

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Research Background

Social platforms have evolved into a key method of communication within the travel sector, shaping how tourist spots engage with people and are advertised. In the tourism sector, social platforms are essential for advertising and disseminating details, along with stories that may sway the choices of those traveling. Based on research done by Kavoura et al. (2020), tourist spots can use social platforms to get the word out, allowing them to grow their reach to include both local and international viewers. Similarly, research by Molenaar et al. (2020) demonstrates that social platforms also serve as the go-to communication hub for tourists when they are putting together their travel plans, in addition to working as a promotional tool able to increase audience reach across the globe. Furthermore, platforms like Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter enable viewers to engage personally and deliver information more quickly and effectively compared to traditional media methods (Prentice & Louvieris, 2019). Consequently, social platforms are vital for developing marketing plans for tourist spots, including places like Buleleng Regency, which offers considerable opportunity.

Buleleng is becoming more well-known as a place for visitors to visit because of its beautiful scenery and interesting culture, including things like waterfalls, beaches, old places, and cultural spots, and social media is helping it become even more popular. This area has a special and interesting culture from the northern part of Bali, but many people do not know much about it. So, it is very important for the Buleleng Regency Tourism Office to use social media to help more people find out about the great tourism in this area. The Buleleng Regency Tourism Office has the ability to use social media to share details about travel spots, happenings, and what makes the local culture special in a way that feels more like a conversation and keeps people interested. Purnomo said in 2021 that social media is a great way to get the word out to more people, talk to travelers, give them the facts they need, and take care of any questions or worries that people might have.

The Buleleng Regency Tourism Office places significant emphasis on how language is utilized across social media when overseeing its platforms. This is because language is crucial for capturing the interest of viewers and fostering a sense of connection with them. The Buleleng Regency Tourism Office employs its social media presence to articulate the essence of local tourism ideals in an accessible manner. The language they use is designed to achieve multiple goals, which could be to share details on tourist spots, encourage potential visitors, or portray the amazing natural and cultural attributes of Buleleng. Research conducted by Crespi et al. (2020) has indicated that using suitable language on social media can establish a favorable reputation and motivate viewers to get involved in tourism activities. Thus, social media is a key factor in advertising what Buleleng Regency offers in tourism to a global audience.

Even with social media's numerous advantages, it's crucial to examine the way language is applied in these interactions. Maysanjaya (2024) posits that, within the realm of online marketing, language acts as both a method of conveying information and a means of constructing a destination's reputation. The construction of messages on social platforms is deliberate; language is purposefully used to achieve specific communication goals. Michael Halliday's (1975) theory regarding language functions gives us an insightful framework to understand language use in everyday social scenarios. Halliday identified seven core roles of language: using language to fulfill desires (instrumental), managing actions (regulatory), establishing connections with others (interactional), sharing feelings and who you are (personal), delivering information (representational), finding out more (heuristic), and inventing imaginary situations (imaginative). Initially identified in how children learn to talk, these functions still play a role in different kinds of communication, such as professional and online discussions.

Digital tourism marketing uses language not just to share details, but also to create an appealing image and spark feelings in possible visitors. However, most research looks at marketing materials but doesn't study how local government bodies like the Buleleng Regency Tourism Office use language on social media to give information, which then leads to audience reactions. Furthermore, there isn't much research that closely looks at how language works to give information on

social media based on Halliday's ideas. Wahyudi et al (2025) state that using language functions is clearly important for successful digital tourism marketing, particularly on social media. Consequently, the goal of this research is to address this lack of knowledge by examining the social media posts from the Buleleng Regency Tourism Office.

