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Evaluation in Tourism Discourse: A Corpus-Assisted Study of Institutional Promotion of the Emilia-Romagna Adriatic Coast in English and Italian (1960s–1990s)

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Abstract

This study investigates the use of evaluative language in English and Italian print tourism promotional materials (TPMs) produced between the 1960s and the 1990s, focusing on the Adriatic coastal area of Emilia-Romagna, commonly referred to as the Riviera Romagnola. Drawing on a corpus-assisted discourse analysis approach and grounded in Appraisal Theory (Martin and White, 2005), the study has a twofold aim: (1) to identify the most frequently promoted localities across decades to assess the visibility and strategic prioritisation of destinations, and (2) to examine how evaluative language is employed to construct affective and appreciative representations of those destinations. The analysis is based on the DIETALY corpus, a collection of digitised TPMs archived by ENIT – Agenzia Nazionale del Turismo. Quantitative findings reveal a disparity in the attention given to Adriatic destinations compared to larger cities, suggesting editorial biases in favour of more prominent urban centres. Qualitatively, the study finds that the judgment sub-system is largely absent, while affect and appreciation are central to constructing a discursive image of the coast as both a tranquil, family-friendly destination and a lively, nightlife-oriented locale. This "double nature" reflects broader shifts in tourism discourse over time, catering to the evolving expectations of diverse tourist demographics. These findings contribute to ongoing discussions on tourism discourse, regional branding, and the interplay between language, place, and promotional strategy.

Keywords: evaluation; corpus-assisted discourse analysis; persuasion; TPMs; Emilia-Romagna

[1]Although the final design of the paper is the outcome of the close collaborations between the authors, for academic purposes Dario Del Fante is responsible for §4, § 5, § 6 while Valentina Di Francesco wrote § 1, § 2 and § 3.

1. Introduction

This study aims to provide an overview of print tourism promotional communication in English and Italian between the 1960s and the 1990s, specifically focusing on the coastal area of Emilia-Romagna. The coastal area, commonly referred to as Riviera Romagnola, has experienced various transformations during this period, from mass tourism (1960s-1980s) to more personalised post-modern experiences (1980s-1990s) (Battilani, 2015). Employing a corpus-assisted perspective (Partington *et al.* 2013; Baker, 2023), we conducted an analysis with a twofold aim.

On the one hand, we aimed to analyse the most frequently mentioned towns and localities in order to determine which tourist destinations are promoted in tourism promotional materials (henceforth TPMs) in English and Italian. In doing so, and based on the assumption that the greater textual space devoted to a city corresponds to increased visibility and stronger economic interests (Chouliaraki, 2006; Duffy, 2014), we could establish correlations between the prominence of certain cities and the underlying reasons for their promotion. On the other hand, we pursued a linguistic interest focused on the study of evaluation in tourism communication. Specifically, our interest is investigating the use of evaluative language for promotional purposes since "[b]esides its informative function, a tourist brochure aims at persuading customers to buy a product" (Mocini, 2013: 159). In this respect, the theoretical framework employed is the Appraisal system developed by Martin and White (2005: 1), which offers a comprehensive model for analysing "the subjective presence of writers/speakers in texts as they adopt stances towards both the material they present and those with whom they communicate.

We directed our analysis toward identifying how writers promote or devalue specific cities and localities by constructing shared feelings and values in texts, using linguistic mechanisms for the expression of emotions, tastes, and normative assessments. The use of corpora gave us a "distant perspective", as this approach allows us to map patterns across a body of print materials, revealing discursive trends that might go unnoticed through traditional close reading. Moreover, this framework is particularly useful for tracing evaluative language choices across textual datasets and for identifying how destinations are linguistically promoted over time. Our research addresses the following questions:

- How is evaluation (with a focus on attitude) employed to promote tourism in specific localities throughout the retrieved materials?

- Which tourist destinations are being promoted in the materials?
- Are there recurring destinations, or do different trends emerge over time?

The study is based on the DIETALY corpus compiled by the Ferrara Unit during archival research at the ENIT Library, which consists of digitised tourism promotional texts (see section 3 of this paper). Our general aim is to understand how the destination image of Riviera Romagnola developed during such a crucial period for tourism development in the Emilia-Romagna region. The results emerging from the English and Italian sub-corpora are then observed comparatively.

2. Background - Tourism and appraisal

Tourism discourse conveys the cultural values of the promoted destination and can influence the behaviour of the potential tourist (for instance, Urry 2002; Manca, 2009; 2007; 2004b; Nigro, 2005; Federici, 2007; 2006). In tourism discourse, the evaluative language and how it shapes the tourist experience are widely explored from various perspectives.

For Thurlow and Jaworski (2010a, 2010b, 2003) language "and languages sit at the very heart of the tourist experience, its representation and its realisation, its enculturation and its enactment" (Thurlow and Jaworski, 2010: 289). The language in tourism, especially English, can be characterised by a balanced use of everyday and specialised language (Maci, 2020). The linguistic features and the linguistic strategies are often used to support both the informative and persuasive functions. For instance, "when specialists address non-specialists, discursive features of general language are mixed with specialised vocabulary" (Francesconi, 2014: 27), which results in a "hybridized" language. Furthermore, at a lexical level, the adjectives are often strategically used to create a convincing image of the destination. Durán-Muñoz (2019: 352), who provided an overview of scholars who investigated adjective categorisation, argues that

> [d]espite the different criteria proposed by these authors, almost all of them identify at least two common adjective categories, which are: descriptive (or objective) adjectives, whose function is to provide factual information and referential content, and evaluative (subjective) adjectives, whose function is to evaluate and reflect a subjective stance.

