

## **THE ANALYSIS OF ENGLISH USED IN BALI TOUR AND TRAVEL AGENCIES' CORRESPONDENCES**

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### **Abstract**

English delivers various functions in the realms of tourism and hospitality. Since the significant role of English in tourism business, the talents working in the sector should be fluently communicating in English. One sector requires fluent English skill in tour and travel agencies which driving to the English course for students of tour and travel business. This study aimed at finding out the use of English in tour and travel agencies' correspondences as well as analysing the language functions found in the correspondence. The research implemented qualitative research approach in which the data were collected through interview and observation in BBM tour and travel. Data were analysed qualitatively to describe and explain the data clearly and systematically. The results of data analysis revealed that English is used to do correspondences to clients and partners. The topics covered in the correspondences were offering package, tour booking, general inquiry, booking cancelation, inspection proposal, commission agreement, contract rate request, collection letter, and acknowledgement letter. The English used to deliver those topics was falling into four language functions, based on Leech's theory, that were phatic function, informative function, directive function, and expressive function. Meanwhile aesthetic function was not notably found in the correspondence since the communication done by tour and travel agencies should be clear and understandable. The results of this research significantly contribute to the English education, particularly in tour and travel business.

**Keywords :** Correspondence, English, Language Function, Tour and Travel

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### **Introduction**

In the realm of the tourism and hospitality industry, the utilization of the English language assumes a pivotal role as a primary mode of communication. English finds extensive application across various facets of the tourism and hospitality sector, particularly in domains where effective communication between tourism professionals and international visitors is essential. The prevalence of English as the lingua franca facilitates seamless communication within this industry. Notably, tour and travel agencies constitute a sector wherein English serves as the predominant means of communication.

While English usage within tour and travel agencies traditionally emphasizes tour guiding, its application extends beyond this realm. English is employed for correspondences with tourists both prior to their arrival at destinations and subsequently. Such correspondences, categorized as business correspondences, encompass a spectrum of written communications within the business domain, spanning informational exchanges, business offers, claims or complaints, advertising and marketing materials, personnel letters or resumes, as well as personal and social letters (Sviatiuk, 2015). The communication mediums, whether electronic or printed, are collectively regarded as correspondence. Tour and travel agencies engage extensively in correspondence as a means of communication with tourists and other business associates.



Recognizing the significance of English proficiency for tour and travel agencies, it is imperative that English be a mandatory subject for students majoring in tour and travel business in Bali. The provision of English lessons aims to equip students with the linguistic competence necessary for fluent communication with foreign partners and international tourists. Research indicates a deficiency in the ability of tour and travel business students to conduct English correspondences, attributable to challenges such as selecting appropriate vocabulary for formal communication and composing emails and letters with direct, communicative, and polite nuances (Fadilah and Nusantara, 2019). Addressing this inadequacy necessitates the enhancement of students' competence through tailored learning processes and media.

The development of suitable learning media for tour and travel business students requires a meticulous analysis of English language usage within the tour and travel sector. Sampelolo et al., (2023) underscored the importance of developing English language learning materials that reflect authentic usage in real-world contexts. The term "authentic use of English" pertains to the application of English in genuine situations. Learning materials aligned with the authentic use of English afford students exposure to real expressions, thereby enhancing their mastery of vocabulary and expressions. Such materials contribute to sharpening students' English proficiency in preparation for their roles within the tour and travel industry.

Consequently, an in-depth examination of English language usage in tour and travel correspondence becomes paramount for the development of pertinent English learning materials. Remarkably, previous research has neglected this specific aspect, indicating a notable gap in the development of English learning materials for the tour and travel industry. To address this lacuna, the present study endeavours to shed light on the patterns of English usage in tour and travel correspondence, with the overarching goal of facilitating the creation of tailored English learning materials specifically suited for tour and travel correspondence. The study aims to analyze the functions of English, encompassing expressions and linguistic elements, within the correspondences of tour and travel businesses.

