

# Original Research

## The tourist booklet as a genre of professional discourse: Interaction with the customer

by Tatiana V. Dubrovskaya

**Tatiana V. Dubrovskaya** Ural Federal University, Russia [gynergy74@gmail.com](mailto:gynergy74@gmail.com)

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*This paper discusses touristic communication practices, specifically the tourist booklets as a genre of professional discourse. Using the framework that is informed by discourse analysis, multimodal discourse analysis, genre studies and professional discourse studies, the author views a tourist booklet as a complex multimodal genre and sets the goal to reveal how booklets construct interaction between professional agents and non-professional customers. Using a set of tourist (predominantly English language) booklets collected in 2005-2019 around the world, the author discovers professional agents seeking to strike a balance between their image as experts in tourism and the need to construct rapport with the customers. These goals are achieved through the employment of various strategies, which are implemented through a range of linguistic and visual techniques. The validity of the professional image relies on such discursive mechanisms as providing expert knowledge on the touristic objects and services, explicit indications of expertise, presentations of professional agents as law-abiding and formally recognised businesses, and references to socially important values. The meanings evoked by the linguistic resources are reinforced visually. To mitigate the asymmetry of statuses, rapport with the customers is developed by means of offering biographies and interviews with the company representatives, the demonstration of attention to the customer, the construction of common emotional space, and the conversational style strategy. The customer is also involved in cognitively entertaining or challenging activities. Thus, the study shows that professional-to-layperson communication is a multi-faceted phenomenon, whose complexity is predetermined by the combination of various intentions and multimodal resources that help implement these intentions discursively.*

**KEYWORDS:** tourist booklet, genre, professional discourse, multimodal, strategy, interaction



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### 1. INTRODUCTION

Although a steady growth in tourism witnessed in recent decades has stalled due to the unprecedented situation of the Covid-19 outbreak, the sphere remains afloat and is looking for new

strategies and solutions to overcome the crisis. According to the report prepared by the European Commission's science and knowledge service, 'the solution is likely to be local' and 'changing consumer preferences hold opportunities for more di-

*versified and sustainable forms of tourism*' (Marquez Santos et al., 2020, p. 7). Apparently, behavioural changes and changes in consumer preferences will require extensive communicational alterations. The tourism industry will have to adapt its communicative practices to respond to newly emerged challenges, on the one hand, and to create new tourism practices, on the other.

Tourism communication practices are at the centre of the present study. Although the research is based on pre-pandemic data, its results can shed light on how professionals in the sphere achieve their goals through the use of varied semiotic resources and what dominant interactional tendencies can be revealed. I seek to answer the following research questions.

1. What are the semiotic features of a tourist booklet as a multimodal phenomenon?

2. How do professional agents demonstrate authority and expertise to the customer? What linguistic and visual resources are employed strategically?

3. What strategies are used by professionals to mitigate the asymmetry of the roles and develop rapport with the customer?

4. What multimodal techniques enhance the interaction between the professional and the customer?

## 2. MATERIAL AND METHODS

For the present study I use a collection of tourist booklets collected by me in 2005-2019 in a number of countries of the world, including Germany, Poland, Australia, the UK, Romania, Hungary, Italy and Russia. The total number of booklets analysed amounts to 80.

Because the booklets have different volumes, which vary from only a few pages to over a hundred pages, and include a different number of illustrations, it would be extremely difficult to perform any calculations of the exact word count in the corpus explored. However, I focus on qualitative analysis, rather than quantitative or statistical analysis, and the indicated number of booklets, which belong to eight cultures, should guarantee the validity of the results.

The majority of booklets are in the English language. There are also bilingual booklets (English-German, Russian-English), and some are written in national languages (Polish, Russian). In the paper I provide examples predominantly in English and quote them in their original wording, keeping the spelling, punctuation, bold type and block letters. Bold type added by me is commented on in all cases.

Methodologically, I draw on discourse analysis in a wide understanding of the term. Discourse analysis views texts as elements of social events and social life. Fairclough (2004, p. 3) indicates that *'text analysis is an essential part of discourse analysis, but discourse analysis is not merely the linguistic analysis of texts'*. Therefore, apart from linguistic analysis proper, the analytical procedure embraces the consideration of the pragmatic context, including the social agents and their explicit and hidden goals and strategies. After Reisigl and Wodak (2009, p. 94), we take strategy to be *'a more or less intentional plan of practices (including discursive practices) adopted to achieve a particular social, political, psychological or linguistic goal'*.