[2] ENIT stands for Agenzia Nazionale del Turismo. The acronym ENIT will be used throughout the text.

From the communicative function perspective, drawing on Dann (1996: 2) who argued that tourism is an "act of promotion", the evaluative language is a device through which the promoted place is presented and narrated. Consequently, tourism texts are characterised by a specific storytelling, which can create identity and values around the destination, and the evaluative language can create proximity or distance between texts and tourists.

Appraisal theory applied to the tourism language (Mocini, 2013) can highlight how the linguistic choices, the type of texts and their communicative functions are intertwined. As Mocini (157-158) writes, "writers [of brochures] exploit a wide spectrum of attitudinal and graduating resources to attract potential customers by enriching their texts of emotions and evaluation regarding their subject matter". Following Martin and White's (2007: 48) Appraisal theory, there are three main semantic resources according to which interpersonal meaning is formed in discourse. *Negotiation* regards the interactive nature of discourse and regards the exchange of meaning between two people and how turns are organised in exchanging the information. *Involvement* regards the array of resources used to negotiate group identity (slang, social dialects, special languages). *Appraisal* regards how evaluation is discursively established and enacted. Specifically, Appraisal is defined through three interacting domains, *attitude, engagement and graduation. Attitude* is defined as evidence of feelings and judgments. *Engagement* "deals with sourcing attitudes and the play of voices around opinions in discourse" (Martin and White, 2005: 35). *Graduation* is concerned with the judgment of phenomena whereby feelings are amplified.

Several studies (Aini, 2024; Phùng Thị Thúy and Lưu Quý, 2018) have employed Appraisal Theory (Martin and White, 2005) as a useful framework for analysing how territories are evaluated for promotional purposes in Tourism Discourse. Mocini (2013) focused on *Affect* and *Appreciation* in a corpus of British tourist brochures produced by tour operators specialising in the promotion of Italy. He demonstrated how the repetition of evaluative meanings results in shaping the discursive image that emerges from the texts by imbuing them with emotional and aesthetic resonance, thereby engaging the reader and enhancing the perceived value of the tourist destination. Jalilifar and Moradi (2019) investigated the Graduation sub-system in brochures and demonstrated how the graduation model functions as a linguistic device to attract potential clients. Similarly, Istianah and Suhandano (2022) adopt an ecolinguistic perspective to examine the promotion of the Indonesian region of Borneo (Kalimantan),

focusing on tourism websites. In their study as well, the Appraisal framework— particularly the *Attitude* and *Graduation* sub-systems—is shown to effectively enhance the touristic appeal of the region. Their analysis reveals texts rich in appraisal patterns that predominantly evaluate the natural environment: the island is positively depicted as a site of natural beauty and is associated with richness and uniqueness through the use of strongly evaluative lexis.

Therefore, in line with previous research, our analysis adopts a cross-linguistic, quantitative qualitative approach to the overall attitude sub-system, focusing on its three regions of feeling as defined by Martin and White (2005: 35): affect, judgment, and appreciation. *Affect* involves the expression of emotional dispositions through specific evaluative language; *judgment* refers to the evaluation of human behaviour, both positive and negative; and *appreciation* entails the assessment of texts, processes, and natural phenomena to establish their value. The distinction among these three regions lies in their respective objects of evaluation: appreciation targets products and processes, judgment concerns human behaviour and affect pertains to emotional expression.

3. The Dietaly database

Over time, most TPMs have shifted from physical formats to digital ones. Pre-digital tourism materials existed only in print versions and were distributed at physical locations, such as travel agencies, tourism trade fairs, and tourism boards, nationally and locally. In Italy, the involvement of different national and regional or provincial institutions in tourism administration over the years (Berrino, 2011) affected the preservation of promotional materials such as brochures, leaflets and tourism magazines in physical archives. Moreover, unlike proceedings or accounting documentation, the promotional texts were rarely archived by the administration offices, probably because they were not considered worthy of interest. The ephemeral nature of these historical printed materials has created gaps in the archives of Italian tourism promotion. Our study, which is dedicated to printed materials belonging to a period of time when no digital dimension existed, potentially addresses the issue for future research on web-based tourism content, which, due to rapid changes, may elude diachronic studies as well.

For the purpose of this article, we used a sample of the printed material we collected from ENIT Library. We divided the retrieval process into three steps: first, we located the material related to the Emilia-Romagna region archived in the ENIT Library. The database was made up of brochures, leaflets, volumes, and articles from the 1960s to the 1990s. We found both original English and Italian texts as well as Italian texts with their translated English versions. We compiled a document with metadata for each text (Title, Year/period of publication, Genre, and Language) and digitised 137 texts. We used the scanner CZUR Aura which released 300 DPI images that were uploaded and stored on a platform which ENIT dedicated to the PRIN DIETALY project[4]. The total number of the texts was identified by one or more *thematic tags* and by the location promoted in each text. In applying the tags to the texts, we intended to take into account macro-areas divided into concrete activities or objects of tourism. The thematic tags, were grouped as in Table 1:

Tag	Description
Eco-Tourism	Excursions
Art, history & culture	Museum, festivals, heritage tourism, churches, cultural events
Sea, leisure & wellbeing	Spas, Amusement parks, equipped beaches, thermal baths
Food & Wine	Gastronomic items
Advertisement	Banner advertisement
Other	Hotel, means of transport, congress events

Table 1: *Thematic tags used to categorise the digitised material*

Through this categorisation, together with the metadata, we were able to select the material referring to the Adriatic Coast between the 60s and the 90s, which was the focus of our investigation. Moreover, the Italian texts and their English translations have not been the object of this work and were not included in the dataset analysed. Therefore, we converted the corpus into the ".txt format" through the software ABBYY FineReader 16.

