below. While ‘Motivating people’ only occurs in three video lockdown diaries, it is of immediate interest to this

study and will also be discussed below. The discussion below also provides an indication of the accompanying visual mode that occurs as certain types of content takes place.

Complaining about the pandemic

One of the key content areas found in the VLD genre are complaints about the pandemic. The vloggers typically complain about not being able to play sports outside or not eating their favourite foods. They also typically complain about the impact of the pandemic on their everyday lives, mainly because they have been at home for too long and have many things they want to do. For example, vlogger 1 states that: *We haven't had hotpot for a very long time since the COVID-19*. As he does this, he first looks directly at the audience (the camera) and then diverts his gaze to something else (Figure 4.1). The shifting gaze repeated occurs in the video lockdown diaries, firstly because the vlogger often exemplifies some product or process related to their lockdown experience. Hence their attention is drawn away from the viewer and towards the phenomenon being exemplified. Secondly, the vlogger also often shoots the vlog in the form of documentary, and the video is unedited for the sake of authenticity and again the gaze is drawn towards the action taking place, for example in Vlog 9, where the vlogger is on the move, and is naturally watching the road. Thirdly, and as seen in Vlog 1, the focus on complaining and the negative emotions with which it is associated, often results in the vlogger finding it difficult to make eye contact, even at a virtual level, with their audience (Figure 4.1).

Figure 6.1 Screenshot of Vlogger looks directly at the camera/Screenshot of Vlogger

1 while complaining.



A characteristic feature of complaints in the 10 video lockdown diaries is reference to the time since when an activity has not been experienced. These temporal references often include expressions involving the phrase *long time*, as in, *haven't done anything for a long time* or *haven't had anything to eat for a long time*. For instance, in VLD9, the vlogger complains that, because of the pandemic, he has not been out to play basketball for a long time. Hence, it could be argued that many of the emotions that both facilitate the development of these videos (potentially as a medium for the vloggers to vent their feelings), and also motivate viewers to watch them, are those accumulated over an extended period of time.

Discussing and showing food

Table 6.1 shows that the discussion and presentation of food appears in 7 out of 10 video lockdown diaries, suggesting that these content elements are key characteristics

of the VLD genre. Vloggers typically display their food and show how it was cooked. Furthermore, fitness or supermodel vloggers (those with a high body value) will often describe the health index of the ingredients, as well as their carbohydrate content. Displays of food are typically accompanied by directional gestures, such as pointing, that draw the viewer's attention to the food item being discussed. For example, vlogger 8 states *here we have carrots and red bell peppers*. As she introduces these ingredients, and as typically occurs in the video lockdown diaries, the screen cuts to the food and her finger points towards the food in the plate (Figure 6.2).

Figure 6.2 Screenshot from Vlog 8 when showing food.



Talking about the pandemic situation

Talking about the pandemic situation is also a key content element found in the VLD genre. Vloggers typically begin or end their lockdown diary vlogs with a reference to, and comment on, the current COVID-19 situation. As they engage these discussions their bodies are typically situated directly in front of the camera, their gaze is directed towards the audience, and their facial expressions are serious. This is evident, for

example in a screenshot from the introductory section of Vlog 2 (Figure 6.3). At the time of this screenshot, the vlogger is commenting on the COVID-19 situation stating that, *Coronavirus has become a global issue. It is spreading rapidly all around the world*. As she discusses the pandemic situation she is facing the camera directly, and appears more solemn than at other times in her vlog.

Figure 6.3 Screenshot of Vlogger 8 talking about pandemic situation.



Motivating viewers

Motivating people was highlighted as a particularly characteristic content element of the video lockdown diary and was often included in the concluding move of the vlog. The aim is to inspire viewers to maintain a positive attitude during the COVID-19 period and overcome the difficulties of the lockdown situation. This element encourages viewers to maintain a healthy lifestyle through an emphasis on fitness, the cooking and consumption of healthy food, as well as an avoidance of excessive mobile device usage. Again, as a departure from the documentary approach largely used throughout the body of the video lockdown diary, when motivating viewers the

vlogger looks directly at the camera. This is evident in Vlog 4, where the vlogger states that, *until then, Let's take a page from their book, and try to keep our spirits high*. As he says this, he faces the camera, smiling encouragingly (Figure 6.4).