Along with the analysis of rhetorical techniques (types of descriptions, strategies) and linguistic means (choice of lexical units, grammar and sentence structures), I resort to multimodal analysis. The principle of multimodal analysis is explained by O'Halloran (2004, p. 1): *'In addition to linguistic choices and their typographical instantiation on the printed page, multimodal analysis takes into account the functions and meaning of the visual images, together with the meaning arising from the integrated use of the two semiotic resources'*. Arguing in favour of multimodal discourse analysis, O'Halloran (2004, p. 1) writes: *'To date, the majority of research endeavours in linguistics have tended to concentrate solely on language while ignoring, or at least downplaying, the contributions of other meaning-making resources. This has resulted in rather an impoverished view of functions and meaning of discourse'*. Unfortunately, it is not always possible to offer visuals due to copyright restrictions, and in most instances of multimodal

analysis I resort to brief descriptions of the pictures. With this paper, I aspire to contribute to the field of professional discourse studies through the exploration of tourist booklets as a complex multimodal genre, in which language and visuals constitute a unity.

### 3. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

The body of literature that is relevant to the present study is vast. As Candlin (2009, p. 7) claims in the preface to a volume on professional communication, *'the study of language in the context of professional communication – for example in the domains and fields of law, education, business, healthcare, social welfare, bureaucratic processes, media – from the perspective of language and communication (in the broad sense of discourse) has a long-standing history, beginning with the mid nineteen seventies and early nineteen eighties'*. That is why I will focus on the three major categories of papers covering the following subjects: professional discourse/communication, genre theory and the study of tourist discourse. In this section, I make an attempt to briefly outline some seminal works in these fields and isolate the basic assumptions that I draw on in my study.

In what follows, I discuss tourist booklets as texts of professional discourse. Therefore, it is expedient to first outline how 'professional discourse' is construed in modern linguistic scholarship. Gunnarsson (2009, p. 5) defines professional discourse as *'text and talk – and the intertwining of these modalities – in professional contexts and for professional purposes'*. Depending on the agents involved in communication, the scholar differentiates three types of texts produced: *'Professional discourse includes written texts produced by professionals and intended for other professionals with the same or different expertise, for semi-professionals, i.e. learners, or for non-professionals, i.e. lay people. It also means that it includes talk involving at least one professional'* (Gunnarsson, 2009, p. 5). In their discussion of professional communication, Scollon and Scollon (2005, p. 3) approach the concept through the definition of 'professional communicators', who they take to be

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*'anyone for whom communication is a major aspect of his or her work'*. Although they do not state explicitly whether professional communication is performed in a closed community of professionals only or can involve non-professionals as well, the list of professional communicators offered includes positions in business such as a sales executive, a tour guide and a translator. From this it can be inferred that a non-professional actor may be a partner of a professional communicator. In this paper we adopt a wide approach to professional communication taking it to embrace contacts between professionals and non-professionals, and genres produced by professionals and targeted at laypeople, the tourist booklet being an example of such genre.

Gunnarsson (2009) identifies a set of features of professional discourse, which includes the expert character, goal-orientation typical of a specific professional environment, situatedness, strongly conventionalised forms and established patterns, a leading role in creating and recreating social groups and structures, its dependence on various societal framework systems, as well as dynamic changes in the language and discourse that reflect social transformations (Gunnarsson, 2009, p. 5-11). As can be seen, the scholar focuses on relevant pragmatic features while also pointing to the linguistic side of the phenomenon. In this paper, the discussion of the pragmatic characteristics is intertwined with the analysis of linguistic and multimodal aspects of the genre.

In linguistic scholarship professional communication is often viewed in terms of genre. Scollon and Scollon (2005, p. 35) define genre as *'any speech event, whether it is spoken or in writing,*

which has fairly predictable sets of speech acts, participants, topics, settings, or other regularly occurring and conventional forms'. Conventions are seen as a basis for genre building and professional communication in general. Bhatia (2010, p. 33) offers a list of factors that contribute to the construction of professional artefacts: *'the genre in question, the understanding of the professional practice in which the genre is embedded, and the culture of the profession, discipline, or institution, which constrains the use of textual resources for a particular discursive practice'*. In other words, genres of professional communication are context-dependent and, in turn, predetermine the use of specific rhetorical and lexical-grammatical means. As will be shown, the tourist booklet as a whole represents a complex multimodal genre with a conventional structure, typical strategies and regular linguistic and multimodal resources.

