

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background of Study

In today's digital transformation, social media has played an important role in the travel and tourism industry as a medium for marketing, communication, and brand storytelling. The rise of social platforms has fundamentally reshaped how destinations are promoted and perceived, enabling users and marketers to collaboratively construct and distribute travel narratives across global audiences (Lim & Childs, 2020). Of the social media used in the tourism industry, Instagram is recorded as the foremost platform for promoting tourist destination, where it influences its users to upload as many aesthetics pictures as possible with narrative captions (Yu et al., 2024). While photographs on Instagram tend to act as the primary attention grabber, recent research confirms that the written components — specifically captions — are equally significant in enriching the meaning of a post, shaping audience interpretation, and ultimately influencing travel intentions (Amir et al., 2022; Lim & Childs, 2020).

Captions now serve as more than just a functional function; they are also effective linguistic tools that enhance visual material by providing contextual explanations, arousing reader emotions, and igniting their imagination through storytelling tactics and descriptive language. (Yu et al., 2024). Studies also emphasize that the use of sensory-rich, emotionally

appealing, and easily readable captions can significantly enhance user engagement, increase digital interaction metrics, and even amplify the persuasive power of travel-related content (Amir et al., 2022; Yu et al., 2024). Consequently, the strategic integration of captivating images and well-constructed captions has become an essential aspect of digital tourism promotion, allowing both travel brands and individual content creators to shape audience perceptions and inspire travel aspirations in an increasingly competitive digital environment (Lim & Childs, 2020; Yu et al., 2024).

Language plays a fundamental role in shaping human perception, particularly through descriptive language, which enhances visualization, engagement, and emotional appeal. Descriptive language refers to the use of vivid imagery, sensory details, and expressive adjectives to create a clear mental picture for the audience. In digital marketing, especially on social media, descriptive language is used to captivate audiences, strengthen brand identity, and foster a connection between the content and the audience. In the tourism industry, descriptive language is a critical tool for destination marketing. Research by Lee & Kim (2023) in "*The Role of Descriptive Language in Travel Marketing*" found that the use of sensory and emotive descriptions in travel advertisements significantly enhances audience engagement and emotional connection. Their study highlights that words evoking sight, sound, smell, and touch create an immersive experience, making destinations feel more tangible and inviting. Additionally, descriptive captions on Instagram allow travel brands to

convey atmosphere, emotions, and cultural depth, making places more appealing to potential visitors (Ardiansyah & Sari, 2022).

Among the leading travel-focused Instagram accounts, @beautifuldestinations is widely recognized for curating and sharing exceptional travel photography and videos from around the world. With a following that numbers in the millions, this account has established itself as a significant force in digital tourism, influencing how people perceive destinations online. The content typically showcases breathtaking landscapes, exotic locations, and immersive travel experiences, all presented with visually striking images and videos. These posts are often paired with descriptive captions that heighten the emotional and sensory impact, drawing followers into each scene, while the visual content is the primary attraction, the captions play a crucial role in engaging the audience, building compelling narratives, and reinforcing destination branding. Research by Thompson (2021) in “Linguistic Strategies in Tourism Promotion on Instagram” highlights that travel influencers and brands commonly use vivid adjectives, hyperbolic language, and direct calls to action in their captions to foster interaction and create a more immersive experience for their followers. This approach not only enhances engagement but also helps shape the way destinations are imagined and desired by online audiences. Analyzing how @beautifuldestinations crafts its captions alongside its visuals is essential to understanding how it successfully connects with and inspires its global community.

Since social media become a platform that have a key role in tourism industry, there are still few study that discuss how descriptive language is important on instagram caption. Research adopting a tourism theme has predominantly focused on persuasive language and promotional techniques, while studies that specifically examine the use of descriptive language in tourism marketing on social media remain relatively limited. Caption on instagram is a key role in inside a post, it's very important to know how descriptive language help to engange the customers. See how instagram account of beautifuldestinations used descriptive language could give interesting knowledge to social media communication, and customers engagement. This study is relative with some aspects, likes linguistic, marketing, and media communication, because it conclude how language and visual become together as in tourism industry. By analyzing the techniques language used in @beautifuldestinations, this study goal is to give a knowledge about how that aspect can influence the promotion of tourism industry.

There are studies that have analyzed descriptive language in tourism marketing. Lee and Kim (2023) says language diversity can increase visitor attraction. Their research aims to explain how the use of diverse language can affect the emotional sense of visitors. They analyzed tourism advertisements on several platforms that contained descriptive language. They used the Elaboration Likelihood Method (ELM) theory. This study shows that deeper cognitive processes can produce stronger changes in attitudes and behaviors. The results of these findings emphasize

that descriptive language can affect user engagement, and increase their desire to visit the advertised destination.

