

## Promotional Sentences Used by Bali Tourism Office and the Philippines Department of Tourism: A Systemic Functional Linguistics Study

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### Abstract

The achievement of the Philippines in developing different destinations is an urgent concern for the advancement of tourism in Bali. Previous research showed that there was a shift in tourist interest from visiting beaches in Bali to the Philippines, raising high concerns about changes in global travel trends. The success is reflected from the selection of words by the Philippines to promote the beauty of its beaches through Instagram account. The effectiveness of using promotional sentences is also considered as an essential part of branding applied to the Instagram account of Bali Tourism Office. Therefore, this research aims to compare the effectiveness of promotional sentences on Instagram used by Bali and the Philippines Department of Tourism through Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) method. The results showed that Bali tourism office only had 3 posts related to beach element as a promotion. The Philippines Department of Tourism massively promoted the beaches in the past year with 37 posts in a year. A total of six processes in transitivity can be used to make promotional content more interesting. However, only material, mental, relational, behavioral, and existential processes were used in Instagram posts of the Philippines Department of Tourism's Instagram account. These processes shaped the presentation of product by promotional messages, as well as the benefit and the included consumer.

Keywords: Promotional Sentences, Bali, Philipines, Tourism, Systemic Functional Linguistics

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### Introduction

Bali has consistently received prestigious accolades from World Travel Awards across various categories over the years. In 2024, Bali was named the most romantic destination in the world but did not win the best beach category as in the previous year. In the current year, the Philippines officially succeeded in replacing Bali as the leading Beach Destination in Asia in the 2024 World Travel Awards. The Philippines surpassed both Bali and Thailand, which had won in this category in previous years. Even though Bali remains a popular destination,

several factors make the Philippines successful in attracting tourists. A variety of new exotic destinations are offered such as beautiful, clean, and relatively quieter beaches than the very crowded tourist beaches in Bali.

Each beach tourism upload on the Instagram account owned by the Philippines should be analyzed by considering the elements of deep and surface structure to determine the success of promotion content. Deep structure analysis refers to the semantic meaning underlying the purposes of a sentence (Zhipeng, 2022). Meanwhile, surface structure is a syntactic form that does not represent meaning. A promotional sentence will not have a big impact when the concept only contains surface structure. The appraisal system theory by Martin & White (2005) which is a development of Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) related to discussion on attitudes is used to analyze the deep structure of a sentence. Lexicogrammatical theory in SFL by Halliday (1985) also analyzes the syntactic structure of a sentence to avoid ambiguity.

Research related to surface and deep structure in desiderata text conducted by Villadarez (2022) reported that each constituent selected and used in a sentence could transform the meaning. In further research, there should be more in-depth analysis related to the possibility of a sentence passing the desired meaning. An analysis of the form of appraisal in media texts conducted by Mulia et al., (2022) reported the writing purposes seen from the position of the author in the text. The use of attitude conveys the idea of the author. Another research was conducted by Marsakawati (2022) regarding the use of appraisal to interpret the meaning of deep structure in tourism blogs. The realization of appraisal in the text was an appropriate strategy to promote tourist attractions. Saefullah et al., (2022) analyzed the appraisal system in the French Travel Blog text to assess the meaning of a text in depth. The results showed that the use of language adopted several oral communication terms and icons describing the expression of the author. The three appraisal sub-systems are needed to have a big impact. Analysis of tourism text by using LSF method was carried out by Tia & Syahputra (2022) where the form of transitivity dominating the text was a relational process. Claria et al., (2023) used the appraisal system to analyze the attitude of the author. The comparative analysis of the model and student text by Hermayanti & Gunawan (2024) showed that LSF theory was used to compare different types of text. Ekawati et al., (2024) analyzed comments on the Tripadvisor online platform regarding religious tourism in madura area. The results showed that the absence of several parts of the appraisal form, such as engagement and judgment, had a major impact on readers' emotions. This research compares two tourism data with a focus on the analysis of syntactic elements relating to surface structure and semantics using the theory of functional systemic linguistics. The combination of data and elements is expected to provide optimal results than the previous research.

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## Method

This research applied the exploratory qualitative descriptive method designed by (Creswell, 2009) to show the effectiveness of the sentences used for promotion. A comparison

between the two promotional materials produced by tourism office was conducted to determine which wording had a greater impact on tourists' interest. The results served as a valuable reference for Bali Tourism Office in enhancing tourist arrival trends. The data used was written in the form of commercial text taken from the official accounts of Bali Tourism Promotion Office and the Philippines Department of Tourism. Data limitation was implemented in one year due to the Philippines' success in the 2024 Travel World Awards. Observation and note-taking methods were used to obtain data. The main theory adopted was SFL proposed by Halliday (1985).