## Literature Review

This investigation was grounded in the theoretical framework of language function, as proposed by Leech (1974), which classifies language functions into five overarching categories. These categories encompass:

- a. Informational Function: This involves the utilization of language to disseminate or convey information to others. For instance, a tour and travel administrator may inform clients about the tour packages they offer.
- b. Expression Function: This pertains to the use of language to articulate one's emotions or sentiments regarding specific subjects or individuals. An illustrative example of this function is an individual expressing happiness through language.
- c. Directive Function: Here, language serves as a tool to instruct or guide others to perform certain actions, as articulated by the speaker. An instance would be directing someone to leave a message during a phone call.
- d. Aesthetic Function: This involves the use of language in artistic endeavors, such as poetry or literature.
- e. Pathic Function: In this function, language is employed to cultivate and sustain relationships among individuals. Language assumes a significant role in the establishment and maintenance of interpersonal connections.

Several investigations have been conducted by prior scholars regarding the utilization of English within the realms of tourism and hospitality. Denok et al. (2017) conducted a study entitled "Developing A Method of Learning English Speaking Skills Based on the Language Functions Used in The Food and Beverage Service." The objective of this research was to elucidate the use of English in the domain of food and beverage service. Data analysis revealed that the language functions employed in this sector encompassed (1) informative function, (2) interactive function, (3) directive function, (4) persuasive function, (5) permissive function, and (6) indicative function. Lestari's (2017) research aligns with the present investigation, particularly in terms of the research methodology employed to analyze language functions.

Damayanti (2019) conducted a study exploring the significance of English in the hospitality and tourism sector, titled "The Analysis on the Importance of English in Tourism Sector." Employing a library research design, Damayanti analyzed various articles and books related to the research topics. The outcomes revealed that English played pivotal roles in the tourism industry, encompassing communicative, integrative, lingua-franca, relationship fostering, business/economic, and functional roles.

Similarly, Budiarsa (2021) conducted a related investigation in 2020 titled "The Styles of Language Used in Hospitality Industry." Employing a qualitative explanatory approach, Budiarsa's research disclosed that hospitality workers utilized strategies such as (1) code switching between English and Indonesian, (2) code mixing to explain dishes and processes, and (3) jargon commonly employed in the food and beverage service sector to facilitate communication with guests or tourists. This study is pertinent to the current research, as both investigations share the objective of analyzing language usage within the tourism and hospitality sector.

## **Research Method**

In pursuit of the research objective, which involves an in-depth analysis of the utilization of the English language in tour and travel correspondence, a qualitative research methodology was employed. Leavy (2017) mentioned that qualitative research is emphasizing on deep understanding on certain case or phenomenon. The selection of this method was predicated upon the overarching goal of furnishing a comprehensive examination of the use of English in tour and travel correspondence, inclusive of delineating the pertinent language functions employed. Data for this study were procured through a combination of observational techniques and direct interviews conducted with administrators associated with BBM Tour & Travel.

Observation, as a methodological approach, entailed on-site scrutiny, wherein the researcher observed administrators engaged in correspondence via email or telephone. This observational strategy facilitated the collection of data pertaining to the linguistic expressions employed in such communicative exchanges. Additionally, interviews were conducted with both tour and travel administrators and personnel to elicit more expansive and profound insights relevant to the research inquiry.

Furthermore, a meticulous analysis of documents was executed, wherein all letters and emails within the purview of BBM Tours were scrutinized and studied. This document analysis served as a means to glean authentic instances of English language usage within the tour and travel domain. The qualitative data obtained through interviews, observations, and document analysis underwent systematic coding and organizational processes to facilitate a coherent

interpretation of the amassed information. This methodological rigor in data organization served as a crucial tool in enhancing the research's ability to comprehend and expound upon the multifaceted facets of English language utilization in tour and travel correspondence.

## **Results and Discussion**

The analysis highlights the importance of various English skills in tour and travel correspondence, with a particular emphasis on writing skill as the most crucial. This finding aligns with Hiranburana (2017) research in the business field, emphasizing the significance of writing skill for effective communication. For BBM tour and travel staff, mastering writing skills is essential for composing emails, letters, and short messages using proper English to ensure clear communication with clients and partners.