The study of tourism discourse has gained popularity in the recent decades, and the linguistic and sociological scholarship on the topic reflects the emergence of new forms of tourism, such as ecotourism (Mühlhäusler & Peace, 2001; Spinzi, 2013), medical tourism (Mainil et al., 2011), food tourism (De Jong & Varley, 2017), music tourism (D'Andrea, 2013), etc. Increasingly, discourses of diverse types of tourism are viewed in terms of power relations and social construction, and take theoretical perspectives from leading power theorists such as Foucault (Church & Coles, 2009). Peace (2005) discusses the myth of ecotourism to explicate the contradictions between ideological claims on sustainability and actual ecotourism practices that lead to a significant ecological footprint. The dramatic rip that divides discourses and real ecotourism practices is pointed out by Mühlhäusler and Peace (2001), who refer to semantic changes in discourse that help to disguise consumerist practices: *'Over the years the prefix eco- has experienced severe semantic bleaching. Rather than referring to functional interrelationships between the inhabitants of an ecology, it has come to mean something like 'having to do with nature'* (Mühlhäusler & Peace, 2001, p. 378). Deconstruction of the classed dimensions of tourism

policy becomes the research objective in De Jong and Varley (2017), where the authors reveal *'the ways Scotland's tourist policy landscape privileges the cultural symbols of the middle class, whilst marginalising particular foods positioned as working class, through the promotion of Scottish food'* (De Jong & Varley, 2017, p. 220). Medical tourism and its discursive practices are also discussed in marketing terms and as a locus where ethical voices surrender to the market logic (Mainil et al., 2011).

I should also point to the scholarly interest towards the genres of tourist discourse, specifically guidebooks (Metro-Roland, 2011), travel guides (Holovach, 2016; Olszańska & Olszański, 2004), tourism brochures (Luo & Huang, 2015) and tourist website texts (Abramova, 2020; Manca, 2013). The authors focus on various aspects of tourist discourse as a multi-faceted phenomenon.

Holovach (2016, p. 14) is concerned with how culturally relevant information is transferred from one culture to another through travel guides and claims that *'the comparison and contrast of 'home' and 'foreign' is one of the organising principles'*. The paper, however, has a purely speculative character and is based on reviewing others' contributions to the field, rather than original data analysis. Abramova (2020) also opts for a cross-cultural approach to tourism discourse, but performs it through considering lexical units, in particular Gaelic foreign elements and their function in English language texts from Scottish tourist websites. Manca (2013) performs a contrastive analysis of Italian and British tourist websites with the aim to discover how references to the five senses are used by farmhouse, hotel and campsite owners to promote the holiday they offer. The study convincingly demonstrates cross-cultural differences in the marketing strategies employed in the two countries.

While digital genres such as tourist websites are attracting more and more attention (Zuliani, 2013), traditional brochures and guidebooks still remain the objects of scrutiny. Drawing on Bhatia's (2010) theoretical framework, Luo and Huang (2015) develop a specific generic structure for tourism



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brochures and show how moves and strategies implement the communicative purpose of shaping destination image. Guidebooks are taken in a wider framework of semiotic approach to urban studies by Metro-Roland (2011, p. 3), who views them as instruments of meaning-making and *'understanding the way in which meaning is educed from the built environment'*.

While drawing on previous studies on professional communication, genres and tourist discourse, I choose to look at tourist booklets from a different angle. I am particularly interested to explore how this genre conceptualises interaction between professional actors and the customer, and what discursive mechanisms and semiotic resources are used by the professional actors to construct their status as experts and to involve laypersons in touristic activities.

## 4. STUDY AND RESULTS

### 4.1. Booklet: general characteristics

The tourist booklet can be viewed as both a material object and a type of multimodal text that has specific communicative goals achieved through an array of verbal and multimodal resources. As a material object, a booklet receives the following definition: *'a very short book that usually contains information on one particular subject'* (Longman Dictionary, 2006, p. 161). This very brief definition can be complemented with a few more details, based on my data observations. The most common size of the booklet is one-third of a standard A4 page, which is predetermined in terms

of its utilitarian purpose: it is the right size to hold in hands, consult or put in a handbag or pocket, especially while travelling or being on tour. Depending on the amount of information provided, the booklet contains from only a few to over a hundred pages.

However, irrespective of the size, booklets are often published on high-quality glossy paper, which guarantees their attractiveness as well as durability. Tourist booklets are always polychromatic and accommodate a lot of visuals, including pictures, photos, schemes, maps, symbols, logos, etc. The combination of verbal and visual components constitutes their essential feature. Paper embossing on the cover, which appeals to the tactile perception, can add to the non-verbal side of the object.

Booklets also possess certain spacial semiotics, since they can be found in some traditional loci: information desks at airports, hotel receptions, tourist information points, travel agencies, booking offices in theatres and museums, etc. These loci as well as the accessibility of booklets signal to a potential user that they are distributed free of charge. Altogether, the aforementioned features provide for the recognisability of the booklet as a physical item that contains information for the target consumer of a specific touristic product.

