

## Persuasion Strategies in Tourism Discourse "The model of a tourist guide

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### Abstract:

It has become clear that the tourist discourse is not different from the literary discourse, as both are based on communicative language and characteristics that ensure the attraction and persuasion of the recipient. The creative work directed towards the recipient by the creator as sender and the promoter of tourism conveys a discourse, whether it is written, auditory or visual, to the target person or the specific segment (the addressee), and the goal is always the submission of the recipient.

Our research is concerned with the tourist guide, text and image, and examines the relationship between them. It focuses on the linguistic signs that accompany the advertising image and support it in its communicative capacity and explanatory function, since, according to Roland Barthes, they increase the clarification of the image, dispel its density and reveal what it fails to convey.

Taking into account the image of words and the way they are printed in the space of the advertising guide is an essential condition for convincing the viewer and converting him into a real customer.

**Keywords:** Strategies, persuasion, guide, tourism, image.

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### Introduction:

There is no doubt that every utterance presupposes a speaker and a listener, where the first party intends to influence the second party, which is called "discourse". The final result of discourse is to achieve communication and thus the success of the communicative process, which depends on the clarity of the message and its appropriateness or congruence with the context of its use. It is quite easy to identify discourse, whatever its type, on the basis of the nature of the message to be conveyed, i.e. the subject, the style and the functional terminology. The objectives and purposes are what achieve or distinguish one discourse from another.

The aim of the tourism advertising discourse is to attract the potential customer through methods or strategies that induce him to change his behaviour in order to accept the presented product or service. The most important of these strategies are: informative, persuasive and aesthetic. It is quite easy for the receiver of this discourse to discover them, because the first one is limited to creating the awareness of tourism in the consumer or customer; the second one tries to persuade him by creating positive impressions and eliminating negative elements, and is based on two components: the linguistic component and the iconic component, while the third one is concerned with everything positive, such as planning, choosing priorities and selecting texts close to poetry. The advertiser has realised the effectiveness of using these strategies in the advertising discourse, so he has endeavoured to use or select the best and most important methods, tools and means in the design of his advertisements in order to influence the receiver/consumer and make him want to accept the product, as is the case with the tourist guide.

### **1- The concept of advertising discourse:**

The most important common element between advertising discourse and other types of discourse is the element of effectiveness or influence, and the achievement of the objectives of any discourse depends on the degree of its impact on the receiver or target audience. Therefore, the producer of the discourse works to create the conditions for its success and then markets it through the available visual and audio media. What distinguishes advertising discourse is the element of propaganda, which in its simplest definition is “a set of news and information used to attract the attention of individuals to a person, place or event, or it is the propaganda used in mass communication” (Cambridge dictionary, make your words meaningful, 2024).

Propaganda is clearly manifested in advertising discourse, and despite the diversity of its concepts, the product/consumer duality is almost never absent. It is “the impersonal means aimed at presenting ideas, goods or services by a known party in return for a paid fee” (Abaidat, 2002, p. 251). It also relies on all available media or possible means of expression to convince the recipient of the feasibility of consumption, even if he is not inclined to do so for economic, social or cultural reasons. (Boutayeb, 2003, p. 67).

### **2- Tourism Advertising Discourse:**

Tourism leaders have recognised that the most effective way to promote tourism products is through promotional discourse, as it is the optimal means of communication and interaction with the public. It can be used to present the range of tangible and intangible services on offer in the tourism market, represented by the facilities, equipment and systems that facilitate travel. In addition, there are

the natural, cultural and religious assets that are considered tourist attractions and an environment that attracts the visitor for a certain period of time.

**2-1 Tourism:** “A set of reciprocal relationships between the person who is temporarily present in a place and the people who reside in that place.” (Maher, 1997, p. 23).

It “includes the activities of persons travelling to and staying in places outside their usual environment for not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business and other purposes. The usual environment of a person consists of a defined geographical area close to his/her place of residence plus all other places that he/she visits regularly and frequently”. (World Tourism Organisation, 1995, p. 10).

**2-2 Tourism discourse:**

Tourism discourse is characterised by features that distinguish it from other types of discourse. It is a discourse that manifests itself in written form in the brochures provided by tourism agencies or offices, in leaflets and in designed advertising. It can also be oral, from the guide to the tourist. The media play an important role in attracting the consumer through the published discourse through the media.