Furthermore, the staff's ability to comprehend emails, letters, and short messages from clients and partners is vital for producing effective written correspondences. Reading skill, therefore, becomes another key component in tour and travel correspondence. Additionally, English-speaking skill is crucial for direct correspondences through phone calls or meetings, necessitating the ability to articulate proper English utterances. English listening skills are equally important for providing accurate responses.

While all four English skills (writing, reading, speaking, and listening) are necessary for tour and travel correspondences, the analysis underscores that writing and reading skills take precedence, given that most interactions occur through written communication channels. The significance of writing skill in the tourism sector is reinforced by the research conducted by Prihandoko et al. (2019), which found that writing skill was the top English skill required in the tourism sector in Merauke.

In terms of the use of English in tour and travel correspondences, the analysis suggests that BBM tour and travel staff or administrators utilize English for various purposes. Here is the list of the use of English in tour and travel correspondences.

### **a. Offering Products/ Tour Packages**

In the realm of tour and travel correspondence, the primary objective of employing the English The primary utilization of English in tour and travel correspondence involves the proposition of products or tour packages to a diverse clientele, encompassing individual travelers, tourists, companies, and tour and travel partners. The procedural structure of the offering letter, intended to showcase the tour packages, typically incorporates four components: (1) greeting and salutation, (2) presentation of product or tour package details, (3) a call to action, and (4) closure.

Frequent English greetings and salutations found in these communications include "Dear...," "Greetings from...," and "Hope this email finds you well." To convey information regarding the tour packages, BBM tour and travel staff commonly employ expressions like "Hereby we attached the tour packages that we offer" or "Please find the revised itinerary in the attachment."

Prior to concluding the email, a call to action is introduced, urging recipients with statements such as "Please do not hesitate to contact me for further assistance" or "Should you have any questions, please feel free to drop me an email or WhatsApp." The email is formally concluded with customary closures such as "Regards," "Sincerely," etc.

The act of offering products emerges as a significant focus within the tour and travel sector, substantiated by the findings of Rasika & Sharma (2019) positioning product offerings among the top three topics within the industry. This underscores the pivotal role of English communication in articulating and promoting tour packages to diverse stakeholders.

#### b. Tour Booking

The subsequent subject matter addressed in tour and travel correspondences pertains to the tour booking letter. Generally initiated by clients, including individual travelers, corporations, and collaborative tour and travel partners, the tour booking letter prompts a necessary response from the administrators of tour and travel agencies. This reply aims to confirm the booking and provide pertinent information. In this context, the staff involved, hereinafter referred to as BBM staff, is required to furnish a comprehensive response, encompassing a quotation for clients and imperative instructions.

In the management of tour bookings, tour and travel administrators adhere to a structured protocol, involving:

##### 1. Greeting the Clients:

Electronic communication, primarily via email, serves as the medium for initiating contact with clients. Common salutations employed include "Dear," "Greetings from," and expressions such as "Hope this email finds you well."

##### 2. Confirmation of Booking:

The confirmation process encompasses notifying clients about the confirmed number of passengers (pax) and the associated price. Examples of confirmation expressions include "We confirm your travel booking" and specific details such as "We confirmed 2 pax for the Kintamani tour."

##### 3. Issuing Instructions:

Essential instructions for clients are incorporated into the communication. These directives encompass various aspects, including but not limited to hotel reservations and other travel essentials. Examples of instructions include "Please proceed with the reservation of the hotel" and "Kindly keep us updated on your flight schedule."

The conclusion of the email is characterized by standard closing statements, indicating the administrator's availability for further assistance. Examples of such concluding expressions are "Please do not hesitate to contact me for further assistance" or "Should you have any questions, please feel free to drop me an email or contact via WhatsApp." The email is formally closed with closing remarks such as "Regards," "Sincerely," or equivalent expressions.

In summary, academic writing within the realm of tour and travel correspondences adheres to a systematic approach, employing formal language and structured expressions while utilizing examples that illustrate the various facets of client interaction in the context of tour booking.

