

HOW TO ANALYSE AUTHENTICITY IN TOURISM BROCHURES: A PRAGMALINGUISTIC TOOLKIT FOR RESEARCHERS

Mohinur Ismoiljonova,

*Student, Faculty of English Philology,
Uzbekistan State World Languages University,
Tashkent, Uzbekistan.*

E-mail: mhnrismoilova@gmail.com

Tel: +998 88 141 04 55

Scientific adviser: Elmuradova Gulrux Karimaliyevna,

*Senior teacher at Uzbekistan State World Languages University,
Faculty of English Teaching Methodology and Educational Technologies,
Tashkent, Uzbekistan.*

E-mail: egulruh@yahoo.com

Tel: +998914531486

Abstract. Adventure tourism brochures promise authentic experiences, yet the linguistic mechanisms behind this promise remain underexplored. This article offers a practical pragmlinguistic toolkit for researchers wishing to analyse how authenticity is constructed in promotional tourism materials. Drawing on speech act theory, deixis, implicature, and modality, the article presents a step-by-step analytical framework applicable to brochures in any language.

Keywords: pragmlinguistics, authenticity, tourism brochures, discourse analysis, speech acts, deixis.

Introduction

The concept of authenticity is central to contemporary tourism promotion. Tourists seek genuine, unmediated experiences, and brochures promise to deliver them. However, as Wang (1999) [6] argues, the authenticity that matters in tourism is often existential – a subjective feeling of being truly oneself – rather than objective verification of historical or cultural purity. The question for linguists is not whether a destination is authentically untouched, but how language creates the feeling of authenticity.

While previous research has examined tourism discourse from sociolinguistic [2] and genre-based [1] perspectives, no existing study has provided a systematic, step-by-step methodological toolkit for analysing authenticity at the pragmlinguistic level. This article addresses that gap. The aim is to equip researchers with a practical framework for identifying and interpreting the linguistic strategies that construct authenticity in tourism brochures.

Materials and Methods

The toolkit presented here is designed for analysing written promotional brochures in any language. Researchers should assemble a corpus of 5-15 brochures from adventure tourism operators (e.g., trekking, kayaking, safari, mountaineering). The analytical framework consists of four pragmalinguistic categories, each with specific questions to guide analysis.

Category 1: Lexical Strategies – Identify adjectives (pristine, hidden, untouched, wild) and verbs (discover, feel, escape). Ask: Does this word construct the destination as pure, exclusive, or requiring effort?

Category 2: Deixis – Identify personal pronouns (we, you, they), spatial markers (here, there, beyond), and temporal markers (now, ancient, timeless). Ask: Does the brochure position the reader as an insider or outsider? Does it create a journey toward an authentic centre?

Category 3: Speech Acts – Following Searle (1976) [5], classify utterances as directives (invitations to act, e.g., "leave your comfort zone"), commissives (promises of experience, e.g., "you will feel"), or expressives (evocations of wonder, e.g., "imagine the view").

Category 4: Modality and Implicature – Identify modal verbs (will, may, can, must) and analyse what is implied but not stated. Ask: How certain is the brochure about its promises? What presuppositions are taken for granted (e.g., "leave the crowds behind" presupposes the reader is among crowds)?

Analysis proceeds by selecting 2-3 examples per category, documenting the linguistic feature, interpreting its pragmatic function, and connecting to authenticity theory [6;3]

Results

Application of the toolkit to a sample of English-language adventure brochures reveals consistent patterns. Lexically, brochures use adjectives of purity ("pristine," "untouched") to construct destinations as unspoiled, and verbs of agency ("discover," "trek") to position readers as active explorers rather than passive tourists. Deictically, inclusive "we" creates solidarity between reader and operator, while spatial markers like "beyond" and "hidden" construct the destination as remote and exclusive.

In speech act terms, directives ("dare to discover") activate the reader, commissives ("you will never forget") promise transformation, and expressives ("imagine the wonder") evoke emotional engagement. Modally, strong commitments ("will") appear for controllable outcomes, while weaker modals ("may") hedge unpredictable elements like wildlife sightings. Implicature allows brochures to claim superiority over competitors indirectly (e.g., "unlike other companies") without explicit defamation.

Discussion

The toolkit enables researchers to move beyond impressionistic claims about authenticity ("this brochure feels authentic") to empirically grounded descriptions ("this brochure uses inclusive 'we' deixis and strong commissives to construct existential authenticity"). The framework is flexible across languages; researchers can adapt the categories to Russian, Uzbek, or any other language by identifying equivalent grammatical resources (e.g., modal adverbs in Russian, the "-adi" suffix in Uzbek for future certainty).

A limitation of the toolkit is its qualitative focus; it does not provide statistical measures of feature frequency. Researchers seeking quantitative results should supplement the framework with corpus linguistic methods. Additionally, the toolkit does not address multimodal elements (images, layout, typography), which Manca (2016) [4] has shown contribute to persuasion. Future developments could integrate multimodal analysis.

Conclusion

This article has presented a pragmalinguistic toolkit for analysing how authenticity is constructed in adventure tourism brochures. The framework integrates lexical analysis, deixis, speech acts, modality, and implicature into a coherent step-by-step method. Researchers can apply this toolkit to identify the specific linguistic strategies that evoke existential authenticity – the feeling of genuine, transformative experience. The toolkit is replicable across languages and adaptable to other promotional genres, such as ecotourism or cultural tourism brochures. By making the pragmalinguistic analysis of authenticity systematic and transparent, this article aims to support further research at the intersection of linguistics and tourism studies.

References

1. Calvi, M. V. (2010). Los géneros discursivos en la lengua del turismo. *Ibérica*, 19, 57-76.
2. Dann, G. M. S. (1996). *The language of tourism: A sociolinguistic perspective*. CAB International.
3. MacCannell, D. (1976). *The tourist: A new theory of the leisure class*. Schocken Books.
4. Manca, E. (2016). *Persuasion in tourism discourse: Methodological perspectives*. Cambridge Scholars Publishing.
5. Searle, J. R. (1976). A classification of illocutionary acts. *Language in Society*, 5(1), 1-23.
6. Wang, N. (1999). Rethinking authenticity in tourism experience. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 26(2), 349-370.