

Enhancing Writing Skills in Indonesian High School Students through Tourism Promotion Texts: A Genre and Appraisal Analysis

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Abstract. This study was conducted to evaluate the abilities of teenage writers in drafting tourism promotional texts in English for the potential tourist attractions in Plupuh, Sragen, Indonesia, prior to their participation in a training program focused on writing digital promotional texts for tourism spots. Six exemplary texts were selected from the prospective training participants. These texts were then subjected to genre analysis and appraisal analysis. The genre analysis identified that five texts were descriptive, structured primarily with obligatory introduction and description units, with one text including additional historical background. The appraisal analysis revealed limited use of Affect, with only the Bahulak Market text employing adjectives such as "excited" and "enthusiastic." Judgment for social esteem was effectively utilized in the Joko Tingkir text, using terms like "good," "skilled," "far-sighted," and "brave" to positively appraise character traits. Appreciation was reflected through adjectives evaluating reaction, composition, and valuation across the texts. Graduation analysis showed the students' ability to modulate intensity and clarity, though inconsistently. To enhance their writing skills, it is recommended that students focus on emotional engagement, consistent use of background information, refined evaluative language, and nuanced graduation use. These improvements can lead to more sophisticated and engaging tourism promotional texts.

Keywords: promotional text, appraisal, tourism

1. Introduction

According to the latest PISA (Programme for International Student Assessment) results from 2022, released by the OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development), Indonesian students rank below the OECD average in key areas such as mathematics, reading, and science. These results highlight a performance gap between

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Indonesian students and those from other OECD countries. In light of this, activities that stimulate students to produce written work are highly necessary.

A training program focused on writing texts in various genres, particularly aimed at digital tourism promotion, is planned for high school students in Plupuh Sub-District, Sragen Regency. The purpose of this training is to equip students with literacy skills, specifically in producing English texts to promote the tourism potential of Plupuh Sub-District. Besides the training sessions, participating students will receive guidance throughout the process of writing these promotional texts. The resulting texts will be compiled and published as a book, showcasing the students' literary works.

As part of the upcoming activities, thirty prospective participants were required to draft initial tourism promotion texts in English. From these drafts, six of the best texts were selected for research to evaluate the students' abilities and skills in writing tourism promotion texts in English. The analysis focuses on identifying the genre, assessing grammatical quality, and examining the use of the appraisal system within the texts. The results of the analysis represent the authors' skills in constructing the texts for the property genres as well as their skills in exploiting emotive words for the components of the Appraisal system, i.e., Attitude and Graduation.

Several previous studies have investigated writing skills in text production. For instance, Khrisna et al. (2022) [1] examined the appraisal system used by translators in presenting the beauty of Sagopi in wayang performances. The analysis revealed that live captions did not fully capture the portrayal of Sagopi. While the shadow puppet performance offered a detailed description of Sagopi's beauty, the English live captions did not reflect this adequately. Deletions and shifts in appraisals were identified in the target language, caused mainly by the lack of culturally relevant terminology and the time lag between the puppeteer's oral utterances and the translator's typing speed during live captioning.

Additionally, Djatmika et al. (2023) [2] studied the ability of high school students to use emotive words in narrative texts. Their findings showed that teenage writers were skilled not only in creating coherent discourse units for narrative texts but also in using adjectives, adverbs, and verbs that represented the feelings of the characters within their stories. This research focused solely on narrative texts and the aspect of affect within the appraisal system.

2. Literature Review

In text analysis, genre refers to the categorization of texts based on their purpose, structure, and language features. Different genres serve various communicative functions and are characterized by distinct patterns of organization and language use. For instance, narrative texts are designed to tell stories, often following a sequence of events with characters, a setting, and a plot. Expository texts aim to inform or explain, typically featuring clear, factual information and logical organization. Persuasive texts seek to convince the reader of a particular point of view, employing arguments, evidence, and rhetorical strategies. Each genre not only fulfills specific communicative purposes but also follows conventions that guide the reader's expectations and

interpretation. Understanding genre is crucial for both producing and analyzing texts, as it helps identify the intended message and the most effective way to convey it. This framework is widely used in educational settings to teach students about different writing styles and their appropriate contexts (Santosa, et.al., 2021) [3].