#### c. General Inquiry

The topic of general inquiry, a prevalent form of communication within tour and travel correspondences, involves exchanges between both clients (including travelers and companies) and tour and travel agencies, specifically BBM Tour and Travel. General inquiries are commonly initiated by clients seeking detailed information about travel arrangements and itineraries. Conversely, BBM Tour and Travel also initiates letters of inquiry directed towards destinations, accommodations, and management of tourism

attractions, aiming to gather comprehensive details on packages, inclusions, meals, and related aspects.

When composing letters of inquiry to destinations, accommodations, and tourism attraction managements, BBM Tour and Travel Administrators employ various English expressions, including greetings, WH questions, Yes-No Questions, and instructions. Common salutations include "Dear," "Greetings from," and "Hope this email finds you well." WH-Questions and Yes-No Questions directed to destinations often revolve around inclusions, meal details, and traveler requirements.

In response, BBM Tour and Travel Administrators follow a structured approach, incorporating greetings, providing necessary information, and offering further assistance. Salutations such as "Dear," "Greetings from," and "Hope this email finds you well" are reiterated. Information provision is articulated with phrases like "Hereby the information that you need related to your travel" or "Please find the information in the attached file." Additionally, expressions like "Please do not hesitate to contact me for further assistance" or "Should you have any questions, please feel free to drop me an email or WhatsApp" convey a commitment to aiding clients. The correspondence is formally concluded with closing remarks such as "Regards," "Sincerely,".

d. Booking Cancellation

The fourth aspect addressed in tour and travel correspondence pertains to the management of booking cancellations. This type of communication typically originates from BBM Tour and Travel administrators and is directed towards various partners, including accommodations, destinations, restaurants, and tourism attractions, subsequent to client-initiated cancellations. Handling booking cancellations involves a structured approach encompassing greetings, apologies, provision of detailed information, and appropriate closure.

BBM Tour and Travel administrators employ standard English greetings and salutations in their communication, exemplified by phrases such as "Dear," "Greetings from," and "Hope this email finds you well." Expressions of apology are articulated with professionalism, such as "We are very sorry that we have to cancel the..." or "The final decision of room reservation for... has to be cancelled. We truly apologize for the cancellation."

The email's conclusion reinforces the commitment to further assistance with statements like "Please do not hesitate to contact me for further assistance" or "Should you have any questions, please feel free to drop me an email or WhatsApp." The formal closure maintains a professional tone, employing customary phrases such as "Regards," "Sincerely,".

e. Inspection Proposal

Tour and Travel administrators at BBM also engage in the formal communication of emails, texts, or letters to accommodations, destinations, restaurants, and tourism attractions to facilitate site inspections. The communication for site inspections typically follows a structured format, including greetings, requests for complimentary meals or rooms, provision of site inspection details, solicitation of responses, and a formal closing.

In extending greetings to partners via email, administrators employ standard expressions such as "Dear," "Greetings from," and "Hope this email finds you well." When requesting complimentary meals and rooms, administrators utilize phrases like "We would like to request complimentary meals and rooms for our team in your property" or inquire, "Is it possible to have complimentary meals and rooms for our team in your property?"

Moreover, administrators inform partners of the specifics of the site visit or inspection, conveying details in a professional manner. An example of this would be, "Regarding the

above Subject, we are glad to inform you that our travel partner from Poland will conduct an inspection in Bali, with one of the hotels in Sidemen being Uma Agung."

f. Commission Agreement

Partners, including souvenir stores, restaurants, accommodations, destinations, and attractions, convey commission agreements to tour and travel agencies, proposing commissions for directing tourists to their establishments. This formal communication involves customary components such as greetings, expression of commission intentions, detailed information provision, instructions, and closure.

The conventional greetings used in these communications include expressions like "Dear," "Greetings from," and "Hope this email finds you well." Partners articulate their intention to offer commissions with phrases such as "As we work closely together, we would like to offer shopping commissions for you." Detailed information is typically shared, with partners directing agencies to relevant attachments, stating, "Please find the attachment for detailed information." The attached documents often include forms or contracts that require mutual agreement and signatures.