Even though government entities and tourism industries are using social media more and more, there is not enough solid research that looks into how official tourism agencies in Indonesia use language in their operations. As a result, Wirahyuni and Martha (2022) point out that using persuasive language strategies to promote tourism in Bali through social media shows how important it is to carefully shape how people see things. Examining how these language functions are used in social media posts from the Buleleng Regency Tourism Office can reveal the methods they use to educate, persuade, and connect with their audience. Therefore, this study seeks to find and sort the types of language used in the Buleleng Regency Tourism Office's social media posts based on Halliday's functional language framework. It is hoped that this study will clearly show how the language and expressions used by the Buleleng Regency Tourism Office on social media impact how well the district government promotes itself and interacts with visitors. Furthermore, this study could also offer ideas on how to improve communication and make digital marketing strategies better, which could then help Buleleng Regency's tourism industry grow. It is anticipated that by thoroughly studying the language and writing style used in the Buleleng Regency Tourism Office's social media posts, useful information will be discovered that will improve their communication strategies. This will support the tourism sector in Buleleng Regency in enhancing its promotional activities.

1.2 Identification of Research Problems

The common practice of using social media by tourism-related organizations has completely changed destination marketing and public interaction management. The official tourism authority in Buleleng Regency actively uses different social media sites to connect with audiences from both here and abroad. However, while the material presented might seem interesting and educational, we

do not know enough about the fundamental communication purposes behind the language used in these online posts. Many studies already available about communication in tourism tend to place emphasis on content topics, visual components, or the effectiveness of marketing. Yet, there is not much investigation into the linguistic roles that determine how messages are created and understood. More specifically, there has not been a thorough study conducted to analyze the posts from the Buleleng Regency Tourism Office using Halliday's seven language functions: instrumental, regulatory, interactional, personal, representational, heuristic, and imaginative. Because of this research gap, there are still unanswered questions about how language is intentionally used in formal social media communications.

It is challenging to determine if these posts successfully achieve their purpose of communicating information, attracting attention, guiding actions, influencing opinions, or providing enjoyment if there's no solid understanding of the various ways language is used. Also, identifying the language functions that are most prevalent or least applied might yield valuable knowledge for enhancing strategies related to digital content.

1.3 Limitation of the Study

The scope of this study is confined to the Instagram profile operated by the Tourism Office of Buleleng Regency. The rationale behind selecting this specific platform lies in its visually compelling nature and widespread adoption for tourism promotion. These characteristics facilitate a precise assessment of the language styles commonly employed to deliver details in posts that showcase tourist spots. The temporal scope of this analysis is restricted to posts released during the period from January to June 2025. Establishing this timeframe enables the observation of contemporary communication approaches utilized by the Buleleng Regency Tourism Office in their promotional activities for Buleleng's tourist attractions. Furthermore, the study will monitor the evolution of language or information in correlation with audience engagement and the utilization of social media platforms. This research exclusively examined language application, encompassing elements like functions and expressions present in textual, visual, and video posts that directly pertain to promoting tourist destinations within the Buleleng Regency. This

includes natural attractions, cultural aspects, and special events organized by the Buleleng Regency Tourism Office. Posts of a general nature fell outside the purview of this investigation. In essence, the research was strictly geared towards pinpointing and scrutinizing the functions of language (pertaining to information, persuasion, and expression) present within the texts and videos that were posted. Aspects of a more technical nature, such as the mechanics of social media algorithms or comprehensive strategies in digital marketing, were not taken into account within this investigation.

1.4 Research Questions

Based on the identification of the problems, the problems of this study are formulated as follows:

1. What types of language functions are most commonly used in the Buleleng Regency Tourism Office's social media posts?
2. How are these functions realized linguistically within the digital content?

1.5 Research Purposes

The purposes of this study are:

1. To identify language functions used in the social media of the Buleleng Regency Tourism Office.
2. To describe how are the language functions realized linguistically within the digital content.

1.6 Significances of the Research

1.6.1 Theoretical Significances

This research is intended to contribute to the development of applied linguistic theory, particularly with regard to language functions and language expressions in digital media. By identifying various functions to convey information used by Buleleng Regency Tourism Office on social media, this research enriches the study of the application of language functions in the context of internet-based mass communication.

1.6.2 Practical Significances

The results of this study can be useful for academics, students, and researchers in the fields of applied linguistics, digital communication, and tourism. This study can encourage further research that examines the dynamics of digital communication in the context of local culture. Finally, this study is expected to increase the understanding of Buleleng tourism industry players, both individuals and tourism business groups, about the importance of strategic language use in introducing tourism products.

