



**A GENRE-BASED ANALYSIS OF TOURIST TRAVEL  
GUIDES**

**BY**

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Purposes)**

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## ABSTRACT

This is a genre-based analysis study of a move-structure of online tourist travel guides of three Asian countries: Malaysia, Thailand and the Philippines. Kathpalia's nine-move structure (1992) for advertising is adopted as a framework to analyse the selected travel guides using *Atlas ti* (a qualitative data analysis software). The selection of data is based on the latest edition of Asian online travel guides. The main purposes of this study are to analyze the move structures, their strategies and communicative purposes, identify the prevalent move(s) in the selected travel guides, and find out whether the selected travel guides have the same move structures. The findings of this study show that Malaysia Travel Guide (MTG) has eight moves, six of them are the same as Kathpalia's framework (1992) and there are two new moves. In addition, Thailand Travel Guide (TTG) has five moves, three of them are related to Kathpalia's study (1992) and the rest are new. Moreover, the Philippines Travel Guide which is entitled 'Your Guide to the Philippines' has six moves, four of them are the same as Kathpalia's and two of them are new. The prevalent moves in these three travel guides are 'Headline' and 'Appraising the Country'; whereas the peripheral moves in the selected travel guides are 'Targeting the Market, Important Contact Numbers and Websites, and Extra Information'. Interestingly, all the realized moves have different strategies in each travel guide. Finally, the results highlight the diversity of moves in the selected online travel guides which are related to the nature of the country, perception and aims of the writer.

## ملخص البحث

تقوم هذه الدراسة على تحليل نوع النصّ وذلك بتحليل البناء النصّي لثلاث من الأدلة السياحية الإلكترونية على الإنترنت، والتابعة لثلاث من الدول الآسيوية (ماليزيا، تايلند والفلبين). تمّ اختيار البيانات بناءً على آخر الإصدارات من الأدلة السياحية الآسيوية الإلكترونية، والمتوفرة على الشبكة العنكبوتية باللغة الإنجليزية. كما تتبع هذه الدراسة منهج كاثاليا (1992م) لتحليل المستندات، والنصوص الإعلانية، والمتألف من تسع أفكار أساسية لبناء النصّ الإعلاني. تتمحور الأهداف الأساسية لهذا البحث حول تحليل البيانات المختارة مسبقاً لتحديد الأفكار المستعملة في بناء النصّ، بالإضافة لتبيان منهجيتها وأهدافها. كما تسعى هذه الدراسة أيضاً إلى تحديد الأفكار الأساسية للبيانات الثلاثة المختارة، وتبيان أوجه الشبه والاختلاف فيما بينها. أظهرت النتائج وجود ثماني أفكار في دليل السياحة الماليزي، ست منها تتبع منهج كاثاليا واثنين جديدين. أما نتائج تحليل الدليل السياحي التايلندي، فقد أشارت الدراسة إلى خمس أفكار، ثلاث منها تابعة لمنهج كاثاليا واثنين جديدين. وأشارت الدراسة إلى ست أفكار في الدليل السياحي الفلبيني، أربع منها تتبع منهج كاثاليا واثنين جديدين. والجدير بالذكر أن الأفكار المشتركة الأساسية المحددة في الأدلة الثلاثة عددها خمس، فكرتان شائعتان وهما: "العنوان" و "تقييم البلد"، بينما الثلاث الأخرى تعتبر أفكاراً اختيارية، أو سطحية، وهي كالآتي: "استهداف المستهلك، ذكر أرقام الاتصال والمواقع الإلكترونية الضرورية، والمعلومات الإضافية". أشارت الدراسة إلى تنوع الأفكار ومنهجية تقديمها في الأدلة السياحية بناءً على أهداف الكاتب ورؤيته من جهة ووفقاً لطبيعة البلد من جهة أخرى.

## APPROVAL PAGE

I certify that I have supervised and read this study and that in my opinion, it conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a dissertation for the degree of Master of Arts (Teaching English for Specific Purposes).

