

## Persuasive Language in A Tourism Video: A Genre Analysis

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### Abstract

Having a long and painful history and current controversy of sharia law implementation, Aceh is massively rebranding its tourism marketing to attract tourists. As the local government holds the control to rebrand the image of this controversial province, this paper aims to analyze the tourism video genre. This is a qualitative study analyzing a tourism video entitled "The Light of Aceh." To select the data, purposeful sampling was used. The data was obtained from the official Aceh government Youtube Channel. To collect the data, observation sheet was used. As this video is narrated in a persuasive language, this study adopts Bhatia's approach of genre analysis focusing solely on three stages of linguistic analysis, namely lexical and grammatical characteristics, pattern of the text, and structural strategies. Also additional information was gained from interviewing a former active member of tourism organization. The results on the linguistic analysis show that the narrative on the video delivers the emotional messages that Aceh has wonderful landscapes, a wonderful story to tell and experience, safe for tourists to visit as people are portrayed as kind, welcoming, and harmonious. Some persuasive suggestions and unique rhetorical question are also evidenced in the results. Whilst the results of the interview uncover that the purpose of the video is to rebrand Aceh tourism to become 'more Aceh' and the main target of the video is foreign Muslim tourists.

Keywords: genre analysis; persuasive language; tourism video

### Introduction

In December 2006, a massive earthquake and tsunami struck Aceh destroying homes, schools, office buildings, and killing more than one thousand seventy hundred people. It was after this tragedy that the idea of tourism arose in this region (Simanjuntak et al., 2017). Simanjuntak et al. believed at the time of crisis, the Acehnese people began to rebuild their future by promoting tsunami-based tourism taking advantage of what they lost and transforming it into something to support their economic growth.

Prior to this tragedy, Aceh was not a suitable place to visit due to its' conflict with the Indonesian central government. Aceh was forming a force called Aceh Free Movement (GAM), which demanded independence from Indonesia. The conflict between GAM and Indonesian government lasted for almost three decades (Sindre and Rose, 2021).

However, on the other hand, the Indonesian government rejected the idea of separate statehood, which brought this region into war. After years of fighting, the two parties finally agreed to sign a memorandum of understanding in Helsinki, Sweden, in the year following the tsunami tragedy. As part of the agreement, Aceh was granted the right to implement sharia law (Hakim, et al., 2021).

However, the implementation of strict sharia law in Aceh is still controversial, especially punishing people who commit adultery, gambling, and drinking alcohol by whipping them with a wooden stick for multiple times. Even though debates have been going on regarding this topic since it was first practiced, which was in 2015 (*Indonesia's Aceh Province Enacts Enforcement of Islamic Sharia Criminal Code*, 2015), such punishment is legal and is still being practiced until the present day (Amin, 2021).

On the other hand, the Aceh government is currently looking for additional funding sources for the region, and they believe creative tourism sector especially tsunami-based and halal tourism could be the solution (Anindyati, 2017; *Gubernur: Potensi Pariwisata Aceh Terus Dibenahi*, 2016). To promote its tourism and to reposition its negative reputation, the Aceh government released a tourism video on its Youtube Channel entitled *The Light of Aceh*.

Aceh is not the first region to portray its image through tourism marketing. Indonesia has also taken the same action as depicted in Sukma (2021). Sukma discovers that through Indonesian tourism website, the Indonesian identity is constructed as richness in culture, friendly and open to foreigners, and kind people. A similar study is conducted by Isti'annah (2021) on Indonesian tourism marketing on social media, which incorporates the display of pictures of physical nature, cultural heritage, and traditional village. In another study, Basri et al. (2021) argues that the content of Lombok tourism magazine solely focuses on amenities and attraction but ignores security.

To succeed in promoting tourism, several aspects must be considered. It is clear that presenting visual image of multicultural, and rich landscape (Jabeen, 2022), selecting the appropriate talents (Hidayat et al., 2020; Hidayat et al., 2018) could boost the marketing. Another important factor to successfully capture the target audience's interest is by adopting an intimate approach and personalized language (Hidayat et al., 2020), which could be achieved by employing persuasive language (O'Shaughnessy and O'Shaughnessy, 2004). Persuasive language is using

the appropriate words to change somebody's perspectives, and to effectively impact the audience especially if presented through narrative (Sukma, 2021).