Meanwhile, the Appraisal System is all about judging or evaluating things. These things can be people, objects, situations, behaviors, and so on. Generally, we can judge something as good (positive) or bad (negative). However, what one person thinks is good might not be the same for someone else. This idea of judgment led to the creation of the Appraisal Theory, which is part of the study of language. The Appraisal Theory was first introduced by Martin and Rose in 2003 [4] and later expanded by Martin and White in 2005 [5]. It's a relatively new field, so there aren't many references on it apart from the works of these authors. Many articles and journals on appraisal still mainly refer to Martin & Rose's (2003) [4] and Martin & White's (2005) [5] books.

Further, Martin and Rose (2003) [4]conceptualize appraisal as the evaluation of attitudes expressed in texts, the intensity of these attitudes, and how these values are conveyed to the readers. In simpler terms, through written texts, we can discern the writer's emotions and their judgments about the subjects they discuss. Similarly, Martin and White (2005) [5] define appraisal as the manner in which evaluation is articulated, amplified, and directed or sourced.

Such a theory is divided into three primary domains: Attitudes, Graduation, and Engagement. The first involves feelings, including emotions and behaviors of people, as well as judgments about objects. It answers the question, "What is the writer's attitude towards what they are writing about?"; the second is about measuring the level of someone's emotions. It looks at how strong or weak these feelings are. For example, "Are they slightly happy or extremely happy?"; and the third determines where and from whom the attitude comes. It looks at who is expressing the feelings or judgments and how these attitudes are presented to the reader. The current research focuses on the first two aspects of Appraisal Theory, namely Attitudes and Graduation, as utilized by the teenage writers in their promotional tourism texts.

Affect, one of the key elements of Attitude in Appraisal Theory, focuses on the expression of emotions, which can be positive or negative with varying intensity. According to Martin and White (2005) [5], affect is categorized into three groups: happiness/unhappiness, security/insecurity, and satisfaction/dissatisfaction. Happiness/unhappiness encompasses emotions like joy or sadness, where positive examples include joy and excitement, and negative examples include sadness and frustration. Security/insecurity involves feelings of safety and confidence versus fear expressions such feeling anxious. and anxiety, with Satisfaction/dissatisfaction addresses contentment or displeasure, seen in expressions of satisfaction or disappointment. Affect is conveyed through direct expressions, behavioral reactions, metaphorical language, and intensifiers. Examples include everyday conversations ("I'm so happy to see you!" or "I'm worried about the test"), literary descriptions ("Her heart leaped with joy" or "A wave of sadness washed over him"), and professional contexts ("We are pleased with the progress" or "The team is frustrated by the lack of communication"). These expressions provide insight into the speaker's emotional state and their reactions to various situations.

Moreover, in the Appraisal Theory, judgment refers to the assessment of others' behavior, attitude, and character, evaluating their appropriateness, abilities, and overall

disposition. According to Eggins and Slade, as cited by Khrisna et.al. (2016) [6], judgment can be identified through questions like "How would you judge that behavior?" or "What do/did you think of that?". In addition, Martin and White (2005) [5] categorize judgment into social esteem and social sanction, or personal and moral judgment. Social esteem judgment assesses behavior's appropriateness, capacity, and tenacity, such as labeling someone as "dependable" or "unpredictable." In contrast, social sanction judgment evaluates truthfulness and ethical behavior, with examples including calling someone "honest and trustworthy" or "deceitful and unethical." These judgments are conveyed through linguistic features like modalization and lexical choices, with words like "certainly" or "possibly" indicating varying degrees of certainty and adjectives like "brave" or "inept" reflecting positive or negative judgments. In everyday language, judgments about behavior, character, or actions shape our perceptions and interactions, as seen in praising someone as "hardworking" versus criticizing them as "lazy."

The other aspect of Attitude is Appreciation. It refers to evaluating the value or worth of objects, events, or phenomena, as opposed to judgment, which focuses on people's behavior. Appreciation can be identified from the question like "What do/did you think of that?" (Khrisna et.al., 2016) [6]. This concept includes reactions, compositions, and values. Reactions are our emotional responses, such as describing a movie as "exciting and dramatic" for positive appreciation or "dull and monotonous" for negative appreciation. Composition pertains to the structure or complexity of an object, where calling a painting "harmonious and balanced" signifies positive appreciation, whereas "disjointed and chaotic" implies negative appreciation. Value assessment determines an object's worth, with terms like "insightful and thought-provoking" indicating positive appreciation, and "shallow and insignificant" reflecting negative appreciation.