Thompson's research analyzes the language techniques used by tourism promoters on Instagram to see how users interact with tourism-related content. This research focuses on Instagram captions related to uploaded photos to see how the use of hyperbolic language and user engagement help make tourism promotions more effective. Using discourse analysis and persuasive communication theory—specifically Critical Discourse Analysis (Fairclough, 1995) and Persuasive Communication Theory (Perloff, 2010), Thompson finds that language strategies enrich posts, encourage follower interaction, and strengthen the appeal of destinations. Persuasive Communication Theory shows how well-designed communication can influence people's attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors, while Critical Discourse Analysis explains how language generates social meaning and reflects power dynamics in digital media. Combined, these strategies demonstrate the importance of descriptive and engaging language in digital tourism promotion. The use of sensory-rich, emotionally engaging, and interactive language in advertisements or social media captions significantly increases audience engagement, fosters emotional bonds, and ultimately influences travel decisions on sites like Instagram.

In this research, Dann's theory of Tourism Discourse Analysis (1996) is used. Dann says in his research that the language used in tourism can create a sense of desire, pleasure, and involvement. Dann also explains

several important aspects used, namely euphoric language, sensory appeal, and personalization as important points in tourism, so Dann's theory is suitable for use in this study to examine the captions found on Instagram @beautifuldestinations. This research aims to provide an understanding of descriptive language that can increase the attractiveness of tourism.

## **1.2 Statement of Problem**

1. How does @beautifuldestinations use descriptive language in its Instagram captions to create an immersive travel experience and influence audience perception?
2. What forms and functions of descriptive languages are used on the Instagram captions of @beautifuldestinations?

## **1.3 Research Objectives**

The purpose of this study is to analyse how descriptive languages is used on the Instagram captions of @beautifuldestinations post to enhance travel storytelling and audience engagement. This research aims to identify the key linguistic features of descriptive language and examine how it influences the perception of destinations in digital tourism promotion.

## **1.4 Research Methodology**

This study uses qualitative methods to analyze caption descriptions found on the Instagram account @beautifuldestinations. Qualitative methods are important for this study because they focus on understanding linguistic patterns and their impact on user perception. The data collected for this study were obtained from Instagram captions uploaded by the

@beautifuldestinations account from January 2024 to January 2025 with a total of 495 posts. Of this total, 50 posts were taken for further analysis. This data is suitable for using qualitative methods, with the aim of exploring existing linguistic patterns. Selecting a detailed number of posts ensures that the richness of descriptive language can be explained thoroughly. The selected captions will be analyzed to see how descriptive language strategies are used to increase interaction.

For analysis, this study uses Dann's Tourism Discourse Analysis theory. Dann's research explores how language is used in tourism marketing to create a sense of desire, pleasure, and engagement. Important aspects such as euphoric language, sensory appeal, and personalization are used to examine how @beautifuldestination creates travel narratives through descriptive captions. Data analysis involves the content of several selected captions, focusing on the linguistic elements used to describe tourist destinations. By applying qualitative methods, this study aims to provide an understanding of how descriptive language can increase visitors in tourism marketing. The results are expected to contribute to social media marketing strategies.

In data collection, this study will utilize media documentation, namely screenshots of captions taken from selected Instagram posts. Captions will be selected based on length, richness of words, sensory descriptions, and the presence of persuasive language. For data analysis, this study applies qualitative and linguistic methods. The qualitative method focuses on textual categorization based on emerging themes, while the linguistic analysis focuses on the use of specific language such as sensory adjectives, hyperbole, and

diverse expressions. These points will be summarized and interpreted using the theoretical framework of tourism discourse analysis aimed at promoting tourist destinations.

### **1.5 Scope and Limitation**

This study focuses on the captions on Instagram posts by @beautifuldestinations, specifically explaining how descriptive language is used as a travel narrative and tourism marketing tool. By analyzing key linguistic points within the captions, this study aims to provide an understanding of how key points in descriptive language, such as emotional expression, play a significant role in user engagement.

This research focuses more on the captions contained in the upload of @beautifuldestinations Instagram posts. While visual media plays an important role, this research emphasizes the role of descriptive language in tourism marketing. Future research can explore the relationship between images and captions to gain a deeper understanding of tourism marketing on Instagram. Furthermore, audience engagement metrics such as likes, comments, and shares were not examined in this study. These metrics can explain the effectiveness of a caption, but their interpretation depends on a number of external variables, including the Instagram algorithm, posting frequency, and audience demographics. To understand how language itself contributes to branding and tourism discourse, this study focuses on the linguistic tactics used in the captions.

To ensure that the captions studied contain rich descriptive language, this study is also limited to a specific, purposefully selected dataset of Instagram



posts. The results will provide important insights into the function of descriptive language in social media tourism marketing, although they may not be applicable to all travel-themed Instagram accounts. By addressing these limitations, this study hopes to maintain a rigorous and targeted examination of descriptive language in travel advertising while also considering more general aspects that may be explored in future research.

### **1.6 Organization of Writing**

This research is systematically designed to provide a clear and logical flow. The background of this research, explained in the introduction, also highlights the importance of descriptive language to promote tourism digitally, especially in the captions contained in the uploads of @beautifuldestinations Instagram posts. An in-depth overview of this topic will be discussed in the following chapters, with support from related theories and previous research. The qualitative method used to examine linguistic elements in tourism-related captions is described in the research methodology. The results of the research will be presented in the results and discussion section which discusses how descriptive language can increase visitor attraction.