At the same time, the tourist booklet as a whole represents a conventional type of a multimodal text, which has a specific communicative goal (or a set of goals) as well as regular structural characteristics, contents and stylistic qualities. Thus, the tourist booklet should be viewed as a genre within touristic social practices.

Defining the category 'social practice', Fairclough (2004, p. 25) offers the following explanation: *'Social practices can be seen as articulations of different types of social element which are associated with particular areas of social life <...> The important point about social practices <...> is that they articulate discourse (hence language) together with other non-discoursal social elements'*. Social elements and language are interrelated: *'Social relations are partly discoursal in nature, discourse is partly social relations'* (Fairclough, 2004, p. 25).

Because the general aim of the booklet consists in promoting and – ultimately – selling some touristic products (city tours, hotels, museums, theatres, concerts, restaurants, various leisure activities, etc.), I define it as a genre of advertising discourse. Thus, there is a professional agent on one side of the interaction, who acts as an addresser, and a layperson on the other side, who acts as a potential addressee. In that, the touristic booklet as a genre enacts social agents, professional and non-professional, and relations between them through various semiotic resources.

I assume that Goffman's (1981) concept of participation framework can be mapped on to the genre of booklet. The three roles of the speaker distinguished by Goffman (1981) include: the principal, i.e. 'someone whose position is established by the words that are spoken, someone whose beliefs have been told'; the author, i.e. 'someone who has selected the sentiments that are being expressed and the words in which they are encoded'; and the animator, i.e. 'an individual active in the role of utterance production' (Goffman, 1981, p. 144). If applied to the tourist booklet, this framework helps us recognise that tourism companies, bodies and organisations as well as local authorities play the role of 'the principal'. This implies that they are 'stakeholders', who promote their interests, which are not necessarily purely financial. For instance, local authorities might aspire to develop the area and improve its image nationally or internationally. The actual 'authors' of booklets are not known; they are invisible to the general public, and this fact is not really important to the customer. Finally, in this participation framework the booklet performs the function of the animator in that it is instrumental in conveying views of the principals, who, in turn, resort to the services of invisible authors. These three roles merge together to form a collective professional agent. Therefore, I will use the terms 'the professionals' and 'the authors' indiscriminately throughout the paper, meaning that the actual authors of the texts write on behalf of tourism companies and authorities. One of the linguistic signs of this merger is the use of the first-person pronouns in the texts.

#### 4.2. Constructing the status of experts

As has been pointed out earlier, the tourist booklet presents a type of professional text that is conveyed from a professional to a lay person. In this communicational configuration the status of an expert predetermines the asymmetry of relations, which is made manifest through language and other semiotic resources. The study reveals a few discursive mechanisms involved in the construction of expertise. A very popular way to claim the status of professionals is realised in the explicit indications of expertise through the lexemes 'experience', 'experienced' and 'professional' (bold type mine):

(1) *WA's premier ballooning company invites you to experience breathtaking scenery above the picturesque Avon Valley **in our safe and experienced hands*** (Eyezone Consolidated Media, 2012).

(2) ***The experienced** staff can arrange for any type of dive* (Countrywide Publications, 2012).

(3) *Step inside and do time with Fremantle Prison's **experiences guides*** (Countrywide Publications, 2012).

(4) *You will receive personal training by **experienced** competition shooters in a **safe enclosed indoor venue*** (Eyezone Consolidated Media, 2012).

As can be seen from the examples quoted, the issue of safety also comes to the fore when it comes to the proofs of professionalism (*safe hands, a safe venue*). It should be added here that the issue of safety may acquire even greater value in the post-pandemic world, while at the same time shifting the focus of the issue to protection from potential epidemic threats.

Another aspect that might be pointed out by tourist professionals as validating their expertise is adherence to the law. In such contexts, guides are characterised as 'licensed', and hotels refer to their formal recognition by referring to the certificates granted:

(5) *The VENETS hotel gained recognition for a high level of service quality. The confirmations are grateful responses of our guests and the certificate of 'Three-star qualification', the certificate of 'Business and Conference Hotel' and the certificate 'China Friendly'* (The 'Venets' Hotel, 2019).

A successful history of work also contributes to the positive image of the professional actor:

(6) *29 years operations, over 30,000 happy customers, professional and award-winning team* (Eyezone Consolidated Media, 2012).

By making all these claims and promises, tour organisers commit themselves before both a potential customer and the law. Taking responsibility for customers, the activities and their consequences should be viewed as a sign of a professional status. Its importance can be reinforced visually, with a photo portrait of a local government official within the booklet, thus giving validity to all the information inside it. The official status of the person is made manifest in their formal look and clothing, as is the case of the photo of Dr Kim Hames, Minister for tourism of Western Australia (Eyezone Consolidated Media, 2012).