Figure 6.4 Screenshot of Vlog 8 when motivating.



The descriptions above focus on key specific content elements, for example, complaining about COVID-19. However, in order to provide an understanding of the more general types of content that occur in the video lockdown diaries, Table 6.2 provides a summary discussion of the higher order content categories identified at the beginning of this section.

Table 6.2: Summary of content elements categorised according to their overall focus.

| Content category | Video Lockdown Diaries | | | | | | | | | | |
|------------------|------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|----|---|---|----|-------|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | Total |
| Comment | 6 | 5 | 4 | 6 | 4 | 4 | 6 | 3 | 1 | 0 | 39 |
| Description | 0 | 1 | 3 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 12 | 1 | 0 | 2 | 20 |
| Exemplification | 3 | 6 | 1 | 1 | 5 | 0 | 8 | 6 | 3 | 1 | 34 |
| Action | 2 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3 |
| Dialogue | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 |
| Encouragement | 0 | 0 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3 |

Table 6.2 shows that ‘Comment’ and ‘Exemplification’ account for a large proportion of the contents of the video lockdown diaries. As mentioned earlier, complaints about

lockdown and comments about items fall under the category of ‘Comment’. As pointed out by Bhatia (1993), the purpose of the video influences the content of the video (see Chapter 4). It was often found that vloggers of VLDs start or end their videos by complaining about the pandemic, or by explaining the current state of the epidemic in order to ease the anxiety of their fans. On the other hand, exemplification of a process such as cooking or skin care mentioned earlier, falls into the category of ‘Exemplification’. In Chapter 4 it was found that the purpose of a large number of vloggers was to exemplify a cooking and fitness process in order to promote healthy lockdown lifestyle.

6.3 Conclusion

The content analysis in Chapter 6 shows that the most frequently occurring content foci in video lockdown diaries during the pandemic, are ‘Complaining about the pandemic’, ‘Discussing and showing food’, and ‘Talking about the pandemic situation’. Closely related to this, the analysis of the higher order content categories in 10 video lockdown diaries, shows that overall the vloggers of VLDs contains ‘Comments’ and Exemplifications’, often intended to encourage healthy lifestyle during the lockdown. In the next chapter, the findings of this study are systematically summarized.

Chapter 7: Discussion

7.0 Introduction

During the COVID-19, the number of individuals creating video lockdown diaries on social media dramatically increased. In many ways, these video lockdown diaries are similar in nature to the type of vlogs that were regularly produced prior to the COVID-19 pandemic (e.g., Frobenius, 2010; Griffith and Papacharissi (2010) Riboni, 2017; Wood, 2019), however due to the particular circumstances of the pandemic and the lockdown, they have developed certain unique generic characteristics. The objective of this research was to examine these lockdown vlogs to find out more about the purposes for their production, their content, and typical generic structures, and ultimately, by drawing upon existing literature on the vlog, establish whether they might be classified as a genre in their own right. As such, the research attempted to answer the following questions:

- 1. What are the primary purposes of video lockdown diaries created during the Covid-19 crisis?*
- 2. What are the specific content foci of video lockdown diaries?*
- 3. What specific structural elements do video lockdown diaries contain?*
- 4. How do video lockdown diaries differ from traditional vlogs?*

Chapters 4, 5, and 6 provided the primary responses these research questions. This

chapter will now highlight key findings which have emerged from this analysis of the video lockdown diary, and respond to question 4

7.1 Key Findings

The analysis of the video lockdown diaries found that their main purpose was to provide viewers with a first-hand account of a vlogger's personal experiences of the pandemic and lockdown situation, and in doing so, attempt to reduce the potential panic and anxiety caused by lockdown isolation. It was also found that the VLD also encourages its viewers how to maintain a healthy lifestyle during the lockdown period, as well as providing information about COVID-19 prevention. Given these important aims, structurally, the VLD foregrounds COVID-19 in its introductory move. The VLD also typically employed a documentary style, was often presented in the form of a diary, and concluded by encouraging viewers to persevere in difficult times. It was also found that in terms of content, most of the video lockdown diaries include food displays and complaints about the COVID-19. Each of these will be discussed in the sections below.