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## DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this dissertation is the result of my own investigations, except where otherwise stated. I also declare that it has not been previously or concurrently submitted as a whole for any other degrees at IIUM or other institutions.

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# **CHAPTER ONE**

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter presents the background of the study, the problem statement, research objectives and questions, scope of the study, significance of the study, and limitation of the study.

### **1.2 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY**

The need of communication among human beings was the main cause for the appearance of languages. The art of communication was developed since the creation of humankind by Allah (SWT). There are many means of communication in our real life situations such as drawing, dancing, music, signs and languages. Language is a kind of Allah's mercy to human beings (Holy Qur'an, 55: 4). It is the medium of communication and expressions. Language use has two media or forms: spoken and written forms. Spoken language is used in ordinary speeches, dialogues, presentations, etc. Spoken language is considered as the primary form of language while written language is a symbolic or graphic representation of the spoken one; it is the secondary form of language. Variation in languages come as a sign to the power and might of Allah (SWT) as stated in the Qur'an (30: 22). Nowadays, people usually use English as an international language to communicate with other people who use different languages. It is considered as the language of knowledge, science, commerce, technology and modernism as general and has become a global language (Crystal, 2003).

The use of English in commerce, especially in tourism which has become the biggest industry in the world (Öztürk, 2014), represents one example of the significant role of language. Undoubtedly, economy is an important factor worldwide since it is one of the essential reasons for developing and improving countries. Many countries usually face economic crisis and, consequently, their governments start looking for ways to tackle these catastrophes by procedures or policies. Moreover, they usually try to find other resources to increase the national incomes. Recently, tourism, in many countries, such as Malaysia, has been a significant industry since it brings huge revenues to both residents and governments, and leads to the creation of many kinds of job opportunities (Habil, Hadina, & Nasir, 2008). To develop and improve the industry of tourism, there is a need to promote the tourist attractions to reach a huge number of people around the world. One of the ways to achieve this aim is that tourism industries have started to produce their promotional documents and websites using English.

Tourism is an important industry, hence it should be advertised and sold. Dann (1996) stated that without discourse of publicity, there would be very little tourism at all. The importance of discourse in promoting tourism shows the important role of language. English language, which is considered as an international language and lingua franca, is the most appropriate language for promotions. The importance of English language highlights the importance of teaching and learning it. Hence, a new approach in teaching English has appeared as a result of the variety of linguistic world needs, which is Teaching English for Specific Purposes (TESP). It emerged in the 1960s as a result of the demands of a brave world, a revolution in linguistics and focus on the learner (Hutchinson and Waters, 1987, pp. 6-8). ESP fulfils learners' and industries' linguistic needs where the focus is on the learner and the special language used in

special cases; so it could be considered as a tool to ease jobs. The interest of the present study is to look into the genre analysis of tourism materials.

The language of tourism is filled with elements of promotion and persuasion. The most appropriate and effective tools for promotional strategies to attract domestic and foreign travellers are handbooks, internet advertising, TV, brochures, newspapers various forms of marketing communication (Salehi and Farahbakhsh, 2014). These tools are employed by tourism organizations to transmit important information to tourists. For example, Malaysia Tourism Promotion Board (MTPB) produces a total of 48 e-tourist brochures and one travel guide. Its travel guide is presented in different languages on their official website (<http://www.malaysia.travel/en/my/resources/e-brochures>). The MTPB aims to distribute accurate, reliable and important information, influence and arouse interest, create a favourable image and stimulate tourists' desire for traveling

### **1.3 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

English language has become an international language of trade and advertisement industry and this is especially significant for tourism. Hence, it becomes increasingly essential for those working and studying in tourism to be able to meet the linguistic needs of this industry. They must have the competence in the four language skills (Bobanovic, 2011; Iborra and Garrido, 2001). For instance, writing for tourism would require the person to use explicit vocabulary and language styles to promote the product.

Moreover, Henry and Roseberry (2001) stated: "As tourism has expanded in recent years, there has developed an ever growing need for writers of effective promotional materials." The language of the advertisement should be effective and persuasive to fulfil the aims of tourism industries (Dann, 1996). However, writing in a



second language can be an uphill task for second language learners (Jun, 2008) and especially so for specific purposes like English for tourism. Non-native speakers of English require not only an excellent knowledge of English such as grammar and vocabulary but also a special training on how to write persuasively and effectively for specific purposes.