The exploitation of emotive language units representing the Attitude above is further supported by the Graduation of the Appraisal Theory. Graduation is used to measure the intensity or strength of evaluations, allowing for varying degrees of emphasis in judgments. It consists of two main categories: force and focus. Force graduation involves the amplification or attenuation of qualities, processes, or modalities, encompassing intensification, which magnifies a particular aspect (e.g., "She is extremely intelligent"), and quantification, which measures quantity or extent (e.g., "He has a few books"). In contrast, focus graduation refines the value of an attitude without altering its intensity, either by sharpening, which emphasizes a specific trait (e.g., "a true friend"), or by softening, which mitigates the severity of the judgment (e.g., "kind of silly")

3. Method

The study selected six of the best texts from participants in a training program to assess their skills in writing tourism promotion texts in English. The analysis focused on identifying the genre of each text. Discourse units from each text were collected to examine how these units were organized to form coherent paragraphs, aiming to identify whether the writer adhered to the conventional text structures of the target genres, specifically expository and persuasive.

Additionally, the appraisal system employed in each text was analyzed to evaluate the use of emotive words. This involved identifying adjectives, adverbs, and verbs that conveyed affect, judgment, and appreciation. The analysis also explored the use of graduation to assess the intensity of emotions expressed in the texts.

4. Result and Discussion

4.1 Identification of Genre

The analysis of the six selected tourism promotion texts revealed that the majority of the participants produced texts that adhered to the expository genre. This genre was characterized by a clear and factual presentation of information about the tourist attractions in Plupuh Sub-District. The participants effectively utilized organizational patterns such as description, enumeration, and cause-effect to provide comprehensive information about the attractions.

However, some texts exhibited features of persuasive genre, aiming to convince the reader to visit the attractions. These texts employed rhetorical strategies, including appealing to emotions, using vivid imagery, and incorporating persuasive language to influence the reader's decision. The genre and the distribution of the discourse units are presented in the following table.

Table 1 Genre and Distribution of Discourse Units Text Title Obligatory Units Text Genre Manyarejo Museum Introduc Des of Historical Des of Descript Descript Description Location Purposes tion backgroun ion of ion of Physical Building Arrange Bahulak Market 1 Historical Historical Introduc Descriptio Descript Description tion backgroun Backgroun d d Bahulak Market 2 Introduc Descriptio Description tion Mbah Gumul Well Introduc Historical Descriptio Description Spring Backgroun tion n Religious Tourism at Introduc Des of Historical Des of Des of Des of Des Des Description the Tomb of Joko tion Location backgroun Content Content Parts of of Visiti Tingkir d Locat ion ng Time The Grave of Joko Reorient Orientat Event Event Event Recount/ Historical Tingkir ion ation Biography

4.2 Use of Appraisal System

The appraisal analysis conducted on the six texts written by the students primarily focused on the attitude components of the appraisal system, which include Affect, Judgment, and Appreciation. The analysis aimed to identify and evaluate the emotional

responses (Affect), assessments of behavior (Judgment), and evaluations of objects and entities (Appreciation) as expressed through various adjectives and descriptive phrases in the texts.

The analysis also included the Graduation aspect of the appraisal system, which focuses on the intensity or degree of the evaluations made in the texts. This involves scaling the force or focus of the evaluations, making them stronger or weaker. For instance, terms like "most visited" and "very influential" intensify the evaluations, indicating a higher degree of significance or importance.

Affect refers to the expression of feelings and emotions within the text. It evaluates how the text conveys the writer's emotional responses to people, events, and situations. However, In the appraisal analysis of the six texts written by students, it was discovered that only the text about Bahulak Market included adjectives that represent Affect as displayed by the table below. These adjectives—excited, charmed, and enthusiastic highlight emotional responses and feelings, distinguishing this text from the others. The adjective "excited" conveys a feeling of eagerness and anticipation, suggesting a high level of interest and positive emotional engagement with the market environment. "Charmed" expresses a sense of being delighted or fascinated, indicating that the market has an appealing and enchanting quality, evoking warmth and pleasure in visitors, "Enthusiastic" signifies a strong feeling of excitement and eagerness, reflecting a passionate and energetic response to the market's offerings and atmosphere. These adjectives collectively illustrate the Affect component of the appraisal system, focusing on the emotional reactions and feelings evoked by Bahulak Market. Their inclusion in the text provides a more vivid and engaging description, helping to convey the market's impact on visitors' emotions. This emphasis on Affect sets the Bahulak Market text apart from the others, which primarily relied on Judgment and Appreciation without explicitly addressing emotional responses.