7.1.1 The VLD provides viewers with a first-hand account of a vlogger's personal experiences of the pandemic situation

The study found that the VLD characteristically provides viewers with a first-hand account of vloggers' personal experiences of the pandemic situation. This was mainly carried out in an attempt to reduce viewers' anxiety about staying at home for long

periods of time, and to help them develop a better understand of COVID-19 situation. As pointed out by Bhatia (1993), the communicative purpose of a genre "shapes a type and gives it its internal structure" (p. 13), and hence these primary aims of the VLD impact on its structure and content in specific ways. For example, the VLD vloggers typically begin their videos by describing their perspectives of the current situation of the pandemic, or by complaining about the current severity of the pandemic. This not only attracts people wanting details about COVID-19 to watch the video, but also those wanting a more personal account of people's experiences related to the lockdown situation. Moreover, in the final concluding move the video lockdown diary is likely to mention that the pandemic has improved, and encourage viewers to collectively persevere with the lockdown.

7.1.2 The VLD provides incentives for the maintenance of healthy habits

According to Pietrabissa and Simpson (2020), the psychological consequences of social isolation and a disrupted lifestyle during the COVID-19 pandemic are not only responsible for anxiety, panic and depression, but also eating disorders and digestive problems. The study has shown that another important purpose of the video lockdown vlogger is to encourage viewers to maintain a healthy lifestyle, including healthy eating habits. To achieve these vloggers typically record scenes where they produce healthy food or exercising, often using a documentary style in their video lockdown diaries. These scenes are usually accompanied by specific details such as the calorie content of each food item, or advice such as the importance of reducing of sugar intake.

7.1.3 The VLD provides information about COVID-19 prevention

The majority of the video lockdown diaries also focused on improving their viewers' awareness of information about preventing the spread of COVID-19. Although most individuals are aware of the seriousness of the pandemic, a small number of people do not wear masks or avoid other protective measures. Therefore, in order to reinforce an awareness of COVID-19 protection, most vloggers include some reference to carrying out personal protection during the pandemic at the beginning or end of their video lockdown diaries. For example, some vloggers mentioned disinfecting the soles of their shoes with alcohol before returning home after going out, and others mentioned wearing goggles as well as a mask because of the risk of eye infection. This particular type of content is different from that of the traditional vlog, particularly given that the information often comes in the introduction or conclusion moves of the VLD. As will be discussed in the next section, traditional vlogs tend to only greet, say goodbye or thank fans for watching in these moves.

7.1.4 The VLD foregrounds COVID-19 in its introductory move

Tolson (2005) mentioned the importance of opening remarks in the vlog. Unlike the traditional vlog (e.g., Frobenius, 2010; Griffith and Papacharissi (2010) Riboni, 2017; Wood, 2019), which characteristically begins with an introduction about the vlogger, it was found that the opening move of the video lockdown diary tends to focus on introducing the topic of the pandemic. This not only signals the key focus of the vlog, but works to attract and maintain the attention of audiences seeking information or first-hand experiences and accounts of the pandemic. For example, the introduction

move of a typical vlog might only include the vlogger briefly greeting the audience, after which the main content of the vlog takes place. However, the introductory focus of the video lockdown diary is to immediately engage the audience with the vlog's theme, and as such the theme is discussed in detail at the beginning of the vlog.

7.1.5 The VLD employs a documentary style

Many video lockdown diaries are shot in the observational style of documentaries (Rabiger, 2014), which is noticeably different from the 'newsreader' presentation mode (Bonner, 2016) of the traditional vlog. The vlogger rarely looks directly at the camera, and instead the camera tends to follow their movements as they demonstrate certain activities. An exception, however, will often occur during the introduction stages of video lockdown diary and the final summary stages. Lockdown diary vloggers might also look directly at the camera when they want to emphasise a particular point. The deployment of the documentary style offer the viewers a sense of participation in the action (Rabiger, 2014), which is also more likely to have a positive impact on the viewer in keeping with the purposes discussed above.

7.1.6 The VLD typically presents a diary-like documentation of the vlogger's day during the lockdown

As discussed above, the video lockdown vlogger is focused on assisting others by sharing their knowledge and experience of COVID-19 situation, often to encourage the maintenance of health during the lockdown. However, this is mainly carried out in the form that represents a diary, where the daily activities of the vlogger, for example, ordering take-away food, preparing and cooking food, applying skin care products,

and so on are described and discussed for the viewer. Therefore, an important characteristic of the lockdown diary is that it representative of a diary, consisting of entries that document the daily life of a vlogger during a period of isolation at home.