Hence, storytelling is crucial for the success of tourism video. Alegro and Turnšek (2021) discovered in their study that tourism videos are less creative without or little storytelling. Thus, storytelling and humor are suggested. Similarly, Moin, Hosany, and O'Brien (2020) found that most tourism videos unsuccessfully deliver a powerful storytelling. Narrative is also used in a different kind of tourism video, that is travel vlog (Chakravarty, Chand, & Singh, 2021). Another mean to portray the identity of the destination is through music (Coronel & Irimiás, 2022). Furthermore, El-Masry (2021) discussed that the combination of image, music, typography, and color contribute the accomplishment of the accomplishment of the video.

To further investigate this genre, Bhatia (1993) suggests seven steps, namely (1) considering the situational context of the text, (2) observing literature from past studies, (3) purifying the analysis of situational or contextual factors, (4) corpus selection, (5) investigating the institutional context, (6) determining the three stages of linguistic analysis, and (7) providing additional information from a person(s) who has (have) authority on the selected text(s). Genre analysis can be viewed from two perspectives, namely synchronic and diachronic (Briggs et al., 1992). According to Briggs et al. (1992), synchronic aspect means considering genre as a source of power that divide data into 'ordered, unified, and bounded text' (pp. 147). On the other hand, diachronic aspect views genre as a tool that divide discourse based on history and culture. Moessner (2020) discussed genre analysis on synchronic aspect revealed similar text structure and linguistic profile while genre analysis on diachronic aspect showed different linguistic profile.

Therefore, with the limited concern on the linguistic analysis on this genre (Basri et al., 2021), and as each country has different strategy to develop distinctive image in tourism video (Vojnovic, 2020), this paper aims to investigate Aceh tourism video produced by the government given the unique context of the video. As the video is narrated as a persuasive spoken text, the author looks into this video through the lens of genre analysis. This mainly identifies the three stages of linguistic analysis and some additional information from authority. Hence, the research question is formulated as follow: *How are the three stages of linguistic analysis were achieved on an Aceh tourism video?*

## Research Methodology

This study employed descriptive-qualitative method. To collect the data, a purposeful sampling technique was used. According to Creswell (2020) purposeful sampling is deliberately selecting people or location to discover or comprehend a phenomenon. The data was a tourism video obtained from Aceh government Youtube Channel. The video is entitled The Light of Aceh (2016). The video was selected as data of this study since it represents the rebranding of Aceh tourism and is still used until the present day to promote Aceh tourism. The video was transcribed using Jefferson's (2004) method of transcription. Observation sheet following genre analysis guidelines through diachronic lens (Briggs et al., 1992) and Bahtia's approach (1993) was employed. To analyze the data, this study solely focused on the three stages of linguistic analysis, namely lexical and grammatical characteristic, pattern of the text, structural strategies. Furthermore, to obtain additional relevant information from the worker in the institution, an open-ended interview was conducted. This information was used to support the analysis of the data as suggested by Bhatia.

## Findings and Discussion,

### Findings

The three stages of linguistic analysis are discussed as follow.

### Determining the Three Stages of Linguistic Analysis

In this section, three stages of linguistics suggested by Bhatia namely lexical and grammatical characteristics, pattern of the text, and structural strategies are presented.

### Lexical and Grammatical Characteristic

Bhatia argued that the first stage of linguistics analysis involves analyzing the lexical and grammatical characteristics of the text or video. As Helder (2011) mentioned, Aristotle's theory of persuasion included 3 features, namely *logos*, *potos*, and *etos*. The definition of each features, as mentioned in Helder, are respectively giving reason to persuade, playing with emotion to persuade, and introducing personality or character. In the video, numerous utterances of *potos* or giving emotional effect to the viewers are evidenced. Here are examples of *potos*.

- (3) A place that makes you feel home/
- (6) A place that makes you feel home/

- (7) That Makes you curious for more ...  
 (11) Feel the sea breeze/  
 (13) and the sound of the waves ...  
 (14) breaking your consciousness/

In the utterances above, the narrator is guiding or illustrating the audience of how it feels like to be in Aceh. The followings are the examples of another feature found in the video, which is *etos*.

- (4) in the midst of people..  
 (5) who live in religious harmony/  
 16) Through the beauty of woven fabrics /  
 (18) Through the scent of coffee...  
 (29) Meet the friendly people/

In these utterances, the narrator is introducing the viewers to the personality of Acehnese people and the characteristics of the things that the viewers can find in Aceh. However, the producer did not clarify reasons for the viewers to visit this region. Therefore, the other Aristotle's theory of persuasion, which is *logos*, cannot be analyzed in this video.