[3] Access is limited to the research unit and all the material contained in it is strictly under the copyright of ENIT. Moreover, only after our requests were approved by ENIT, could we digitise the material.

[4] https://pdf.abbyy.com/it/(last accessed 14/04/2024).

4. Methodological framework

A corpus-assisted approach was used given its quantitative and qualitative nature (Baker, 2023). The Corpus Assisted Discourse Studies (henceforth CADS) tradition uses a large quantities of data as empirical evidence to test and verify specific hypotheses, thus providing useful tools and techniques for identifying patterns in linguistic use that could not be easily accessible by only directly reading the text (Partington *et al.*, 2013: 10). Moreover, CADS also offers the opportunity to investigate language in context through concordance analysis, which is necessary to capture the different nuances of meaning related to the language of touristic promotion, which is stylistically rich and full of culturally rich text. As regards this paper, we adopted a two-step mixed methodology approach incorporating Lancsbox (Brezina and Platt, 2023).

As previously discussed, we sampled two corpora from the Dietaly Database: Dietaly_Eng (D-Eng), comprising 654,000 words and 69,000 types, and Dietaly_Ita (D-Ita), comprising 288,000 tokens and 45,000 types. Each corpus was further divided into four sub-corpora, corresponding to different time periods, in order to investigate recurring destinations from the 1960s to the 1990s. (See Table 2 in the Appendix).

We extracted the most frequently mentioned towns in both corpora and compared the results for each decade. Subsequently, we calculated the distribution of all tourist destinations along the Adriatic Coast in both corpora, highlighting differences in the frequency of occurrences between highly populated and less populated towns. The second step involved a qualitative analysis of "the system of interpersonal meanings which realize the tenor of discourse" (Mocini, 2013: 159), following the Appraisal framework. We examined all collocational contexts of the coastal towns to investigate their evaluative patterns and to identify candidate words expressing emotions. Then, we gave a close reading of each candidate, and then categorised the texts after personal subjective reading in terms of *affect, judgment, and appreciation.* In the following section we report the results of our analysis.

5. Analysis

5.1. An overview of the Adriatic Coast

The first step was to analyse the distribution of the towns within both D-Eng and D-Ita. As previously discussed, we assumed that the more space devoted to a city, the greater its visibility and the associated economic interests. We calculated the most frequently named towns and localities in general to verify which tourist destinations are being promoted in the TPMs. Tables 3 and 4 (Appendix) and Figures 1 and 2 show that the documents collected did not exclusively focus on the Adriatic Coast and Emilia-Romagna. Indeed, many towns outside the region were mentioned, such as Venice, Rome, Naples, and Florence. While frequencies varied in both corpora over the decades, Rome stands out as the most frequently mentioned city, except for the 1970s D-Ita subcorpus, where Parma is the most frequently mentioned. In the 1970s D-Eng subcorpus, the word "San" indicates both towns such as San Marino or San Giovanni, or to Saints such as San Nicola or San Giorgio. Regarding D-Eng, most localities are regularly mentioned, indicating that they constantly receive focus. Only Paris, Trento, and Trieste appear during specific time periods. Regarding D-Ita, there is no mention of any international city. In general, the distribution of the mentions is less constant: Bologna, Modena, Ravenna, Rome and Venice are the only towns distributed uniformly across the four decades considered (See appendix).

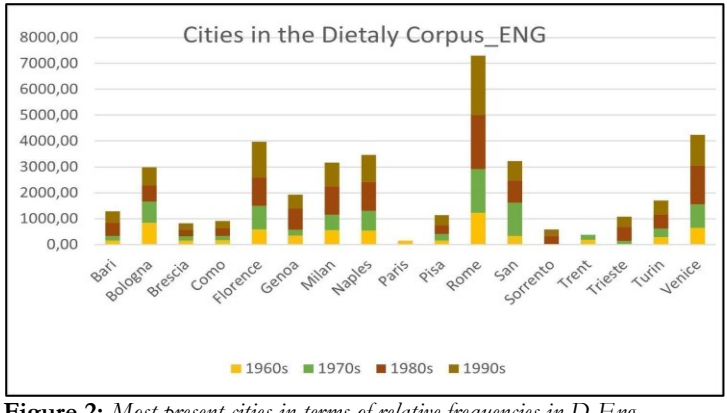


Figure 2: *Most present cities in terms of relative frequencies in D-Eng*

[5] We specifically conducted an R1 collocation analysis to verify this information.