7.1.7 The VLD focuses on encouraging perseverance

A unique key element of the concluding section of most video lockdown diaries is a focus on encouraging viewers to persevere in times of difficulty. This element is absent from traditional vlog structure. The intention, here, is potentially to both reduce fear and panic, but also motivate the viewers. It was found that a number of frequently used motivating words were employed in this section of the VLD. These included “strength, victory, take care, keep our spirits high”.

7.1.8 The VLD focuses on complaints

The study revealed that complaints of vloggers about the pandemic was one of the key recurring elements of VLD content, with the majority of complaints directed at the inability to properly exercise, eat, or party in a way that was possible prior to the pandemic. Many of the vloggers chose to vent such feelings in the early sections of the video. In some respects, the complaint of the video lockdown diary vlogger is less a personal complaint, and instead one that might be seen as representing the viewers of the vlog. By complaining about the lockdown situation, the vlogger is voicing what they view as the opinions of their viewers.

7.1.9 The VLD focuses on food

According to the study, a frequently occurring content focus of the VLD is the food

eaten during the COVID-19 lockdown period. A number of the lockdown vloggers explained how to prepare certain meals, while others presented content showing healthy food content or recipes. These actions greatly encouraged their viewers to follow the vloggers to learn how to eat healthy food and keep themselves and others healthy. Interestingly, during the pandemic period, a number of chefs made desserts in the shape of pandemic masks (Soulful Creation, 2020) and created their own food. In short, and as represented in the video lockdown diaries displaying and creating food became an essential activity during the mundane life of pandemic isolation.

7.2 The video lockdown diary as a unique genre

The primary purposes of the video lockdown diary, with their underlying emphasis on reducing stress and anxiety by conveying information related to the COVID-19 pandemic is distinctive from the purpose of traditional vlog. As mentioned in Chapter 2, the primary characteristic purposes of the traditional vlog involve self-expression and profit making. Given these and other findings related to the particular distinctive purposes, content and functions of the video lockdown diaries as identified throughout this dissertation, the video lockdown diary might be categorised as a unique genre in its own right.

7.3 Implications for future research

Given that the video lockdown diaries has been regarded as a unique genre, this study opens up the possibility for future research into the production, distribution and reception of the video lockdown diary. It would be interesting for researchers to interview vloggers to find out more about the production of video lockdown diaries, and the underlying motivations behind the production of this emergent genre. Similarly, it would be of interest to carry out qualitative investigations that interview viewers of the genre to establish whether and how the emergent genre has impacted on their lives. Research might also chart the trajectory of the genre over time to establish how its unique characteristics have changed since the outbreak of Covid-19. Finally it would be interesting to examine whether certain generic characteristics of the video lockdown diary have shaped emergent iterations of the more traditional vlog genre.

7.4 Limitations of the study

Finally, there are some limitations to this study. Firstly, the results of the study would be more generalisable if a greater number of video lockdown diaries were collected for the research. However, this was difficult as I could not return to New Zealand to carry out the study due to the COVID-19 situation. In China, it is difficult for individuals to access foreign social media platforms, like YouTube, and this, combined with my post-graduate study research focus on English language new

media, limited the number of suitable video lockdown diaries I could collect for my research. Furthermore, the findings would have been more generalisable if video lockdown diaries could have collected from a wider range of countries.

7.5 Conclusion

To conclude this chapter and study, four key observations are made from this study. First, the main purposes of the video lockdown diaries is to reduce stress and anxiety by communicating often personal information and providing experiential accounts about the COVID-19 pandemic and the isolation experience. Secondly, the structure of VLD is characterized by the use of documentary style shooting techniques and the focus on COVID-19 in the introduction and opening section. Third, the specific content of VLD focuses on encouraging people to persevere and demonstrate healthy living. Finally, by comparing with the traditional vlog from three aspects, it is concluded that VLD is a unique genre. Importantly, the video lockdown diary is only at the early stages of its development, and given the persistent nature of COVID-19 and the continued use of the lockdown as a prevention strategy in many countries, the genre will continue to be produced and is likely to develop in interesting and unique new ways. It is hoped, therefore, that this study, although only exploratory, will inspire other analyses of the VLD, perhaps at a much deeper level.

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