Apart from this, the booklets offer a lot of factual information, thus representing the professional agents as knowledgeable and well-informed in the sphere. For instance, the promotion of city tours always contains the references to historical periods, events and prominent people participating in them (bold type original):

(7) *Our No.1 tour shows you **All the Main Sites** (and the hidden ones others pass by!). Berlin through the ages – from its humble beginnings as a Slavic fishing village, to the age of the **Teutonic Knights**, through the Bismarck era, and onto the tumultuous events of the 20th century – the **Nazi period** and the **Cold War*** (Insider Tour, 2017).

Interestingly, the authors of the text highlight specific words and word combinations for emphatic purposes, and, in this way, they manage both the selection of important facts and the perception of the consumer. Phrases in bold type attract more attention, while those in simple fonts are viewed as less essential, and this information might be overlooked.

The authors understand that tourists are often in a hurry, trying to absorb information about competing tourist attractions and make decisions about which to visit. Under such circumstances, words in bold facilitate 'skim reading' and manage the customer's choice.

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Another way to demonstrate expertise and construct the asymmetry of relations concerns the representations of promoted products. For instance, general characteristics of architectural structures normally include the date and circumstances of construction, the size of the building, its historical background and current location, as in the following example (the spelling mistake *it's* comes from the original version):

(8) *To the right, there is a baroque Kamienica pod Gwiazdą dating from the end of 17th century and believed to be one of the most beautiful tenement houses in Toruń. It's history begins in the Middle Ages when it belonged to the tutor of the king Kazimierz Jagiellonczyk's sons* (Idea Studio, 2010).

However, a typical pattern for the information presentation is not prescriptive, and the authors of texts exercise their privilege to select facts for the presentation, adding value to some of them and revaluing or ignoring others. A German booklet entitled *Let's go up!*, which provides information on the Berlin TV Tower (Berliner Fernsehturm), opens with a general characteristic of the building and the entertaining opportunities it has to offer:

(9) *Towering 368m above Berlin, the TV Tower dominates the city's skyline like no other building. In just 40 seconds, the two high-speed lifts will whisk you 203 metres above the city to the Observation Deck and Berlin's highest bar. Another four metres up at 207m is Germany's highest restaurant. The Berlin TV Tower – a must-see for visitors to Berlin. Let's go up!* (Berliner Fernsehturm, 2017).

The linguistic description of the tower constructs an attractive object through both veritable details related to sizes, distances, quantities and time (368m, 40 seconds, two lifts, 203 metres, four metres, 207m), and persuasive rhetoric that contributes to the image of an impressive structure. The latter receives expression in the lexis of superiority (*dominates, like no other, high-speed*), the superlative adjectives (*highest* used twice), the lexeme *a must-see* with the meaning of obligation, and the imperative *Let's go up!* used as an invitation. Because a booklet is an inherently multimodal genre, the text in example (9) constitutes a multimodal complex with the picture placed on a neighbouring page. The picture, in its turn, is a combination of a photo and graphic elements: the photo shows the Berlin TV Tower beautifully lit with electric lights against the background of the Berlin view at night. The graphic elements annotating the photo indicate schematically the facts mentioned in the written text. Thus, a strong connection is established between the written text and the picture, which helps both manifest the expert knowledge and perform the function of persuasion.

What should be noted, however, is that the description of the Berlin TV Tower offered in the booklet omits the story of its construction. No information is furnished on the date when the building was erected, or the people involved in this architectural project. The tower dates from the GDR (German Democratic Republic) times, as it started functioning in 1969 as a utilitarian edifice, but also as a symbol of a newly formed state – the GDR, established after WW2 in the Soviet zone of influence in Europe: *'It served as a symbol of communist power and remains a remarkable landmark of the now reunited city <...> The head of the East German state, Walter Ulbricht, inaugurated the building to mark the 20th anniversary of the foundation of the GDR, on October 3, 1969. The structure served as a demonstration of the power of the communist state. The tower was indeed a masterpiece of engineering – even West German experts were ready to admit that'* (Dege, 2019). Omission of these basic historical facts in the booklet is ap-

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parently strategic and rooted in the authors' aspiration to disconnect the tower from its past, and present it as belonging to the reunited Berlin. From this example, it can be inferred that facts stated in booklets go through a selection process that is based on the authors' discretion and strategic goals.