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## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This language cannot be separated from the context of the situation or cultural context. Fontaine (2013) explained that the basic knowledge of SFL was related to the system of choices. Halliday & Hasan (1976) stated that the harmonized social context and linguistic aspects created a complex register variable useful for optimal communicative competence. Systemic functional language known as grammar focuses on delivering the information. According to Wiratno (2018), language is a system realized through text, and this system interprets linguistic elements such as clauses, phrases, and other units as configurations of functions. Halliday (1978) stated that there were six lingual elements or constituents representing the general categories of LSF analyses.

### Transitivity

In this context, transitivity is included in the ideational metafunction that views clauses as representations of experience. Experiential meaning is divided into various forms of processes in transitivity Halliday (1985). Meanwhile, logical meaning plays a role in connecting experiences to determine the relationship between meanings. Halliday (1994) stated that a perfect unit of experience in transitivity could be seen from the existence of 1) process, 2) participants, and 3) circumstance. Win (2024) added that processes, participants, and circumstances were realized through verbal, nominal, and adverbial groups, respectively.

Process plays an important role in determining the number and category of participants Claria (2023). Fitri et al., (2021) stated that participants were realized through the nominal group. This variable also indirectly determines circumstance and the activity in a clause consists of material, mental, relational, verbal, behavioral, and existential processes. Material process shows the occurrence of an activity, event, or incident realized by a verb showing the occurrence of physical activity. This process has a position to determine behavior of participants in physical form. Halliday (1994) stated that material process described an action in text. Mental process shows the existence of activities in the form of encoding the meaning of thoughts and feelings to produce a perception (Halliday, 1994). This process is used to express the feelings of the author. Relational process shows the existence of an intense relationship leading to an expanding meaning. Verbal process shows words in the form of a notification. This process is often found in the text including actions in the form of saying and has three participants in the implementations, consisting of the speaker, content of the conversation, and recipient or listener (Halliday, 1994). Additionally, behavioral process

describes the presence of habitual behavior and contains psychological properties. This process is a combination of material and mental processes without the sense of touch. Existential process shows the existence of an event (Halliday, 1994).

Besides process and participants, circumstantial element is an important part of transitivity. Circumstance is the location where the process takes place (Halliday, 1994). In traditional grammar, this element is known as adverbial but is different in SFL (Martin, 2000). The term adverbial or circumstance consists of extent, location, manner, cause, accompaniment, role, matter, and angle. An extent is identified by the presence of time and place, while manner is shown by analyzing the working process of an event. Cause can be identified by seeing an event with cause and effect (Tran & Ngo, 2018).

### *Material Process*

Material process shows action in the form of an event that requires participants (Wiratno, 2018). Participants in these processes consist of actors, goals, ranges, and beneficiaries. As participants, the actor is responsible for achieving the goal. In the Philippines Department of Tourism's Instagram account, 10 posts show the transitivity of the sentence with the presence of material process.

- a. Travelers come to this beach in Pagudpud for its pristine aesthetic and charming rustic touch.

The word *come* in this clause interprets the occurrence of an event. Specifically, the word means the process of moving towards a person or place. From the explanation, *come* belongs to material process. The actor and the goal are two important parts of the material process. Participant 1, referred to as the Actor in this context and realized by the word "travelers," represents the entity acting. The goal of the actor is to come to the beach in Pagudpud, motivated by the pristine aesthetic and charming rustic appeal. The phrases "*to this beach*" and "*in Pagudpud*" function as circumstances of Place. In SFL, traditional grammar labels such elements as adverbs but are referred to as circumstances.

### *Mental Process*

Mental process is a process of sensing and can be divided into cognitive, perceptive, desiderative, and emotive. Perceptive and cognitive describe human senses and brain activities, respectively. Desiderative includes desires and hopes, while emotive comprises affection such as emotions and feelings (Halliday and Mathiessen, 2019).

- a. Brace yourself for an adrenaline-fueled escapade!

There are two participants in this clause which indicates a mental process. Participant 1 is a senser of the clause in the form of the word *yourself*. Participant 2 is the phenomenon of the clause in the form of the phrase *for an adrenaline-fueled escapade!* These two participants have one mental process seen from the word *brace*. In this clause, brace is related to feeling and preparing for new or strange event. The mental process belongs to the affective form which has a function to express the feelings of an individual.

### *Relational Process*

Relational process is the act of being and having. This shows the relationship between intensity and expansion of meaning known as attributive and identification (Wiratno, 2018). Participants in this process are referred to as carriers and attributes. Relational identification process connects one participant to another by providing values and information.

a.       Whale sharks are considered the largest fish in the sea and locally known as "tiki-tiki" in Southern Leyte.