Table 2 Affect of the Texts

												Form	s											
Text	Quality					Process								Comment										
	positive		Negative		Positive				Negative			Positive			Negative									
							Beha	avioral		Men	ital		Behav	/ioral		Mei	ntal							
	hp	SC	st	uhp	isc	dst	hp	SC	st	hp	SC	st	uhp	isc	dst	uh	isc	dst	hp	sc	st	uhp	isc	dst
																p								
1																								
2	Excited																							
	Charmed																							
	Enthusiastic																							
3																								
4																								
5																								
6																								

hp: happiness uhp: unhappiness sc: secure isc: insecurity st: satisfaction dst: disatifaction The analysis of the six texts reveals that only the text about Joko Tingkir (Text 6) explicitly employs adjectives representing judgment for social esteem, focusing on the dimensions of normality, capacity, and tenacity. Judgment of social esteem evaluates a person's character and behaviors based on societal values and norms. In this context, adjectives such as "good," "skilled," "far-sighted," and "brave" are used to positively assess Joko Tingkir's character. For instance, under normality, "good" describes his esteemed reputation among people and military leaders, aligning with societal expectations. In terms of capacity, "skilled" highlights his military competence, while "far-sighted" underscores his strategic planning and vision for the future. Regarding tenacity, "brave" appraises his courage and reliability in combat. This analysis is summarized in the table, showing that only Text 6 utilizes these adjectives to praise Joko Tingkir's qualities, highlighting his goodness, skills, foresight, and bravery. This selective use of judgment for social esteem enhances the portrayal of Joko Tingkir's character, emphasizing his respected status in historical narratives. The following table present the data of Judgment.

Table 3 Social Esteem

Text		norm	ality			сара	ıcity		tenacity					
		'how sp	ecial?'			'how capable?'				'how dependable?'				
		itive mire)		ative icize)	Posi (Adn			ative ticize)		sitive mire)		ative ticize)		
	Adj	Mod	Adj	Mod	Adj	Mod	Adj	Mod	Adj	Mod	Adj	Mod		
1														
2														
3														
4														
5														
6	Good				skilled				brave					
					far-									
					sighted									

Adj: Adjective Mod: Modality

Meanwhile, the analysis of the six texts shows that the adjectives representing social sanction, specifically in the areas of veracity (honesty) and propriety (ethics), are minimally employed. Social sanction pertains to evaluating a person's actions based on societal standards of truthfulness and moral conduct. Among the texts, only the description of Joko Tingkir (Text 6) and the Bahulak Market text (Text 5) contain relevant adjectives. In Text 6, the adjective "wise" appraises Joko Tingkir's ethical and prudent decision-making abilities, indicating his moral integrity and sound judgment. Similarly, in Text 5, the adjective "majestic" is used to praise the subject's noble and dignified qualities, suggesting a character of honor and ethical standing. The table summarizing these findings demonstrates that veracity is not addressed in any of the texts, while propriety is positively highlighted through the adjectives "wise" and "majestic." This detailed examination illustrates how these specific adjectives contribute to portraying the individuals' integrity and ethical stature in the historical narratives. Table 4 below shows the data for the social sanction.

Table 4 Social Sanction

	Positive [praise]		- 0	ative demn]	Positive [[praise]	Negative [condemn]		
	Adj	Mod	Adj	Mod	Adj	Mod	Adj	Mod	
1									
2									
3									
4									
5					majestic				
6					wise				