### **Pattern of the Text**

Moving on to another theory posted by BBC UK, it is stated in the *Persuasive Text* (2011) that persuasive text may be consisted of 'repeated words, capital letters, exclamation marks, rhetorical questions, emotional arguments, and humor. In this video, capital letter is not applicable because it is a spoken persuasive text. Humor is also not applicable because in the narration of the video, there is no humor. However, There are several repeated words in the video as follow.

**Table 1.** Repeated words found in the video

Words that are repeated	Utterances
Heard	(1) Have you heard about this story
	(20) If you never heard it before
	(26) Perhaps you've heard this story
Story	(1) Have you heard about this story
	(10) Travel to the place where the story unfold
	(26) Perhaps you've heard this story
Beautiful	(2) about a beautiful place
	(16) Through the beauty of woven fabrics
	(23) From the beauty of its land

Place	(2) about a beautiful place (3) A place that makes you feel restful (6) A place that makes you feel home (10) Travel to the place where the story unfold
Land	(23) From the beauty of its land (27) About a land
Make	(3) A place that makes you feel restful (6) A place that makes you feel home (7) That Makes you curious for more
Feel	(3) A place that makes you feel restful (6) A place that makes you feel home (11) Feel the sea breeze
May	(21) you may now find it intriguing  (22) You may want to know every square inch of this place
Welcome	(30) who will welcome you (33) welcoming guests

From this table, it can be analyzed that the word *heard* is used to start the story. It is then repeated again in the middle of the story to recall back the main theme of the video. At the climax of the story, the narrator once again repeated the word *hear* to signal that the story is ending and informing viewers that they have not only finished watching the video, but more importantly that now they have heard about it.

Furthermore, the word *story* is repeated for three times. In the first appearance of the word *story*, the speaker intended to refer Aceh as a story worth telling. While second utterance indicates that the speaker suggests the viewers to create their own unforgettable stories in Aceh. In the last utterance, the speaker referred back the word *story* to Aceh as the interesting story that he has been trying to deliver.

The word *beautiful* is used once as an adjective to describe the *place*, which in this context is Aceh. It is used two more times as a noun. Afterwards, the word *place* is mentioned four times. In addition to *place*, sometimes the speaker switch it into *land* to make it sound more dramatic. Moreover, the speaker repeated the word *make* to give the viewers the idea of what effect they can get if they visit Aceh. In addition to that, as mentioned earlier, the speaker mentioned the word *feel* for three times in an attempt to get to the viewer's emotion. Apparently, modals such as *may* is also included in this persuasive spoken text.

Finally, the word *welcome* is repeated to emphasize that Aceh is open for people around the world.

Besides, the *Persuasive Text* from the BBC UK website also suggested that in a persuasive text, it might contain exclamation mark. Even though this is a spoken persuasive text, looking at the way the speaker was narrating the text, the speaker gives a number of suggestions such as:

- (9) Start your journey
- (10) Travel to the place where the story unfold
- (11) Feel the sea breeze
- (29) Meet the friendly people

Another point that the writer of the *Persuasive Text* article is the rhetorical question, that means question which do not require answers. Apparently in this video, there is one rhetorical question. It was the first utterance of the video, namely the opening mark; (1) Have you heard about this story. This utterance appears in the very beginning of the video is to attract people's attention at that very second.

### **Structural Strategies**

The final stage is analyzing the structural strategies that have meaning or message that the writer or producer is trying to deliver. Singh et al. (2012) argued that to make these strategies, the writer or producer should consider who the readers or the viewers are and what messages that this text or video is going to convey.

There are several messages that this video is trying to deliver. The narrator mentioned '(5) who live in religious harmony' in the video. The purpose of this is to send message to the targeted audience that even though the majority of the population of Aceh is Muslim, the minority is safe too to visit in Aceh, that there will never be any racial conflict, that the international tourists will be safe in Aceh and, in fact, they are very welcome by the local people as the narrator read in the last part of the video;

- (29) Meet the friendly people
- (30) who will welcome you
- (31) with warmth
- (33) welcoming guests
- (34) is their tradition

(35) welcoming guests

(36) is their tradition

Furthermore, the utterances above can also be related to the history of conflict in Aceh. This video promotes friendliness, trying to reposition the memory of the painful history. The video tells the audience that the Acehnese people are now open to visitors and they will be safe in the region.