Relational process of the clause can be seen from the existence of token and value. The token of the clause is *whale sharks* which given a value of *considered the largest fish in the sea and locally known as "tiki-tiki" in Southern Leyte*. The token and value of the clause represent participants 1 and 2, respectively. The word *are* as a relational process is identifying that whale sharks are the largest fish in the sea.

### *Behavioral Process*

Behavioral process shows physical behavior physiologically. Processes with physical and psychological properties overlap with each other. In the Instagram department of the Philippines, 8 posts about beaches had a transitive form using behavioral process. Examples of sentences in the form of behavioral processes can be seen as follows.

a.       This underwater paradise awaits you in the Philippines

In the case above, behavioral process is reported from the word *awaits*, which requires human awareness. Participant 1 or the phenomenon is seen from the phrase *this underwater paradise* while Participant 2 or behaver is represented by the word *you*. The circumstance in this clause is seen from the phrase *in the Philippines*.

### *Existential Process*

Existential process shows the existence of an event. There is only one participant in this process known as existent. In one year, there were 8 uploads related to the beach using existential process as the message point in the sentence publish by the Philippines Department of Tourism. An example of the upload can be seen as follows.

a.       Saud Beach is a 2km curved stretch of Ivory sand.

### **Discussion**

Promotional texts often rely on material processes used by the Philippines. The material process makes the message goal-oriented, and dynamic in allowing the reader to act. Meanwhile, the use of action verbs creates a sense of urgency. The clauses with material processes such as *Travelers come to this beach in Pagudpud for its pristine aesthetic* use verbs indicating action. The purpose of using the material process in a clause is to provide a direct experience imagined by the reader. The other clauses have mental processes to imply desirability. Therefore, the processes include feelings such as the use of verbs classified as affective, thinking, and cognitive. Mental process helps to connect emotionally with the audience and can be considered as a good strategy for promotion. The inclusion of feelings

with physical information about a place increases the interest of the reader. Positive discussion about the product is a strategy to attract the interest of the reader. In several clauses and verbs, the target reader is allowed to think and feel happy when visiting beaches in the Philippines. In this context, the active participants empower the reader while the passive construction can imply expertise. Relational process can establish value in defining and associating the product or services offered. The clause *Whale sharks are considered the largest fish in the sea and locally known as "tiki-tiki" in Southern Leyte. The long stretch of fine gray sand is the ideal beach break for beginners, with expansive shores to navigate the waves* shows the choice of emphasis on the content to be considered in the post. In relational process, there are participants known as tokens and values. Tokens are the reported content, while values are additional information given to the tokens. For example, *Whale sharks* and *the long stretch of fine sand* are tokens given added value. This strategy opens the insights of the reader because of the additional information presented in the promotional post. The reader may not understand that Whale sharks are the largest fish in the sea and can be found in the Philippines. Behavioral process shows the position of the author on the promoted content. In this case, an open attitude is expressed in accepting tourist visits. The clauses *This underwater paradise awaits you in the Philippines* clearly show the pride in the beauty of beach tourism and the willingness to welcome visitors with pleasure. The verbs *awaits* clearly give the impact that the reader is highly anticipated. Existential process is general information included in promotional posts. This process is solely intended to provide information about places before tourists can visit.

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## CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the Philippines Department of Tourism massively promoted the beaches in the past year. A total of 37 posts were reported to promote promoting the beaches in a year. This was different from Bali Tourism Office which had only 3 posts related to its beaches in a year. In this context, six processes were used to show the transitivity of a sentence as stated by Halliday. However, only five processes were found to be used in Instagram posts of the Philippines Department of Tourism. These included material, mental, relational, behavioral, and existential processes. Material and mental processes were used in posts to give the impression of "enjoying the first-hand experience". The two mental processes embedded persuasive meaning by framing the perspectives of the reader. The inclusion of the reader's feelings in an effective form of mental process provided an opportunity to directly imagine the beauty of the Philippines, creating a sense of entitlement. Meanwhile, relational, behavioral, and existential processes served as sources of additional information on the existence of beaches in the Philippines and the possessed value. The absence of verbal process in the post showed that the reader was persuaded to like the Philippines beaches based on the real experience offered. The Philippines promotional text reported the content of the offered product, emphasized the benefits and desirability, put the reader as the agent, experiencer, and beneficiary, showed the positive aspects, and created the specific value. Therefore, the use of transitivity shaped the presentation of the product through promotional messages, as well as reported the benefits and the included consumers.

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