**2-2-1 Means of promotion and media for tourism discourse:**

Private entities in a given country use different media to attract tourists and present tourism offers by publishing information, raising awareness and activating the cognitive domain. The most important of these means are: the press, television, websites and general publishing media that reach the general public, such as magazines, brochures, leaflets and posters or billboards. Our research paper is concerned with the means that are considered as advertising guides for tourism.

**a) Brochures:**

The task of distributing brochures is entrusted to the authority responsible for the tourism sector, as the Algerian National Tourism Office (ONT) distributes brochures in more than three languages, and they are designed to appeal to the eye and the heart. The brochure may cover a single topic in detail or several related functional or professional topics, and in many cases the brochures are printed by tourism agencies or other tourism-related institutions.

**b) Leaflets:**

The leaflet usually consists of one page or several subdivided pages to facilitate the message, and it may be written on a sheet of paper with a cover or large paper surface in folds or sheets to make it easy to carry and review the topics it contains. They are also written in different languages.

**c) Magazines:**

They differ from brochures and leaflets in that they contain all the necessary information. They are published on specific occasions or at regular intervals, such as monthly, quarterly or yearly, in order to communicate with different groups of the public and provide them with all the data, information and colours of knowledge that they may wish to benefit from, for the purposes of interpretation,

education, improvement of the mental image or for advertising and promotion (Al-Dagheim, 2011, p. 112).

### **3- Persuasive strategies in tourism discourse:**

#### **3-1 Discourse strategy:**

By strategy we mean the method a person uses to carry out many actions in his or her social, cultural and linguistic life. In its simplest definitions, it is “specific ways of dealing with a problem or carrying out a task, or it is a set of processes aimed at achieving certain goals, or it is planned measures to control certain information” (Al-Shahri, 2004, p. 53).

He distinguishes four communicative strategies: the solidarity strategy, in which politeness and morality are used; the directive strategy, in which advice and warning are used, and one of its methods is the imperative; the allusive strategy, in which the speaker only alludes without explicitly stating the intention; and the persuasive strategy, in which the speaker uses linguistic and non-linguistic signs to persuade the recipient, as is the case in the tourist guide.

Van Dijk and Kintsch (1983) distinguish seven discourse strategies:

**a) Cultural strategies (Les stratégies culturelles):** Concerned with cultural competence between speakers in a given discourse context.

**b) Social strategies (Les stratégies sociales):** Involve information about the social structure of the group, or about the institutions, roles or functions of the participants, or about the discourses of institutions or occasions. They are also related to social norms, values or ideologies.

**c) Interactional strategies (Les stratégies interactionnelles):** These focus on the verbal and non-verbal conditions and the beliefs, knowledge, opinions or motives of the listener.

**d) Pragmatic strategies (Les stratégies pragmatiques):** These include speech acts, promises, congratulations and the social procedures used by language users.

**e) Semantic strategies (Les stratégies sémantiques):** Focus on the general or local understanding of the discourse in its overall dimensions.

**f) Schematic strategies (Les stratégies schématiques):** Present other types and structures, and each discourse has a different classification in the consciousness of each person.

**g) Stylistic and rhetorical strategies (Les stratégies stylistiques et rhétoriques):** Through the style of a discourse, one can understand the specific variations of grammatical rules as well as the schematic and rhetorical differences that characterise the discourse or its context.

#### **3-2 Strategies for promoting tourism discourse:**

Four main strategies can be distinguished in the tourist discourse: (Baider & Burger, 2004, pp. 121-123)

**a- The informative strategy (La stratégie informative):** This strategy aims to create tourist awareness and consists of a series of objective arguments. Despite

its informative nature, the discourse is not neutral and often has persuasive aspects.

**b- The persuasive strategy:** This strategy seeks to persuade the traveller by creating positive impressions of the destination and eliminating negative elements. The components of this discourse play an important role in seduction, especially the linguistic and iconic elements.

**c- The aesthetic strategy (La stratégie esthétique):** This strategy is concerned with the planning process, such as the choice of spaces and colours, in order to influence the visitor or consumer. It tends to choose texts closer to poetry in order to arouse the artistic sensitivity of the recipient.