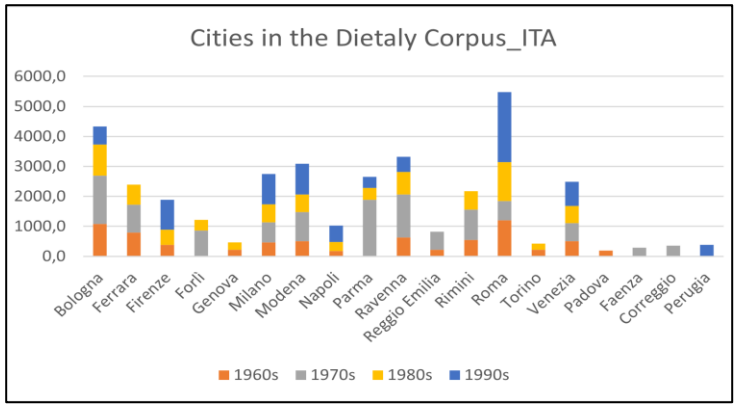


Figure 3: *Most present cities in terms of relative frequencies in D-Ita*

This first portion of the analysis contributes with two main considerations regarding those cities which consistently occur over the four time periods under study. Firstly, as shown in Figure 2, Bologna, Florence, Milan, Naples, Rome, and Venice are the destinations most frequently mentioned in D-Eng, consistently present across all four decades with an overall frequency of over 2,000 occurrences. Except for Venice, which stands out as the principal tourist destination in North-Eastern Italy and was already connected to Padova and the rest of Northern Italy by the A4 since 1933, these cities are all linked by the A1 "Autostrada del Sole", Italy's oldest motorway opened in 1958. This suggests that tourism communication appears to be strategically directed towards key points along the road network, emphasising that more accessible places tend to receive more promotional efforts.

Secondly, in the D-Ita corpus (Fig. 3), the towns most frequently mentioned over the four decades are Bologna, Rome, Milan, and Venice, along with Modena and Ravenna. In contrast, important tourist destinations such as Firenze and Napoli do not appear consistently, and are notably absent in the 1970s. The high occurrence of smaller towns such as Modena and Ravenna, alongside more expected towns, as observed in the D-Eng analysis, could be interpreted as a promotional strategy specifically tailored for the Italian audience. Clearly, too, these two destinations might not have been mentioned in the English-language materials, simply because they were less well-known tourist destinations.

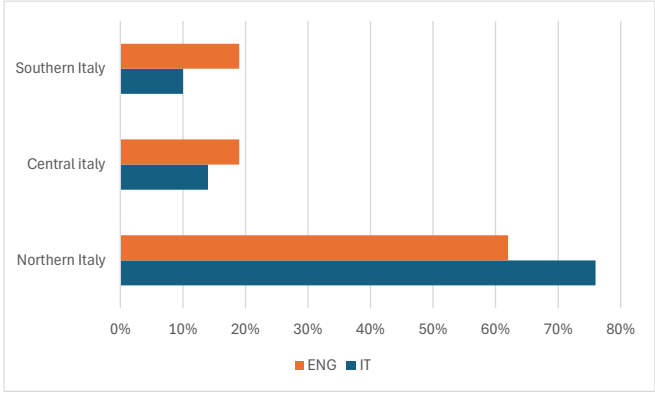


Figure 4: *Geographical position of cities in D-Eng*

Additionally, the data interestingly reveals that the majority of the most frequently mentioned destinations in both corpora are primarily in the North of Italy, as indicated in Figure 4, covering the period from the 1960s to the 1990s.

As for the Adriatic Coast, the frequency of occurrence of all the localities on the coast (Figure 5 and 6), "Rimini", "Cesenatico", "Cattolica", "Cervia", "Milano Marittima" and "Riccione" are the most mentioned in both the D-Eng and DIta. Moreover, the frequency patterns are the same across the four time periods, with Rimini also being the most quoted, followed by "Cesenatico", "Cervia" and "Cattolica".

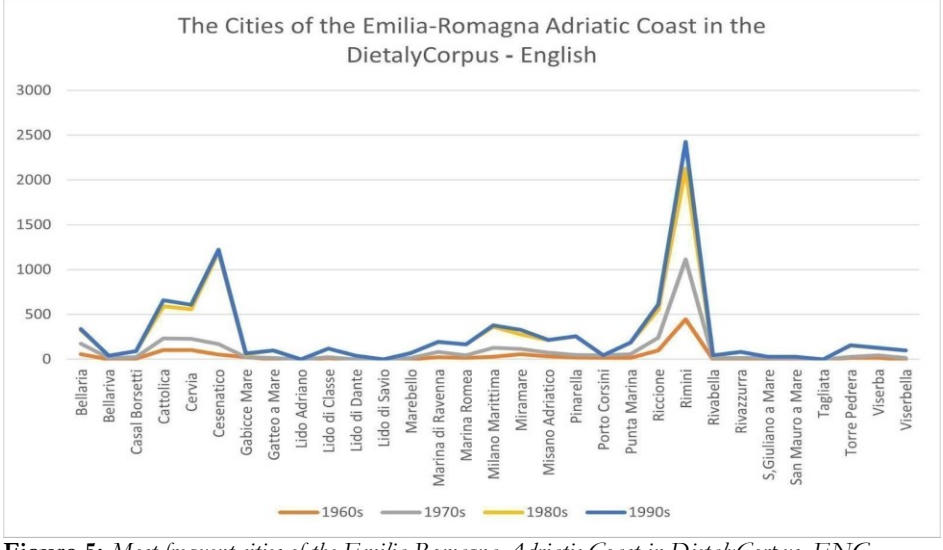


Figure 5: *Most frequent cities of the Emilia-Romagna Adriatic Coast in DietalyCorpus_ENG*

Overall, an examination of the space devoted to Adriatic Coast destinations in both corpora suggests that this area does not receive significant attention within the analysed tourism promotional materials (TPMs) on Emilia-Romagna.