In teaching English for Tourism, which comes under English for Specific Purposes (ESP), genre analysis is considered as an important approach to analyse texts (Dudley-Evans, 1994). Many genre studies have looked into analysing tourism advertising materials such as tourist brochures (Osman, 2013; Öztürk, 2014; Luo and Huang, 2015) and leaflets (Iborra and Garrido, 2001). Interestingly, the majority of these studies have focused only on printed promotional materials.

On the other hand, there are not many studies on online travel guides per se. Consequently, this study on online Travel Guides text is established on the basis of English for Special Purposes (ESP) theory from the perspective of genre analysis. It includes the study of authentic texts which could be useful in giving a better understanding of the nature of language used in this specific genre which could be applied to design English courses and materials for tourism, especially in writing travel guides. In this study, genre analysis helps to know the purpose, the organization, and the strategies of the text. The next section explains the objectives of the study.

#### **1.4 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES**

This research aims to:

1. Analyze the move structure, their strategies and communicative purposes in the selected travel guides.
2. Find out the prevalent move/s in the selected travel guides.

3. Find out whether the selected travel guides have the same move structure.

### **1.5 RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

1. What are the move structure, their strategies and communicative purposes in the selected travel guides?
2. What are the prevalent move/s in the selected travel guides?
3. To what extent are the move patterns different in the three travel guides?

### **1.6 SCOPE OF THE STUDY**

This study focuses on the analysis of moves, communicative purposes and their strategies, in electronic travel guides of three countries, namely, Malaysia, the Philippines and Thailand. The data of this study will be limited to these three English language travel guides selected from Asian countries. All of them are the latest version of e-travel guide that are available online.

### **1.7 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

This study will be beneficial as follows:

1. The findings on text organization and communicative purpose can be applied as a model for the writers of the genre (e.g. brochure writers, or tourism staffs, tourism students) to create effective promotional texts.
2. The findings will benefit teachers and learners of the genre, especially to the teaching and learning of English for tourism. Teachers can utilize the findings as guidelines for teaching writing tourist text. These guidelines will be useful in preparing teaching materials and designing English for tourism courses. In addition, the students taking a writing course on the English for

tourism will gain useful information and ideas to improve their writing skills and to create effective tourist advertisements.

3. This study will be useful for further studies concerned with other genres or other aspects of genre analysis.
4. The study opens the door to compare promotional materials produced by other countries.

### **1.8 LIMITATION OF THE STUDY**

This study attempts to analyse the move structures in three different Asian countries' travel guides. It focuses on Malaysia, Thailand, and Philippine. The used framework is limited to Kathpalia (1992) which has approved its applicability in many studies such as Zanariah (2003), Howe (1995), and Choo (1998).

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter presents a review of the literature and is divided into six sections discussing the following topics: the concept of genre theory, genre analysis and ESP, Travel Guide in Tourism (definitions and characteristics), history of travel guides, travel guide as a promotional genre and the related research in promotional materials.

#### **2.2 GENRE THEORY**

The lexical meaning of ‘genre’, according to Cambridge Advanced Learner’s Dictionary online, is “A style, especially in the arts, that involves a particular set of characteristics.”

On the other hand, Paltridge (1997) mentioned that there are three approaches of genre analysis in the field of applied linguistics which are systematic functional linguists, English for specific purposes (ESP) which draws from the work of Swales (1981,1990) and others, and written communication.