**d- The educational strategy (La stratégie pédagogique):** This strategy combines the previous three with the aim of educating the potential tourist or consumer to new horizons.

Baider and Burger consider the travel guide to be the most representative medium.

#### **4- The persuasion strategy in the tourist guide:**

We can distinguish two components or levels in the structure of the advertising guide's discourse: the linguistic and the iconic. The advertising designers prepare them in a style suitable for the general public and support these advertisements with images and illustrations in order to help the readers to understand them correctly, to dazzle them, to stimulate their perception and, consequently, to persuade them and arouse their admiration in order to convince them of the advertised service. What do we mean by persuasion in the advertising guide?

##### **4-1 Persuasion:**

Persuasion is any conscious attempt to influence behaviour (Al-Id, 2010, p. 06). This means that influencing others depends on the arguments and evidence presented in the discourse and the extent to which the message sender perceives the recipients to change their attitudes and beliefs. However, this can only be achieved through methods and techniques that are related to the overall purpose of the discourse and the arguing speaker, the role of the receiving listener, and the conversational language involved in the discourse, without neglecting other means that "Perleman" emphasises, such as psychological and social means. For him, argumentation is nothing but a study of the nature of minds, then choosing the best ways to engage with them and listen to them, then trying to achieve their positive harmony and integration with the proposition presented. If these psychological and social matters are not taken into account, the argumentation will be without purpose and without effect (Chaim, 1983, p. 18).

Perhaps the appropriate and suitable approach that takes into account all these means and techniques in discourses is the pragmatic approach, because it is based on communicative and semiotic requirements and interacts with them. In this context, "Bashir Ibrir" (2004, p. 234) sees that "pragmatics is in fact an effective communication that expresses the purpose and conveys the intended meaning in

a simple and easy way, i.e. it hits the meaning from the closest meaning reached by the ancient Arab scholars”.

Since advertising discourse in general, and tourism discourse in particular, is persuasive, its argumentative and evidential evidence can be distinguished on two levels:

**A. The level of the linguistic system:**

Tourism advertising discourse has a linguistic structure whose main objective is to convey information in the best possible conditions and circumstances, or it is a “linguistic structure determined according to the standards of the language in which it is produced...”. As far as its structure is concerned, it is closer to the structure of the poetic text, which is built according to the prevailing non-vulgar dialect, which resonates with the variables of daily events and the rapid developments experienced by the speakers of that dialect (Aylan, 1998-1999, p. 213).

Most studies that have looked at advertising discourse at the linguistic level require that it should present new and accurate information and ideas, be relevant to the circumstances of the target audience, and be written in a style appropriate to them. It should also be supported, wherever possible, by images and illustrations to help the reader to understand it correctly. It must also have all the correct criteria and rules to make its content suitable for publication and not take the reader a long time to read.

In order to ensure the effectiveness of the tourism advertising discourse, it must be designed with a solid structure, both in its linguistic and iconic aspects. At the expressive level, the designers of this type of discourse have stipulated the following: (Mezari, 2015, p. 187)

- Relying on simple sentences and ensuring that they convey multiple meanings.
- Use of both standard and colloquial language - mixing of levels.
- Focus on description or proof and mastery of the technique of moving between them.
- Extensive use of the element of suspense through exaggeration of fantasy and adventure.
- Use rhetorical devices such as rhyming prose, paronomasia, irony and repetition of expressions.
- Use of direct imperative verbs to persuade, influence, communicate and interact.
- Use of local pronouns to limit interpretation and reassure the target audience.
- Suggestive language in tourism advertising discourse, as the reportage style is limited to appealing to the consumer.
- The use of a deletion strategy and the elimination of what is unimportant in the discourse, or what is known as the “telegraphic style”.

All these characteristics and features are what the advertiser tries to use to convince the recipient of the quality and effectiveness of the product.

**B- At the level of the iconic system:**

The advertising image in the tourist guide plays an important role in attracting and influencing the recipient, as it contributes, together with the linguistic component, to signalling desire and response. It is “one of the non-verbal communicative symbols that effectively influence human communication” (Aloui, 2013, p. 96).