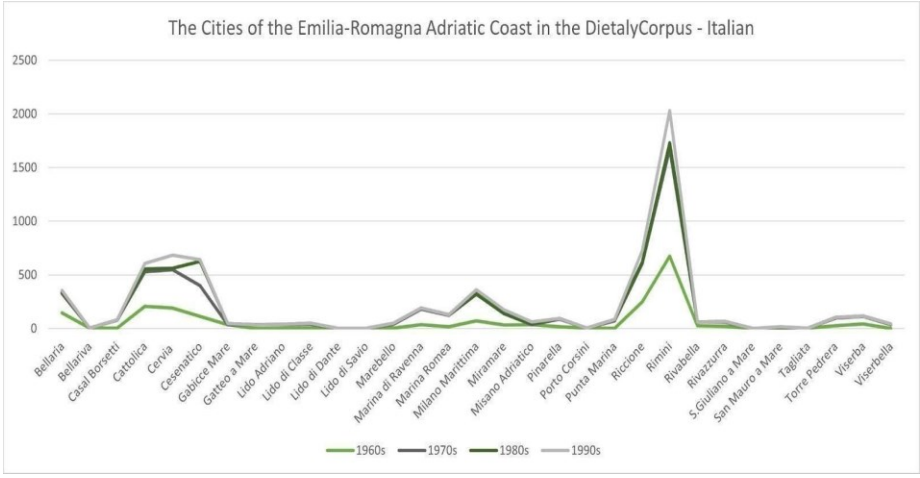


Figure 6: *Most frequent cities of the Emilia-Romagna Adriatic Coast in DietalyCorpus_ITA*

The analysis clearly indicates that larger and more well-known destinations are cited more frequently, while smaller areas receive comparatively less attention. This pattern may be attributable to a strategic focus on promoting areas already developed for tourism. Conversely, smaller and lesser-known towns are understandably less prominent. This result may be explained by the fact that larger cities tend to attract greater interest and occupy more space in national print materials, particularly given the intense urbanisation that took place in Italy after World War II and continued through the 1980s (Romano *et al.*, 2017). In contrast, smaller localities with fewer economic resources were often overlooked in promotional campaigns. As discussed earlier, a key factor in the economic development of such areas—the slow city movement—was only established in 1999 (Paul, 2014).

5.2. The attitude sub-system in Adriatic Coast tourism discourse

As regards the study of evaluation in relation to both D-Eng and D-Ita, we found that the *attitude* subsystem is expressed only through two regions of feelings, namely *affect* and *appreciation*. One unexpected discovery was the

absence of the *judgment* subsystem, which is typically expressed through adverbials such as "justly", "fairly", "virtuously", or through attributes like "corrupt" or "beautiful". This could be attributed to the likelihood that these tourist texts primarily focus on the territory, landscapes, and entertainment, potentially lacking substantial human elements. All the examples[7] are evenly distributed throughout the corpus, as they have been detected in the sub-corpora from the 1960s to the 1990s.

Regarding the *affect* sub-system for D-Eng, we identified four instances where language conveys emotional responses (1-2-3-4).

> (1) Rimini possesses very many art treasures, including the celebrated Malatestiano Temple. It has a beach of **soft**, **deep** sand. Numerous **pleasant** excursions can be **enjoyed** in the area. (*The Seas of Italy* [Booklet] - 1960, in ENIT Library)

> (2) Relax at Misano Adriatico. It's the **quietest** and **most relaxing** seaside resort on the Romagnola Riviera. It extends along 4 kilometres (2 miles) of coastline with a **marvellous coloured** sea. It lies half way between Riccione and Cattolica, and **it enjoys** particularly **fine** panoramas which invite the visitor to set out on **pleasant** excursions into the hills around. Rendezvous, the best dance halls and sporting events suggest a holiday there. (*L'Italia - n. 190* [Italy] [Magazine] - 1964, in ENIT Library).

In general, language is used to evoke positive emotions aimed at presenting the Adriatic Coast in two versions: on the one hand as a relaxing and enjoyable place, which is idyllic to spend holidays, and on the other hand as a vibrant area full of attractions. Rimini is described as a place where tourists can enjoy pleasant excursions, also for the depth and softness of the beaches (1). Similarly, in (2) the image of the excursions on the hills in Misano Adriatico are also presented as "pleasant" from which one can "enjoy fine panoramas[8]".

Differently, looking at the following examples (3) and (4), which are extracts from the same article, the writer creates an emotional bond and evokes joy and liveliness in the reader by highlighting the literal and symbolic brightness of the coast during the night.

[7] The extracts from ENIT material published under the PRIN DIETALY project cannot be reproduced, disseminated and/or used by third parties without the express consent of ENIT.

[8] Dates for the undated documents were estimated by the research team based on font, layout, and colouring.

(3) The **bright** lights and signs of the hotels, the pensions, the night clubs, and of famous rendezvous gathered about the hillside, **strike one** unexpectedly, and they are **repeated in a play of light** as far as Cattolica, Riccione and Rimini, eventually to **be lost** in an **infinity of luminous dots** towards Viserba. There thus takes over another sea of light which invites you to share a **joyous night life** in all its **splendour**. (*La Riviera delle Muse – Adriatico Italia* [The Coast of Muse – Italy Adriatic] [Book] 1963, in ENIT Library).

(4) The sky is already **sparkling** with stars. Already the hills are **pulsing** with their myriad lights. And the Artist, with his brush dipped into a palette of green-yellow, white and blue, rose-violet, has written the name: Gabicce. (*La Riviera delle Muse – Adriatico Italia* [The Coast of Muse – Italy Adriatic] [Book] - 1963, in ENIT Library).

In fact, while the coast is indeed brighter at night due to the lights of hotels and guesthouses (3), tourists may also find themselves captivated by the unexpected "play of lights" and "lost" in "the luminous dots". Surrounding them, the sky and hills are animated (4), "sparkling" and pulsing" respectively.

