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<u>The construction of veganism in vegan food blogs</u>

The proliferation of food as a matter for identity construction and distinction in the industrialised countries seems to have coincided with the advent of the internet and the rise of new technologies for sharing information and for interacting across space (e.g. Sneijder & Te Molder 2005, Gerhardt 2013: 46ff). One such happy marriage of foodiness and technologically-mediated communication (TMC) instantiates in vegan food blogs. They allow the blogger and their users to construct and celebrate a certain food-based lifestyle, to create symbolic capital and a virtual, but real community across the globe. Linguistically, food blogs are of interest since they represent contemporary versions of a centuries-old genre, the recipe (Norrick 1983). In this paper, I will analyse structural and lexical features of vegan food blogs as opposed to classical written recipes with a view to the communional TMC construction of vegan lifestyle in the general framework of discourse analysis.

The structure of vegan food blogs is investigated against the backdrop of classical written recipes from cookery books to highlight their increased interactiveness and communicative thrust (Diemer & Frobenius 2013). One handy example is the comments section which does not have an equivalent in the book world and allows for a calibration of vegan identity and practice.

Lexically, adjectives such as "creamy" or "meaty" flag the inherent problem that veganism is, in the end, defined negatively, in the sense of "no animal products", but depicted as a choice for something by vegans themselves. Hence, vegan food blogs construct veganism as an eye-opener, a gaining of independence from trodden paths, a discovery of new ways, while concurrently having to tackle the problem that the English lexicon for tastes and textures of food is non-vegetarian and non-vegan. While the term 'meaty' probably has an equivalent in other languages, vegan blogs in English have the added difficulty that 'creamy' is polysemic and does not only refer to some soft, rich texture, but also to the dairy product, hence a forbidden choice. Despite all attempts to show that Veganism is 'more', not 'less' (e.g. "Culinary discoveries are one of my favourite things about vegan food creation"), reference to animal and meat-based diets cannot be sidestepped in these blogs. This dilemma also shows in the extremely high frequency of the adjective "vegan" used as pre-modifier for dishes and ingredients (e.g. "vegan pancakes" or "vegan Worcestershire sauce"). Also, in the evaluation of dishes, comparisons to traditional meat-based versions is all-prevalent.

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