In response, BBM Tour and Travel administrators reciprocate with courteous greetings like "Dear," "Greetings from," and "Hope this email finds you well." Expressions of gratitude for the offered commissions are conveyed, such as "Thank you for the offer" or "I appreciate your offer." Administrators then proceed to send signed documents in response, noting, "Please find the signed contract in the attachments." The closure of the email reinforces the availability for further assistance with phrases like "Please do not hesitate to contact me" or "Should you have any questions, please feel free to drop me an email or WhatsApp." The email is formally concluded with polite closures such as "Regards," "Sincerely," .

g. Contract Rate Request

Tour and travel agencies, in their pursuit of refining pricing strategies, regularly engage in the solicitation of contract rates from partners to update published rates. BBM Tour and Travel administrators routinely communicate with partners via email, adhering to a formal structure encompassing greetings, expressions of gratitude, articulation of the email's purpose, the explicit request for pricing information, and a formal closing.

The customary expressions of greetings employed in these communications include "Dear," "Greetings from," and "Hope this email finds you well." Expressions of gratitude follow the greetings, with administrators conveying appreciation for collaboration in statements like "First of all, we thank you for your great support and good cooperation, and we expect this will continue for the future."

The crux of the contract rate request is underscored by elucidating the need for the latest pricing information. Administrators convey their intention with statements like "This is kindly to inform you that to make proper planning and pricing for our faithful clients, we look forward to continuing your support for future cooperation." The administrators then explicitly request the latest pricing details, specifying market segmentation with statements such as "Appreciate if you could segment the rates into European Market, Asian Market, and Domestic Market."

The closure of the email emphasizes the availability for further assistance, utilizing phrases like "Please do not hesitate to contact me" or "Should you have any questions, please feel free to drop me an email or WhatsApp." The formal closing includes expressions such as "Regards," "Sincerely," aligning with the conventions of good communication.

h. Collection Letter



Tour and travel correspondence serves the purpose of collecting payments from clients and partners, necessitating the issuance of reminders through emails, letters, or texts by BBM Tour and Travel administrators. In this process, administrators adopt a polite tone to prevent any potential offense, structuring collection communications with elements including greetings, expression of intentions, polite reminders, provision of payment details, and a formal closing.

The customary expressions of greetings in these communications include "Dear," "Greetings from," and "Hope this email finds you well." The administrators proceed to gently remind clients and partners about pending payments, employing phrases such as "I am writing you this email as a gentle reminder on the payment of..."

Subsequently, administrators provide details of the payment, including the amount to be paid and the accepted payment methods, using statements like "Please find the details in the attachment" or "The payment should be transferred to..."

The closure of the email emphasizes the willingness to provide further assistance, utilizing phrases such as "Please do not hesitate to contact me" or "Should you have any questions, please feel free to drop me an email or WhatsApp." The formal closing includes expressions like "Regards," "Sincerely," in adherence to the conventions of good communication.

#### i. Acknowledgment Letter

Tour and travel correspondence serves the final purpose of acknowledging payments from clients and partners, distinguishing its structure from that of collection letters due to its distinct objective. In the acknowledgment letter, BBM Tour and Travel administrators begin by extending greetings to clients or partners and informing them of the successful receipt of payment. Throughout this correspondence, administrators emphasize expressions of gratitude, including phrases such as "Thank you for the payment" and "Thank you for the collaboration." The tone of the acknowledgment letter is characterized by appreciation and recognition, reinforcing the positive rapport between the tour and travel agency and its clients and partners.

Moreover, this study delved into the examination of language functions manifested in tour and travel correspondence. The analysis of language functions in this research was grounded in Leech's (1974) language function theory, which categorizes language functions into five overarching categories: informational function, directive function, expressive function, aesthetics function, and phatic function. The exploration of these language functions provided a comprehensive understanding of how communication in the tour and travel industry serves varied purposes, contributing valuable insights to the broader field of communication studies.