In relation to the *appreciation* sub-system, we found four examples where texts, processes, and natural phenomena are evaluated through language. In the previously mentioned example (2), Rimini is appreciated by the writer who uses two superlative adjectives, namely "quietest" and "most relaxing", and evaluative adjectives like "marvellous" and "pleasant". These adjectives signal the author's positive evaluation of the territory with explicit promotional aims. Moreover, we found *appreciation* in the following text (5).

(5) Many factors have played a part in this development. **First, there is the considerable historical patrimony of the towns and cities**, both inland and on the coast, reflecting a cultural and artistic history that is **as important** as any in Italy. **The natural heritage is one of the most impressive** in Italy, with hills and mountains, plains crossed by rivers and dotted with lakes, and the coastline. The **coastline is long and enjoys an excellent climate**; the inland scenery is **interesting and varied**; there are many old and new towns which contrast sharply with one another, although they are all tourist centres; all this has helped to encourage the foreign visitor. Rail network: **The rail network is one of the most extensive in Italy**, situated as it is in the centre of the country; the main axis of the system runs Piacenza- Bologna-Rimini. International car transport services following the passenger link Dusseldorf with Rimini via the Brenner, and with Boulogne Maritime via Iselle. Travellers who so wish may find rented cars without driver

> ready for them at the stations of Bologna, Ravenna, Parma and Rimini. «Treni navetta» (car trains) also operate between Pontremoli and Borgo Vai di Taro. Airport system: **There is also an important airport system for air tourism**, with several airports at Bologna, Ferrara, Forli, Rimini, Ravenna, Reggio Emilia and Parma, some of which serve **the heaviest** air tourist traffic in Italy, especially as regards charter flights. (*Emilia Romagna, Italy* [Brochure] - 1971, in ENIT Library).

In addition to the use of superlative adjectives such as "most impressive", "most extensive", "heaviest" or evaluative adjectives such as "considerable", "excellent", "varied", the appreciation also lies at the overall discursive level: the writer, in fact, promotes the territory by showcasing all its positive aspects, from the historical heritage to the more concrete rail network and airport system. In this sense, two keywords emerge from this publication from ENIT: heritage and accessibility. The Adriatic Coast is positively evaluated and presented as a place where you can find historical sites and a vast natural heritage, easily accessible by trains and planes.

The use of superlative adjectives as a signal for *appreciation* is also present in (6) and (7), where Cervia and Milano Marittima are promoted for their popularity, and Rimini for the size of its facilities and seafront.

> (6) Today Cervia and the neighbouring Milano Marittima form one of **the most popular** sea resorts in Romagna. The spa which utilises seawater from the salterns, benefits from all the hotel, sports and leisure time facilities available in the area for tourists. (*Thermal Regions, Italia* [Magazine] - 1991, in ENIT Library).

> (7) Rimini, in the province of Forli is one of the liveliest towns on the Romagna coast, whose modern tourist facilities along the beach make it one of Europe's **largest sea resorts**. (*Thermal Regions, Italia* [Magazine] - 1991, in ENIT Library).

As regards D-Ita[9], we found four examples for the *affect* sub-system, where the promotional texts mainly use the emotion of joy as an attracting factor.

> (8) **Chi, fra tanti luoghi, sceglie Gabicce Mare, secondo noi, sceglie bene**. Probabilmente qui, anche quel tal poveruomo, ammesso che ve ne sia capitato uno, si sarebbe immediatamente assuefatto all'ambiente che, **per godere in santa pace la propria vacanza**, è quanto mai tipico ed ospitale nelle sue innumerevoli pensioni attrezzatissime e nei suoi alberghi accoglienti. Qui si fanno i bagni — **e**

[8] The following translations from Italian to English were provided by the authors.

che bagni, nel limpido specchio d'acqua, non intorbidato dai canali collettori o di scarico! — e si fanno le cure del sole e le sabbiature, e ci si trastulla, e si conversa in lieta compagnia all'ombra degli ombrelloni, come altrove[10]. (*La Riviera delle Muse – Adriatico Italia* [The Coast of Muse – Italy Adriatic] [Book] - 1963, in ENIT Library).

(9) Riccione è **la più «sofisticata»**, la **più chic**, **la più «notturna»**. In certi suoi negozi, aperti anche a sera inoltrata, si vedono pellicce per signora (figuratevi, d'estate e di notte), una furberia a favore delle donne che significa, ci sembra, qualche cosa. Del resto, **Riccione è tutta per le belle signore**. A Riccione bisogna essere **eleganti, cambiar d'abito continuamente;** e la sera si va a letto di solito tardi. Centinaia di «nights», infinite occasioni di lusso, fanno di questa spiaggia una delle più ricercate dai villeggianti che vogliono riposarsi divertendosi[12]. (L'Italia n.193 [Italy] [Magazine] - 1964, in ENIT Library) [10].

(10) Cattolica, infine, a sud di Riccione, è **la più riposante, la più tranquilla,** anche se non vi mancano occasioni **curiose o stravaganti**. Chi ha bambini con se deve scegliere Cattolica. È piena di parchi e di giardini, attrezzati per far **divertire** i piccolissimi. I suoi alberghi e le sue pensioni (quanti sono? infiniti) sono spesso **defilati, appartati,** l'ideale per chi voglia soprattutto riposare. E si mangia **benissimo** (come, del resto, in tutta la Riviera), alla maniera dei romagnoli, che **son famosi nella famosa cucina italiana**. (*L'Italia n.193* [Italy] [Magazine] - 1964, in ENIT Library).