Its importance is evident in its “connection with perception, imagination, consciousness and unconsciousness, as well as with understanding, representation and cognitive background...”. The image has aesthetic, educational, psychological, logical, technical, social, ideological, philosophical and cultural aspects” (Al-Azzawi, 2006, p. 21).

The advertising text sometimes resorts to the image to express what it cannot, given the communicative richness of the image. The advertising image has several functions, the most important of which are: (Ali, 2003, pp. 117-123)

- **The aesthetic function:** Its aim is to stimulate taste and to invite contemplation of its finest elements, thus attracting the attention of the viewer and motivating him to buy the product.

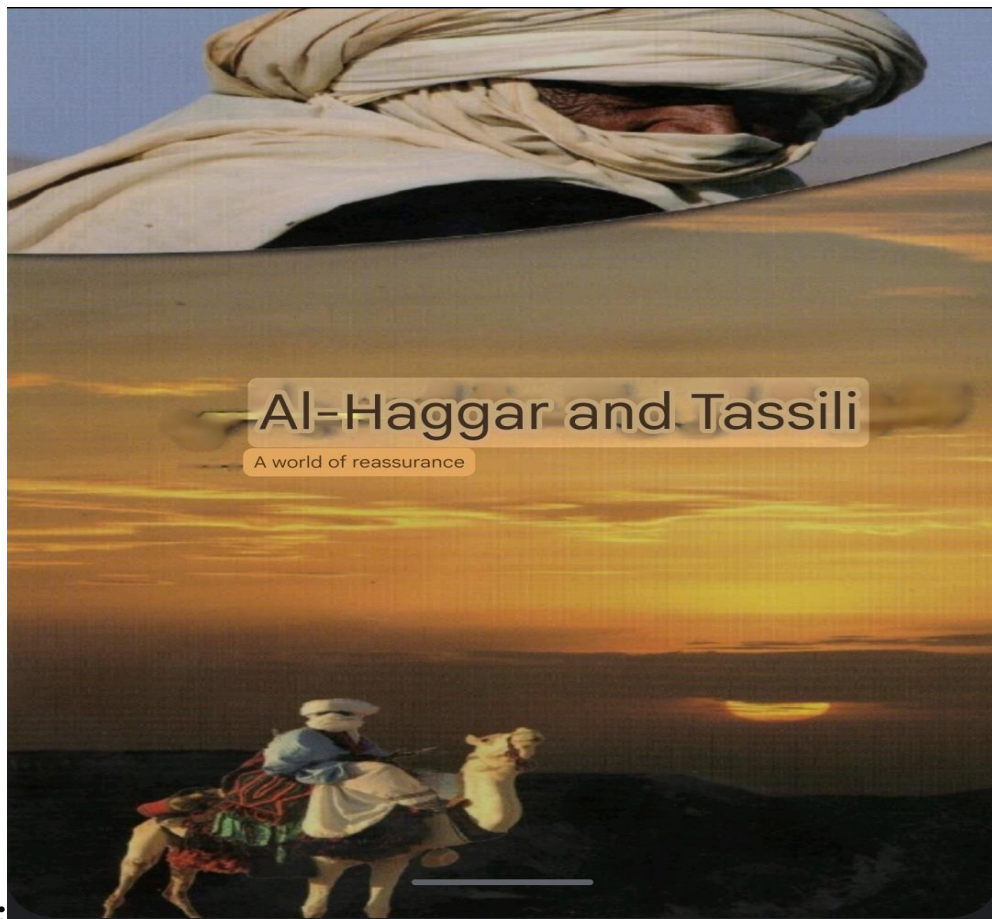
- **The directive function:** The image is accompanied by a small caption that indicates its intended meaning.

- **The representation function:** It presents objects and features with precision and clarity, unlike language.

- **The semantic function:** All the previous functions converge on this function, as the advertiser establishes and standardises the image to convey meaning, and strives to communicate what he intends by various means, of which language is the most prominent, as it directs the image towards the intended meaning.

#### **5- Analysis of examples of images in the tourist brochure:**

There is no doubt that the advertising image is rich in symbols and signs, and trying to understand it requires studying the processes of image formation. The researcher “Abdel Aali Boutayeb” identifies the components of the advertising image in two areas: The first is the formal signs, which include the frame, framing, camera angle, shapes and colours. The second domain concerns the icon of the image, the iconic image and the metaphorical icon.