Indications of power, as it is practised in professional discourse, also include evaluative comments targeted at both the touristic objects promoted and historical figures referred to. Such comments are not necessarily shaped as assertives; more commonly, they are part of a syntactic presupposition. Let's consider the following example:

(10) *We will show you where Marx and Engels, Einstein, J.F.K., Gorbachev and Reagan, all stood in their efforts to change the world from this city* (Insider Tour, 2017).

The main clause of the sentence presents a promise, a commissive speech act (*we will show*). Yet, the presupposition for the claim includes the authors' acknowledgement of the fact that all the people on the list made efforts to change the world and did that in Berlin. The readers are expected to have certain background knowledge in order to understand why Marx and Engels are coupled as well as Gorbachev and Reagan, and who the abbreviation J.F.K. refers to.

#### 4.3. Constructing rapport with the customer

While maintaining their professional status is essential for both touristic businesses and local councils, it is equally important to establish a good rapport with a customer. The distance between an



expert and a layperson, although traceable and visible, should not discourage laypersons from using the promoted services. As a result, a whole array of strategies is used to develop rapport between professionals and customers.

1. One of the strategies consists in telling personal stories and providing personal information about those who represent the touristic business. I suggest calling this strategy 'personalisation'. German booklets introduce their guides in a very in-

formal manner, telling their names and personal life stories, as well as showing their photos. Altogether, such introductions give the impression of personal acquaintance with these people even before meeting them. Intriguing life stories of the guides show them not only as professionals, but also as fascinating characters who can attract attention. Visually, the guides are smiling in the photos, which is an apparent sign of friendliness and openness (Figure 1).

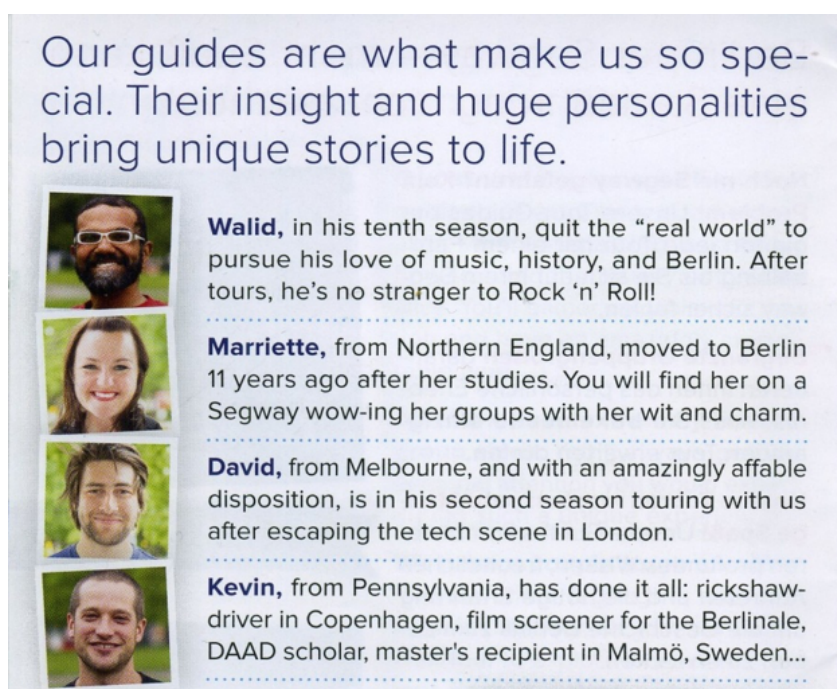


Figure 1. Information on the guides in the Fat Tire Tours (2017) booklet

One of the Australian visitor guides implements the personalisation strategy through accommodating an interview with the Head Concierge of the Parmelia Hilton Hotel in Perth. The interview is short, it contains only three questions; however, all of them are personally oriented:

(11) *What do you find is the most enjoyable part of your role as a Concierge?*

*What would you suggest to any of your guests who are new to Perth, particularly in terms of experiencing the city and surrounding areas?*

*What is the best restaurant you have visited or are currently recommending and why?* (Eyezone Consolidated Media, 2012).

Again, the verbal constituent of the interview is reinforced visually with a photo of the smiling person.

2. The other side of imitating interpersonal relations in professional discourse employs the strategy of personal attention to the customer. In his characteristic of institutional discourse Fairclough (1989, p. 62) introduces the category of synthetic personalisation, a tendency 'to give the impression of handling each of the people handled en masse as an individual'. The impression of being treated individually may be constructed through a number of tactics (bold type throughout examples 12-20 mine).

Showing care for the customer:

(12) *Paved pathways **give easy access** to wheel-chairs and prams* (Eyezone Consolidated Media, 2012).

(13) *We trust this guide **will assist you** to enjoy your stay here as well as be your constant **companion to navigate your way** around this beautiful place* (Eyezone Consolidated Media, 2012).