The analysis of the six texts reveals various instances of appreciation, focusing on the subcategories of reaction, composition, and valuation within the appraisal framework. Appreciation evaluates the aesthetic qualities, value, and impact of objects and entities, enriching the descriptive and evaluative depth of the texts. In Text 1, adjectives like "interesting" signify the engaging nature, while "iconic," "maintained," and "authentic" reflect distinct and genuine characteristics. Additionally, "equipped" and "valuable" highlight the subject's utility and worth. Text 2 uses "attractive" to denote appeal, and "unique," "old-fashioned," "traditional," and "special" to describe its cultural significance, with "rare" emphasizing its precious nature. Text 3 employs "traditional," "ancient," and "safe" to underline historical and secure attributes. Text 4 utilizes "historical," "local," and "green" to capture cultural, geographical, and environmental qualities. Text 5 describes the subject's widespread recognition with "famous," its emblematic status with "iconic," and its importance with "prominent" and "necessary." Finally, Text 6 highlights reliability with "stable" and renown with "famous." These adjectives collectively contribute to a nuanced portrayal of the subjects, enhancing the reader's understanding and appreciation of their unique attributes and cultural significance.

Table 5 Appeciation

Text	Rea	ction	Comp	position	Valuation		
	Impact	Quality	Balance	Complexity			
1	interesting	iconic, maintained		equipped	valuable		
2	attractive	authentic unique old-fashioned traditional			rare		
3		special traditional ancient					
4		safe historical local					
5		green famous iconic			prominent necessary		
6		stable famous			,		

Finally, the analysis of the six texts reveals various instances of graduation within the appraisal framework, particularly focusing on the categories of force (intensification and quantification) and focus (sharpening and softening). Graduation is utilized to amplify or diminish the intensity or clarity of an evaluation, thus modifying the impact of the appraisal.

In the analysis of the six selected texts, various linguistic strategies are employed to enhance or diminish the intensity and clarity of the descriptions. In Text 1, the adjective "very interesting" functions as an intensifier, augmenting the perceived interest, while phrases such as "many" and "not only... but in every" serve to quantify the extent and frequency of the features described, and "well" provides sharpening for clarity. Text 2 exhibits graduation through the adverb "increasingly," which intensifies the degree of change, and "less," which softens the extent of an attribute. Text 4 uses quantification with terms like "gradually" and "three times," indicating frequency and incremental change, and sharpening with "precisely" to enhance accuracy; the modal "must" underscores necessity. Text 5 employs "precisely" for sharpening to add exactness, and "always" for both intensification and quantification to emphasize constancy. Text 6 features graduation with "successfully," highlighting positive outcomes, while "initially" and "always" quantify temporal aspects and regularity. These instances illustrate the nuanced use of language to convey varying degrees of evaluation and emphasis, refining readers' understanding and emotional engagement with the content, and highlighting the importance of linguistic choices in descriptive and narrative contexts.

		Tuois o Olumuulii				
Text	Fc	orce	Focus			
	Intensification	Quantification	Sharpening	Softening		
1	very interesting	many not only but in every	well			
2		increasingly		less		
3						
4		gradually three times	precisely must			
5	precisely	always				

always

Table 6 Graduation

5. Conclusion

6

successfully

initially

Based on the genre analysis and appraisal analysis of the six tourism promotional texts, we can infer several aspects of the writers' skills in crafting these texts. The genre analysis revealed that five of the texts were descriptive, utilizing obligatory discourse units such as introduction and description, with one text incorporating additional historical background information. This indicates a basic understanding of structuring

descriptive texts, though there is room for improvement in consistently incorporating relevant background information to enhance the promotional appeal.

The appraisal analysis, focusing on attitude components like Affect, Judgment, and Appreciation, showed varied use of evaluative language. Notably, only the text about Bahulak Market exploited adjectives representing Affect, suggesting that the writers could further develop their skills in conveying emotions and personal engagement in their writing. The use of judgment for social esteem was primarily evident in the text about Joko Tingkir, with adjectives like "good," "skilled," "far-sighted," and "brave" positively appraising Joko Tingkir's character. This indicates an ability to evaluate and express character traits effectively, although this skill was not uniformly demonstrated across all texts.

Furthermore, the analysis of appreciation showed varied usage of adjectives to evaluate reaction, composition, and valuation. Terms like "interesting," "unique," "traditional," and "majestic" indicate an awareness of how to appraise the aesthetic and functional qualities of tourism sites. However, this aspect could be further refined to consistently enhance the promotional impact of the texts.

The graduation analysis highlighted the use of intensification, quantification, sharpening, and softening across the texts. Terms such as "very interesting," "precisely," and "gradually" show an ability to modulate the intensity and clarity of evaluations. Nevertheless, there is potential for more nuanced and varied use of graduation to enrich the promotional language and better engage readers.

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