**Example 1:**

**Message/picture description:**

Sender: The National Tourism Office (ONT)

Message: Entitled “Al\_ Haggar and Tassili” and “A world of reassurance”.

Type of message: A tourism promotional photographic image

Focal points of the message: Tuareg man, sunset, Tassili mountains

The aim of the message is to promote Algerian tourism.

**2- The Formal Visual Signifiers and Iconic Analysis:**

The Algerian desert is one of the most famous destinations that tourists flock to, as it is an ideal place for holidays, especially in the Hoggar mountain region. The advertiser has placed an image of a Tuareg man at the top of the page, framed with his white headscarf over a white camel, and has chosen a sunset scene to reflect the natural landscape of the region. The two titles are written in black.

The choice of white was not accidental, as it is a symbol of purity and cleanliness and is often used in Arabic expressions to convey this meaning (Mokhtar, 1997, p. 69). Yellow is a preferred colour associated with reason and logic, as it is said to lead the individual to sound thinking (The effect of yellow on psychology and health, 2024). Black denotes power and professionalism and is associated with authority and elegance (Psychological proprieties of colors, 2024).

The advertiser appears to have used the Naskh calligraphic script for the titles, which is widely used and suitable for tourism advertising discourse. Together they

help to describe the image of the tourist regions of Hoggar and Tassili. The advertisement also uses the rhetorical device of metonymy, in which the whole (the Hoggar and Tassili regions) is represented by the part (a specific scenic element).

It is natural that the brochure or its outer cover should captivate the recipient (the tourist). The designer has carefully considered all the compositional operations and the defined selection from the perceived reality, using the elements that make up the image and arranging them in an orderly manner to produce a certain meaning.

Example 02:



### 1- Description of the message (image):

Sender: The National Tourism Office (ONT).

Message: Tourism promotion "Composite image of some tourist sites in Algeria".

Type of message: Photographic image "poster".

Message themes: Beaches, desert, Tassili rock art, Oran Corniche, Algerian post office.

Purpose of the message: To promote tourism in Algeria.

### 2- Visual and iconic analysis:

In this composite image, the National Office of Tourism (Algeria) promotes some tourist attractions in Algeria that are suitable for a visit. The image is composed of five photographs, four of which are similar in their standard and geometric dimensions. One shows the old Algerian post office, a unique architectural heritage. Another shows a mural, the third the Oran Corniche leading to the beaches, and the fourth a beach frequented by tourists. The fifth photograph,

which takes up more space on the poster than the previous four, is of the Algerian desert, the main focus of Algerian tourism.

The linguistic component represents the name of the ministry in charge of tourism in Algeria, then the institution, which is the National Tourist Office, written in two colours: white and yellow, in both Arabic and English. At the bottom is the Algerian flag, followed by contact details, including the telephone number and website of the National Tourist Office.

It seems that the designer of this image is trying to achieve the objectives of tourism communication. The images are organised in an appealing way, bringing together some of the most distinctive tourist sites in Algeria, making it more convincing and impactful for the consumer.

### **Conclusion:**

Every discourse is defined by its characteristics and objectives, and what distinguishes the advertising discourse in tourism is the combination of two essential components: the linguistic component and the iconic component, in addition to its socio-economic dimension.

In an effort to attract the recipient (the customer/consumer), the advertiser uses all available media and expressive components.

Two functions of the linguistic component can be identified in the advertising discourse of tourism: the first is to fix or explain the image and grasp its intended meaning through its suggestive density; the second function is complementary, as the relationship between the linguistic and iconic components is interdependent.

The iconic component in tourism advertising discourse is no less important than the linguistic component, which is why the advertiser is keen to make good use of the image, choosing its colours to match the subject of the advertisement, as well as its shapes and lines.

Despite the fact that Algeria has many tourist assets, advertisers focus on the tourist destinations in the south of Algeria, as it contains a group of classified cultural reserves, and the tourist advertising discourse rarely pays attention to non-desert tourist destinations such as the northern reserves (El Kala, Djurdjura and Batna), in addition to the archaeological sites scattered throughout the country, which are no less important than the desert destination.

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