Swales (1990) described genre as “a class of communicative events, the members of which share some set of communicative purposes. These purposes are recognized by the expert members of the discourse community, and thereby constitute the rationale for the genre. This rationale shapes the schematic structure of the discourse and influences and constrains choice of content and style.” (p. 58). So genre can be identified by the communicative purpose which is defined by Swales (1990) as “both a privileged criterion and one that operates to keep the scope of a genre as here conceived narrowly focused on comparable rhetorical action.” (p. 58). Moreover, Dudley-Evans

(1994) defined communicative purpose as “the defining feature by which a genre such as the academic article is distinguished from other genres and by which the consideration of genre is distinguished from the consideration of register.” (p. 219). Consequently, it can be said that genre analysis is mainly concerned with the study of language in specific context or situation. In short, genre analysis is the study of the language use within a certain setting to achieve the communicative goal which distinguishes one genre from another.

### **2.3 GENRE ANALYSIS AND ESP**

Dudley-Evans (1994) stated that genre analysis is the approach that becomes important to text analysis especially when the analysis is related to ESP field. Since ESP is interested with pedagogical goals, so it could make benefits of genre analysis where the focus is on certain keys like presentation style of content, the order of presentation of that content and all the numerous rhetorical factors that affect the conceivability for readers of the argument presented. He said, “genre analysis is not always concerned with the analysis of ‘moves’; it also embraces, for example, studies of tense usage, lexical frequency and classification of reporting verbs used in academic text. These analyses, when placed within the context of the study of writers’ communicative purpose and rhetorical strategies, play an important role in the higher-level analysis of the conventions of genres.” (p. 220). So, genre analysis targets not only to identify the moves and construction strategies of a genre, the allowable order of the moves but also to figure out the key linguistic features. This reveals that genre analysis is mostly concerned with the analysis of moves and the most common linguistic features associated with the moves.

Move analysis aims to analyze all the text to get its overall structure where each move serves a particular intention of the general purposes of the genre. Swales (1990) analyzed the introductions of the research article and he investigated the rhetorical structure by offering the original model of an identification of moves and steps called “Create-A-Research-Space (CARS)” model. His model is shown in Figure 2.1 below:

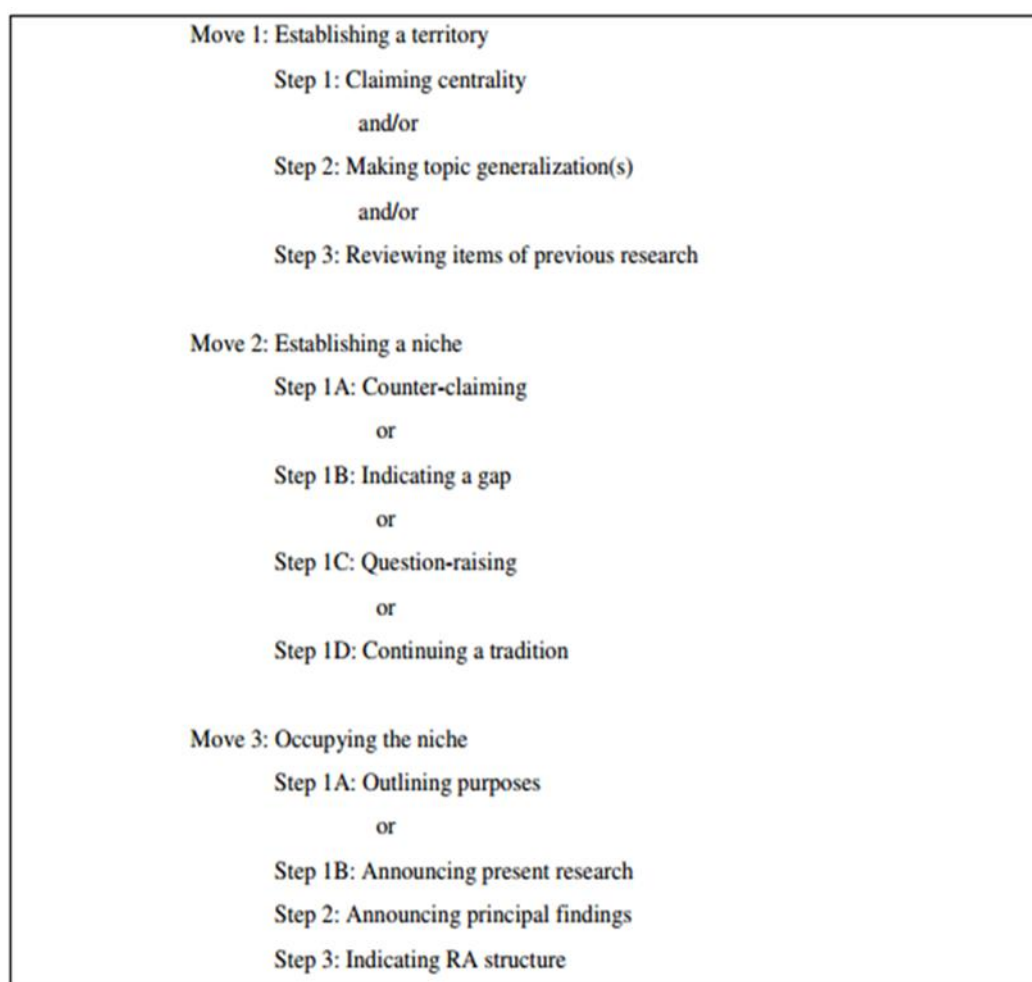


Figure 2.1: A CARS Model for Research Article Introductions, Swales (1990, p.141)

While this model can be useful in teaching research writing in English and English for Academic Purposes (EAP), it cannot be used in other genre because each genre has its specific moves to achieve its communicative purposes and suit its

discourse community. But the idea that genres can be structured into moves and steps that incorporate communicative intentions can still be applied to other genres.

Genre analysis has been applied to other genres by other scholars; the best-known analyst is Bhatia (1993) who used this approach on other non-academic text genres. He applied it to different communicative events i.e. in the business world where he studied two types of business letters which he called 'promotional genre': the sales promotion letters and the job application letters. Both of them are related to the same genre and serve similar communicative purposes that could be summarized as to persuade customers to take an action and reflect this in their move structure. He mentioned that promotional genres include business letters, advertisements, and brochures since all of them are similar in communicative purposes.

Moreover, Dudley-Evans (1998) compared the influence of discourse analysis and genre analysis on ESP research. He differentiated between the two of them in definitions and results. He stated that discourse analysis is "any study of language or, more specifically, text at a level above that of the sentence" (p. 87). So, discourse studies may involve the study of cohesive links between sentences, of paragraph structure, or the structure of the discourse. He stated that the result of discourse analysis shows how texts work while the aim of genre analysis is "on the regularities of structure that distinguish one type of text from another" (p. 87) in which the results of genre analysis will be focused on the differences between text types (genres). Consequently, he concluded that since genre analysis focuses on the differences between the features of different genres so it is useful to study both written and spoken texts in all area of ESP. Similarly, Bhatia (1993) in her genre analysis study on promotional letters mentioned that promotional genres share not only rhetorical moves but also share certain linguistic features. A literature on genre analysis and tourism will be explored

in section 2.5. The written aspect of advertising language will be the focus of the present study.

#### **2.4 THE TRAVEL GUIDE IN TOURISM (DEFINITIONS AND CHARACTERISTICS)**

Holovach (2016) cited many definitions of a travel guide according to many scholars. He cited Kiseleva et al. (2008; cited in Holovach, 2011, p.12)'s definition of the travel guide as "a verbal genre with pragmatics and communicative strategies determined by the author/compiler, which includes advertising as well as ideological discourse and clearly models the perception of the described space". Specific language and communicative acts, such as descriptive and persuasive language, are considered as some features of travel guides which are used by the writer to advertise attractions. The role of these features highlight the importance of modelling the mind of the readers and changing them from readers to actual clients.

Moreover, he referred to the definition by Filatova (2012; cited in Holovach, 2011, p.12) "the travel guide as an essential source of information about natural, economic, cultural and household peculiarities of the country enabling communication between the representatives of various countries in the cultural space". This definition indicates extra features of the travel guide as reference for economical, historical, cultural, natural information about the attraction.

To sum up, it can be said that the travel guide is an instrument of advertisement in the tourism industry which uses specific language and communicative acts to provide readers with information about certain attractions in order to persuade, attract and make the readers to be real clients.