### **Additional Information**

The purpose of the interview is to get additional information in order to gain deeper understanding on the video. As Bhatia (1993) argued that providing information from a person who works in the institution where the text or video was produced can provide validity to the researcher's perception of the text that is being analyzed. The results from interviewing one of the former leader of Indonesia Tourism Generation Organization confirms that the purpose of the video is to rebrand Aceh tourism, to attract International Muslim tourists, and the production of the video is mostly based on the videographer ideas, not the government.

The participant reported that the philosophy of changing the name of the brand is to make it look 'more Aceh.' In other words, he argued, it is hoped to give more power to tourism in Aceh as Islamic-based and cultural-based destination. He stated that the main targets of the video are foreign Muslim tourists, which explains the visualization of Islamic practices and the use of English language from a native narrator.

Another notion pointed out by the participant is that the female local model appeared in the video is actually an Acehnese who happened to have moved to Jakarta. The model was apparently chosen by the videographer. In addition, the way the video was narrated is actually not the government idea. It is produced by the videographer's creative idea.

### **Discussion**

The findings of this study deliver the analysis of tourism video genre focusing on three stages of linguistic analysis, that is lexical and grammatical characteristic, pattern of the text, structural strategies and some additional information from a worker of the institution as suggested by Bhatia (1993). The results discover specific lexical and grammatical characteristics from the narrative, which functions to engage with the audience emotion by illustrating what it will feel like to be in Aceh, the warm local



people they will encounter, and items they will find. In terms of pattern of the text, some words were repeated for several times for a purpose. Furthermore, the results also uncover the structural strategies in the video that is to encourage warmth and kindness while attempting to reframe the memories of the difficult past.

These findings are in line with those of Sukma (2021) which highlight friendliness and kindness of the local people featured with cultural richness in Indonesian tourism website. Given the unique context of the data in the present study, emphasizing friendliness and kindness is crucial. It was evidenced in the data that these features were portrayed in the narrative. In addition, although visual display of the richness of breathtaking landscape, cultural heritage, and traditional villages are crucial to promote tourism (Isti'annah, 2021; Jabeen, 2022), employing persuasive language in the narrative is equally crucial (Hidayat et al., 2020; O'Shaughnessy and O'Shaughnessy, 2004). All these features are evidenced in the results of the present study. The persuasive language in the narrative matches with the visual in the video. The visual was also described in the narrative.

On the other hand, Bari et al. (2021) argues security information is not included in Lombok tourism magazine. They only discover information regarding solely amenities and attraction. These findings are in contrast with those of the present study. Regarding the painful history and strict sharia law controversies, ensuring the safety of tourists in Aceh is a top priority of the government. Hence, as aforementioned the narrative in the video encourages friendliness and openness of the local people to welcome foreign visitors regardless of their background. This narrative is to promote tourism safety.

To deeper understand the production of the video, an interview of a worker of the government institution was conducted, and it reveals the script of the narrative, the visual, and the talents were all the ideas of the videographer. This fact indicates the videographer, not the government, controlled the responsibility in the production of the video. However, the government still has power to accept or reject the production. This implies if the government had chosen different videographer, the results would have been so much different from the present one, and the message might be delivered differently. However, according to Adachi, Cramer, and Song (2022), the impact of diverse sources of information was determined to be insignificant.

## Conclusion and Suggestion

In this paper, by applying Bhatia's approach of genre analysis, a deeper understanding about the meaning conveyed in this particular video is achieved. Chun (2015) argued that a video or a text might have no meaning if the audiences or the readers do not look at the context that exists behind the construction of the video or the text. As discussed, the history and the controversial image of Aceh are still present, and people from across the world could easily access the information, the government or the producer in charge of the construction of the video tried to highlight what this region has to offer and attempted to erase the negative image of this region through persuasive language. The results of this study illustrate that the government portray Aceh as a wonderful story to tell and to be experienced, as a safe tourism destination. A further finding find that the purpose of the video is to rebrand Aceh. However, this study is limited to only investigate the linguistic aspects of the narrative in the video without taking into account the perspectives of the target audience regarding the impact of the narrative. Therefore, a further research on this topic is suggested.

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