(14) *Your instructor **takes care of you** all the way* (Travelwest Publications, 2012).

An emphasis on the exclusive bonuses that the customer can get. The use of the lexemes 'special' and 'exclusive' implies that nobody else can get this bonus:

(15) *You will receive **a special bonus*** (Berlin-Highlights GmbH, 2017).

(16) *You'll even get **an exclusive reward*** (Berlin-Highlights GmbH, 2017).

(17) *You will get **an exclusive gift*** (Berlin-Highlights GmbH, 2017).

An approval of the customer's decision to travel to a specific place:

(18) *A visit to the German capital is always **a good decision*** (Berlin-Highlights GmbH, 2017).

Appeals to the customers shaped as imperatives:

(19) ***Take** a step back in time at our Dales Countryside Museum in Hawes* (Yorkshire Dales National Park, 2007).

(20) ***Enjoy** the bustle of market days, and sample delicious local produce from cheese and beer to Yorkshire curd tart* (Yorkshire Dales National Park, 2007).

3. Rapport between the provider of tourist services and the customer is also constructed through the building of a common emotional space. For instance, the organisers of tourist activities in Perth, Australia, exhibit their aspiration to share with the customers their love of Perth:

(21) *We want you to love Perth, Fremantle & Surrounds as much as we do* (Eyezone Consolidated Media, 2012).

4. Finally, the results of the study show that one rapport strategy has a purely linguistic character, as it involves linguistic resources typical of conversational style. In the context of professional dis-

course these resources give the impression of casual communication and, thus, a closer contact between the interactants, i.e. the actors of tourist business and the customers. I will denote this as a 'conversational style' strategy.

Among the conversational resources discovered are the following.

Conversational syntax, including grammatically incomplete sentences:

(22) *Looking for special souvenirs?* (Eyezone Consolidated Media, 2012).

(23) *How it begins? How it continues? How it ends?* (Castelul Bran, 2019).

For an even more convincing imitation of a conversational style, conversational syntax can be reinforced through the usage of interjections, which according to English language grammarians 'have an exclamatory function, expressive of the speaker's emotion' (Biber et al., 2007, p. 1083). The role of 'oops' and 'whoops' is explained as follows: 'They are used at the moment when a minor mishap occurs' (Biber et al., 2007, p. 1084). From example (24), it becomes clear that the mishap involves forgetting the recommendation to visit an important attraction:

(24) *OOPS... nearly forgot – a visit to Kings Park for a view over Perth & Swan River by day and night is a **MUST!*** (Eyezone Consolidated Media, 2012).

Interestingly, this fragment combines features of conversational speech with the efficient use of graphic resources: block letters emphasise the interjection *oops* and the insistent recommendation *a must*.

Phrasal verbs and idioms typical of informal interaction (bold type mine):

(25) ***Have a go** at chiming* (Eyezone Consolidated Media, 2012).

(26) ***Jump on** the Hop on Hop off City Sightseeing Bus Tour* (Eyezone Consolidated Media, 2012).

(27) ***Hop on** an open air bus up to Kings Park* (Travelwest Publications, 2012).

The phrasal verbs and idioms in examples 25-27 have the grammatical form of the imperative, thus directing the customer to perform specific activities.

*'Maps are an indispensable part of tourist booklets; they can be considered as a structural generic feature of the booklet. Because a deeply semiotic approach is taken to communicating information in booklets, almost any guide accommodates a map of the place, whether of the city or area as a whole, or a specific site – an exhibition, a museum, a park, etc. Maps differ in terms of their purposes, contents (information provided), as well as technical performance: detailing, type of graphical representation, visuals employed and colours'*

Also, few instances of ungrammatical usage have been spotted; however, I cannot be sure if these are typos, or inadvertent errors, or deliberate mistakes used strategically:

(28) *If **your thinking** of your next function, then have a game of Supa Golf* (Eyezone Consolidated Media, 2012).

#### 4.4. Multimodal techniques of involvement

The multimodal nature of a booklet entails the special techniques it employs to enhance the interaction between the professionals and the customers.