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[9] Among many places, whoever chooses Gabicce Mare, in our opinion, chooses wisely. Probably here, even that certain poor man, assuming there was one, would immediately become accustomed to the environment, which, to peacefully enjoy one's vacation in peace, is extremely typical and welcoming in its countless well-equipped guesthouses and cozy hotels. Here one goes swimming — and what swims, in the clear mirror of water, not clouded by drainage or discharge channels! — and sunbathes and gets sand treatments, and one frolics, and converses in cheerful company in the shade of umbrellas, just like elsewhere

[10] Riccione is the most "sophisticated", the most chic, the most "nightlife-oriented". In some of its shops, open even late at night, you can see fur coats for ladies (imagine, in summer and at night), a cleverness in favour of women that means something to us. Furthermore, Riccione is all for the beautiful ladies. In Riccione, one must be elegant, change clothes continuously; and usually, people go to bed late in the evening. Hundreds of "nights," endless opportunities for luxury, make this beach one of the most sought after by vacationers who want to relax while having fun.

[11] Cattolica, finally, south of Riccione, is the most restful, the most peaceful, even though there are no lack of curious or extravagant opportunities. Those who have children with them should choose Cattolica. It is full of parks and gardens, equipped to entertain the little ones. Its hotels and guesthouses (how many are there? infinite) are often secluded, secluded, ideal for those who want to rest above all. And one eats very well (as, indeed, throughout the Riviera), in the manner of the Romagnoli, who are famous in the famous

(11) Il Mare Adriatico, **calmo, con le sue grandi, spiagge sabbiose** che scendono dolcemente al mare, è lo scenario perfetto per la famiglia: i bambini possono giocare e divertirsi in tutta sicurezza. Ovunque l'offerta di strutture ricettive è **notevole**: dai resort di lusso, ai club che offrono **animazione, divertimento** ed ogni tipo di sport, agli alberghi famigliari che coniugano **comodità e calore** affacciati su **suggestive** coste, in romantici borghi di pescatori, in paesini arroccati sulle scogliere con **incantevoli** vedute panoramiche su golfi e insenature. Una vacanza per vivere **sensazioni intense e magiche**, senza dimenticare il **divertimento** per i giovani con discoteche e locali presenti in ogni riviera italiana. (Guida alle Regioni Italiane [Guide to the Italian regions] [Booklet]- n.d. - in ENIT Library).

In (8), joy is expressed simply as the pleasure of experiencing the Adriatic Coast territory, "to peacefully enjoy one's own holiday". In (9), Riccione is described as a place full of opportunities for luxury, particularly in what in Italian are called "nights", a partial borrowing of "nightclubs". The expression "who want to relax while having fun" connects the emotion of joy with the notion of rest to attract tourists, almost creating the antithetical image of fun-relax. Similarly, the same image is mentioned in (11), where an invitation to holiday on the Adriatic Coast is accompanied by the promise of experiencing intense emotions along with entertainment for young people: "A holiday to experience intense and magical sensations, without forgetting entertainment for young people with discos and clubs present in every Italian Riviera."

As for the *appreciation* sub-system, we also found that in the Italian TPMs the evaluation is enacted through superlative adjectives, as in (9) "Riccione is the most *sophisticated*, the most chic, the most *nightlife-oriented*, where beautiful ladies can buy fur coats late at night". On the other hand,

Italian cuisine.

[12] The calm Adriatic Sea, with its large sandy beaches gently sloping into the sea, is the perfect setting for families: children can play and have fun in complete safety. Everywhere the range of accommodation is remarkable: from luxury resorts to clubs offering entertainment, fun, and every kind of sport, to family-run hotels that combine comfort and warmth overlooking charming coasts, in romantic fishing villages, in villages perched on cliffs with enchanting panoramic views of bays and coves. A holiday to experience intense and magical sensations, without forgetting entertainment for young people with discos and clubs present in every Italian Riviera.

[13] Dates for the undated documents were estimated, when possible, by the research team at the University of Ferrara based on font, layout, and colouring. However, although we originally considered this example to be from the 1990s, we deemed it safer not to assign any specific date.

looking at (10), "Cattolica, finally, south of Riccione, is the most restful, the most peaceful", where "one eats very well (as, indeed, throughout the Riviera)". There are also evaluative adjectives, like in (11), where the Adriatic Sea is presented as calm, "with large sandy beaches gently sloping into the sea, is the perfect setting for families". Therefore, the Adriatic Coast is promoted as having two faces: a place to rest and relax during the day, and a world of fun at night.

6. Concluding remarks

This study aimed to provide an overview of the use of evaluative language used in print tourism promotional materials between the 1960s and the 1990s, specifically focusing on the coastal area of Emilia-Romagna and in two languages, English and Italian.

The quantitative analysis reveals a disparity in the attention given to cities along the Adriatic coast. Despite the initial economic growth experienced by Adriatic cities such as Rimini and Riccione during the 1960s, these areas were underrepresented in the corpus compared to larger cities. The analysis indicates a bias toward promoting major tourist destinations, likely due to pre-existing infrastructural connections and editorial priorities linked to strategic promotional efforts. This imbalance raises important questions about the role of institutions in supporting smaller localities with fewer resources. However, as previously argued, it is important to recognise that the need to promote lesser-known tourist destinations may have emerged later, coinciding with the establishment of the Slow City (Città Slow) movement in 1999 (Paul, 2014). This delayed response, which did not emerge until the late 1990s, suggests that alternative tourism models and less commercialised destinations were not fully incorporated into national promotional strategies during the period under investigation.