#### a. Phatic function

The phatic function of language, dedicated to sustaining interpersonal relationships, emerges as the predominant language function within tour and travel correspondence. This prevalence is attributed to the imperative for tour and travel administrators to cultivate and uphold relationships with both clients and partners. The manifestation of the phatic function in English within this context is evident in the greetings and closings of emails, exemplified by phrases such as "Dear...," "Warmest greetings from...," "Thank you for your trust," "We cannot wait to see you in Bali," and "Regards." This observation aligns with the findings of Mantra et al. (2020), who identified that English, in the hospitality and tourism industry, serves not only as a communication tool but also plays a crucial role in building and maintaining social relationships. Similarly, Jeannette (2022) highlighted in the paper titled "English in the Workplace: An Analysis of the Communicative Needs of Benin Banking, Tourism, and Travelling Personnel" that English serves the purpose of



preventing misunderstandings and fostering a family-like atmosphere within the banking, travel, and tourism sectors. This underscores the vital role of the phatic function in tour and travel correspondence for nurturing and sustaining meaningful relationships.

**b. Informational Function**

The informational function, integral to language usage, serves the purpose of conveying information to others. Given that the primary objective of tour and travel correspondence is to furnish clear information to both clients and partners, it is unsurprising that the informational function prominently prevails in such communication. Instances of informational functions within this context include statements such as "Our tour package includes...", "To enter Bali, you do not need a Covid-free letter," and "The detailed information is attached in the document provided." Consistent with these observations, Nazira et al. (2023) identified the provision of information as one of the most prevalent language functions among tourism and hotel workers in Padang. Additionally, Aldohon (2014) acknowledged the utilization of English by tourism workers, particularly tourism police officers, for delivering services to foreigners and addressing inquiries. This underscores the significance of the informational function in tour and travel correspondence for effective communication and service provision.

**c. Directive Function**

The directive function, intricately tied to the communication's purpose between tour and travel agencies and clients or partners, is another prevalent language function found in tour and travel correspondence. The administrators may issue directives, directing clients and partners to undertake specific actions pertaining to the tour package. For example, statements like "Please inform us if you have any food allergies" or "Please send us the details of your arrival" reflect instances of the directive function. It is noteworthy that the directive function of English is not exclusive to tour and travel correspondence; Anatoliyivna et al. (2019) identified its presence in communication within the hospitality industry as well. This underscores the versatility of the directive function across various sectors, including tour and travel, as a means of providing clear instructions and guiding actions.

The expressive function, often employed in the acknowledgment letter, surfaces when tour and travel entities convey sentiments of joy in managing clients' tours or express satisfaction in collaborating with partners. Conversely, the aesthetics function is notably absent in tour and travel communication, as the primary emphasis is placed on clarity and ease of understanding. In the acknowledgment letter, expressions of happiness are evident, exemplified by statements such as "We are delighted to handle your tour" or "We express our joy in collaborating with esteemed partners." The absence of aesthetics function aligns with the overarching goal of ensuring transparent and comprehensible communication within the correspondence.

The correspondence between tour and travel administrators and clients is also conveyed in both oral and written communication, yet this research scope was confined to the written form. While written communication offers valuable insights, the exclusion of oral interactions may limit a comprehensive understanding of the entire communication spectrum. Future research could delve into the nuances of oral communication to provide a more holistic view of the subject matter."

## **Conclusion**

Based on results of data analysis, it was found that the most common language function used in tour and travel correspondence was phatic function since the communication aimed at



maintaining the relationship while discussing the products. Proficiency in the English language is of paramount significance in the realm of tour and travel correspondence. Specifically, adeptness in writing constitutes an indispensable skill for effective communication in English within the tour and travel sector. The predominant subjects addressed during the correspondence pertain to the formulation of package offerings, furnishing detailed information, soliciting site inspections, managing cancellations, and facilitating payment collection.

The communicative exchanges within these thematic domains serve to embody four distinct language functions, namely the phatic function, informational function, directive function, and expressive function. It is imperative that the communication within tour and travel correspondence manifests clarity and comprehension, with a primary emphasis on conveying information rather than accentuating aesthetic considerations.

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