1. Maps are an indispensable part of tourist booklets; they can be considered as a structural generic feature of the booklet. Because a deeply semiotic approach is taken to communicating information in booklets, almost any guide accommodates a map of the place, whether of the city or area as a whole, or a specific site – an exhibition, a museum, a park, etc. Maps differ in terms of their purposes, contents (information provided), as well as technical performance: detailing, type of graphical representation, visuals employed and colours. In his classification of signs, Peirce (2000) places maps in the category of icons, i.e. signs that are related to their objects by resemblance. How-

ever, this resemblance is relative: while offering a general schematic and simplified view of the place, a map also adds other information 'layers' to it: information on transportation, special facilities, telephone numbers, directions, etc. What is more, along with the pragmatic function of guiding a tourist through the site, a map often serves an entertaining function. Such maps are densely illustrated with bright sketches and looking at and scrutinising them turns into a rather involving activity. The map of the Aquarium in Krakow, Poland (Muzeum Przyrodnicze Krakow, 2011) is apparently targeted at children: it is colourful and filled with sketches, which symbolically indicate different rooms, exhibits and animals. The suggested route shows the navigation and is painted deep red, so it cannot be missed. The utilitarian and entertaining aspects of the map are complemented with the educational one: the panel on the left accommodates brief descriptions of the animals exhibited. Thus, the three functions performed by the map (navigation, education, and entertainment) presuppose the intense involvement of the visitors and their response to the map with particular activities (following the specific directions as they are indicated on the map, reading and learning things, and having fun).

2. Involvement of the customers might be triggered by offering interactive tasks. For instance, that same booklet of the Aquarium offers a page with a quiz on animals. The quiz is intended for children aged 6 to 16, who are expected to tick the correct answers and return the page to the staff of the exhibition. Because the page contains the boxes for personal details, one can assume that the participants in the quiz will be contacted later in case of their success. Such involvement may also be thought of as a marketing tool – having the customers' contact details means the organisers can send them information about other attractions or repeat visits, etc.

Another example of interactivity can be found in the guide booklet 'Berlin Highlights' (Berlin-Highlights GmbH, 2017), which encourages the tourists to collect special stamps while visiting particular landmarks, stick these stamps in the desig-

nated spaces on the booklet's special page, cut out the page (the cutting line is indicated with an image of scissors), hand it in at Berlin-Highlights partners and receive a reward. The page for stamps is arranged as a multimodal space with concise verbal instructions to the customers (e.g. '*Collect the stamps & get your rewards!*') and a schematised route with the images of landmarks and spots for stamps designated on it. The customers become involved into a whole sequence of actions organised as a game, which promotes associated tourist attractions.

3. The authors and designers of tourist booklets may also include an empty page for notes, which motivates the customers to make their own personal written contributions to the booklet. Personalising the book adds to its value in the understanding of the customer. The customer's own notes give ownership to the booklet, making them more inclined to retain it and keep using it. In this respect, the customer becomes a co-author of the booklet, which reflects more general communication trends – ubiquitous authorship and blurred boundaries between the author and the addressee in modern communication space.

## 5. CONCLUSION

The study presented in this paper analyses the tourist booklet as a genre of professional discourse produced by professional agents in the field and aimed at potential consumers of touristic services. The professional agents in tourism seek to strike a balance between their image as experts in tourism, which presupposes the asymmetry of the roles in communication, and the need to construct rapport with the customers in order to encourage them to use the services promoted.

The validity of the professional image relies on such discursive mechanisms as providing expert knowledge on the touristic objects and services, explicit indications of expertise, presentations of themselves as law-abiding and formally recognised businesses, and references to socially important values (e.g. safety). Because booklets are complex multimodal phenomena, the meanings evoked by the linguistic resources are reinforced

visually through the photo images of public officials or company representatives, who embody power and influence. In fact, power is exercised discursively, too. The selection of facts that are made available to the consumer and the evaluative comments are the privilege of the professionals. Also, commissive speech acts are the signs of accepting responsibility.

To mitigate the asymmetry of status, rapport with the customers is developed by means of a few strategies, which include the personalisation of the company by offering biographies and interviews with the company representatives, the demonstration of attention to the customers, the construction of a common emotional space, and the conversational style strategy. These strategies imitate interpersonal relations in professional discourse. Relying on linguistic resources, they also make use of multimodality, e.g. a visual component is essential in implementing personalisation.

Another shared feature of booklets is their attempt to interact with the customers by involving them in cognitively entertaining or challenging activities (like scrutinising a beautifully illustrated map or doing a quiz), or urging them to undertake some physical actions (like following a designated route or taking notes).

Thus, the study shows that professional-to-layperson communication is a multi-faceted phenomenon, whose complexity is predetermined by the combination of various intentions and multimodal resources that help implement these intentions discursively. The potential avenues in exploring tourist booklets as part of social practices include the choice of languages, promoted values, emotions referred to, and types of company presentations. It would also be relevant to investigate how transformations in touristic practices in the post-pandemic period will be reflected in discourse.

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TATIANA V. DUBROVSKAYA

Ural Federal University | 11 Kominterny Str., 620078 Ekaterinbourg, Russia  
[gynergy74@gmail.com](mailto:gynergy74@gmail.com)