In terms of the attitude system, the absence of the judgment sub-system may indicate that the promotional focus was placed on services and the environment, rather than on ethical or moral evaluations of individuals or institutions. Conversely, the analysis of the affect and appreciation subsystems reveals that the coastal area was associated with positive emotional responses and favourable evaluations. The discursive image emerging from the texts in both languages consistently reflects two main aspects. On the one hand, there is the image of a serene destination where tourists can relax on expansive beaches of soft sand, ideal for both older individuals and families. On the other hand, there is the vibrant and dynamic

image of the Adriatic Riviera at night, where tourists enjoy themselves and let loose. This "double nature" of the coast appears to be a central theme, reflecting the evolving tourism image of the Adriatic coastline in response to the shifting demands of diverse tourist demographics. Furthermore, the analysed materials suggest that the promotional strategy was explicitly geared toward attracting the widest possible audience, consistent with the principles of mass tourism (Naumov and Green, 2016).

These preliminary results may constitute the basis for future research investigating how the patterns that emerged in our study persist or change in other periods of time or types of material selected, for instance, considering mainstream trends such as regional rebranding initiatives (Pezzi *et al.,* 2020).

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Appendix

English Corpus

1960s Tokens	1960s Types	1960s Texts	1970s Tokens	1970s Types	1970s Texts
89,135	38,383	42	697,181	110,819	9
1980s Tokens	**1980s Types**	**1980s Texts**	**1990s Tokens**	**1990s Types**	**1990s Texts**
732,271	176,929	9	222,212	327,511	12

Italian Corpus

1960s Tokens	1960s Types	1960s Texts	1970s Tokens	1970s Types	1970s Texts
184,538	35,472	38	283,877	71,974	4
1980s Tokens	**1980s Types**	**1980s Texts**	**1990s Tokens**	**1990s Types**	**1990s Texts**
138,964	40,934	4	622,411	120,906	6

Table 2: *The overview of the D-Eng and D-Ita corpora*

1960s City	Freq.	Texts	1970s City	Freq	Texts	1980s City	Freq.	Texts	1990s City	Freq.	Texts
Rome	340	28	*Rome*	118	9	*Rome*	153	3	*Rome*	507	11
Bologna	231	26	*San*	90	7	*Venice*	110	6	*Florence*	304	11
San	213	33	*Florence*	64	8	*Naples*	82	3	*Venice*	264	11
Venice	180	20	*Venice*	63	9	*Milan*	81	4	*Naples*	229	11
Florence	160	22	*Bologna*	58	5	*Florence*	81	5	*Milan*	200	11
Milan	152	19	*Naples*	53	5	*San*	63	8	*San*	165	12
Naples	151	17	*Milan*	42	7	*Genoa*	60	2	*Bologna*	154	11
Genoa	96	24	*Turin*	23	7	*Bologna*	46	7	*Turin*	117	11
Turin	78	13	*Pisa*	17	6	*Turin*	41	2	*Genoa*	117	10
Trent	50	13	*Genoa*	16	5	*Trieste*	40	4	*Bari*	95	12
Como	47	15	*Trent*	14	4	*Bari*	38	3	*Trieste*	86	10
Pisa	43	9	*Bari*	13	3	*Pisa*	27	2	*Pisa*	82	8
Brescia	42	12	*Como*	11	5	*Sorrento*	24	1	*Como*	60	11
Bari	41	13	*Trieste*	10	5	*Como*	23	2	*Sorrento*	57	7
Paris	41	21	*Ferrara*	9	3	*Brescia*	20	2	*Brescia*	54	9

Table 3: *Top 15 most frequent cities for each decade and their distribution across texts in D-Eng*

1960s City	Freq.	Texts	1970s City	Freq	Texts	1980s City	Freq.	Texts	1990s City	Freq.	Texts
Roma	221	35	*Parma*	53	2	*Roma*	388	47	*Roma*	133	4
Bologna	200	23	*Bologna*	45	2	*Bologna*	309	36	*Milano*	58	5
Ferrara	147	10	*Ravenna*	40	2	*Ravenna*	224	31	*Firenze*	57	5
Ravenna	117	18	*Rimini*	28	2	*Ferrara*	196	19	*Venezia*	46	5
Rimini	102	22	*Modena*	27	2	*Rimini*	183	33	*Romagna*	35	5
Modena	94	10	*Ferrara*	26	2	*Milano*	176	33	*Bologna*	34	5
Venezi a	93	22	*Forlì*	24	1	*Venezi a*	170	36	*Sicilia*	34	4
Milano	85	19	*Milano*	19	4	*Modena*	152	18	*Napoli*	31	4
Firenze	72	23	*Roma*	18	4	*Firenze*	147	35	*Lombardia*	30	4
Torino	41	16	*Reggio*	17	2	*Parma*	116	16	*Ravenna*	29	5
Reggio	40	11	*Venezi a*	15	4	*Forlì*	106	28	*Aosta*	27	5
Genova	40	13	*Riccione*	10	2	*Napoli*	88	22	*Palermo*	26	3
Padova	36	9	*Correggio*	8	2	*Genova*	75	19	*Perugia*	22	2
Napoli	34	15	*Faenza*	6	1	*Riccione*	62	21	*Modena*	22	4
Riccione	32	13	*Arezzo*	4	2	*Torino*	62	22	*Parma*	21	4

Table 4: *Top 15 most frequent cities for each decade and their distribution across texts in D-Ita*