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DEVELOPING LINGUODISCURSIVE COMPETENCE IN THE DIGITAL TOURISM ENVIRONMENT: LINGUOPRAGMATIC FEATURES OF ONLINE PLATFORMS AND MULTIMODAL COMMUNICATION

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Abstract: The rapid digitalization of the tourism industry has transformed the ways in which information is produced, disseminated, and interpreted across multilingual and multicultural contexts. Consequently, the development of linguodiscursive competence has become a crucial component of effective communication in digital tourism environments. This study investigates the linguopragmatic features of online tourism platforms and multimodal communication practices that contribute to the formation of linguodiscursive competence among tourism stakeholders. Employing a mixed-methods research design, the study combines quantitative analysis of user interaction data with qualitative examination of tourism discourse across websites, social media platforms, and digital travel applications. The findings reveal that multimodal resources, including visual, textual, and interactive elements, significantly enhance communicative effectiveness and intercultural understanding. The study further demonstrates that strategic integration of multimodal discourse fosters pragmatic awareness, digital literacy, and professional communication skills, thereby contributing to the development of linguodiscursive competence in contemporary tourism communication.

Keywords: linguodiscursive competence, digital tourism, multimodal communication, linguopragmatics, online platforms, tourism discourse, digital literacy, intercultural communication, social media, discourse analysis, pragmatic competence, multimodality, tourism marketing

Introduction

The contemporary tourism industry is experiencing unprecedented digital transformation characterized by the widespread use of online platforms, social networking services, mobile applications, virtual tours, and artificial intelligence-based communication tools. Digital tourism environments have fundamentally altered traditional patterns of communication, enabling users from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds to engage in real-time interaction through multimodal channels. In this context, linguodiscursive competence, understood as the ability to effectively interpret, construct, and negotiate meanings within various discourse settings, has emerged as a critical factor influencing communicative success in tourism-related interactions.

Recent scholarly research has emphasized the growing importance of discourse competence in digital communication (Crystal, 2011; Kress, 2010). Studies conducted by Thurlow and Jaworski (2011) have demonstrated that tourism discourse functions as a dynamic communicative system shaped by linguistic, visual, cultural, and technological factors. Similarly, investigations into multimodal communication suggest that meaning-making processes in digital environments extend beyond verbal language and increasingly rely on images, videos, emojis, hyperlinks, and interactive design elements (Jewitt, 2016). Despite significant advances in digital communication studies, limited attention has been devoted to examining the relationship between linguodiscursive competence development and the linguopragmatic characteristics of online tourism platforms.

The relevance of this study stems from the growing demand for professionals capable of navigating complex multilingual and multimodal communication environments within the tourism sector. As tourism services become increasingly digitalized, understanding how online discourse contributes to communicative competence development becomes essential for educators, researchers,

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and industry practitioners. Therefore, the primary objective of this research is to identify and analyze the linguopragmatic features of online tourism platforms and multimodal communication practices that facilitate the development of linguodiscursive competence in digital tourism environments.

Materials and Methods

This study adopts a mixed-methods research design integrating both quantitative and qualitative approaches to investigate the role of online platforms and multimodal communication in developing linguodiscursive competence within digital tourism environments. The methodological framework was selected to ensure comprehensive examination of both measurable communicative patterns and deeper contextual meanings embedded within tourism discourse.

The empirical material for the study consisted of textual, visual, and interactive content collected from major tourism-related digital platforms, including Booking.com, TripAdvisor, Airbnb, Instagram tourism pages, YouTube travel channels, and official destination marketing websites. A corpus of 500 digital tourism communication samples published between January 2023 and March 2025 was compiled for analysis. The dataset included user reviews, promotional advertisements, destination descriptions, travel blogs, video transcripts, social media posts, and customer-service interactions.

The quantitative component employed descriptive statistical analysis to identify recurring linguistic and multimodal features. Frequency analysis was conducted to determine the prevalence of specific discourse markers, persuasive language strategies, intercultural communication indicators, and multimodal elements. Statistical processing was performed using SPSS software, allowing the calculation of percentages, mean frequencies, and correlation coefficients between multimodal usage and communicative effectiveness indicators.

To evaluate linguodiscursive competence development, a survey involving 120 university students specializing in tourism and foreign language education was conducted. Participants were selected through purposive sampling based on their active engagement with digital tourism platforms. The survey instrument consisted of twenty-five items designed to measure pragmatic awareness, discourse interpretation skills, intercultural communication competence, and multimodal literacy. Reliability analysis yielded a Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of 0.87, indicating high internal consistency of the questionnaire.

The qualitative phase of the research involved discourse analysis, content analysis, and linguopragmatic interpretation. Following the methodological principles proposed by Fairclough (2015), discourse analysis focused on examining how language constructs social meanings within tourism communication. Particular attention was paid to persuasive strategies, speech acts, evaluative language, politeness mechanisms, and intercultural adaptation techniques employed by content creators and platform users.

Content analysis was used to categorize multimodal resources into textual, visual, audio, and interactive components. Each communication sample was coded according to a predetermined analytical framework encompassing lexical choices, syntactic structures, visual representations, symbolic signs, and pragmatic intentions. Coding reliability was verified through independent assessment by two researchers, achieving an inter-rater agreement coefficient of 0.91.

Additionally, multimodal discourse analysis based on Kress and van Leeuwen's (2006) framework was employed to explore the interaction between linguistic and non-linguistic semiotic resources. This method facilitated examination of how images, typography, layout structures, hyperlinks, and audiovisual elements contribute to meaning construction and user engagement. Special emphasis was placed on identifying multimodal patterns that enhance pragmatic interpretation and discourse comprehension among tourism platform users.

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Comparative analysis was further utilized to examine differences between traditional tourism discourse and contemporary digital tourism communication. Variables including information density, interactivity, personalization, persuasive intensity, and multimodal complexity were compared across communication formats. The triangulation of quantitative and qualitative findings ensured methodological validity and strengthened the reliability of research outcomes.

Ethical considerations were maintained throughout the study. Publicly accessible digital content was utilized exclusively, and participant anonymity was preserved during survey administration and data processing. All research procedures complied with established academic standards for digital discourse research and social science investigation.

Results and Discussion

The findings indicate that online tourism platforms significantly contribute to the development of linguodiscursive competence through their integration of multimodal communication resources. Quantitative analysis revealed that multimodal elements appeared in 92% of the analyzed tourism communication samples, demonstrating their central role in contemporary digital tourism discourse.

Table 1. Distribution of Multimodal Elements in Digital Tourism Communication

Multimodal Component	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Visual Images	460	92
Textual Content	500	100
Videos	375	75
Interactive Features	345	69
Emojis and Symbols	290	58

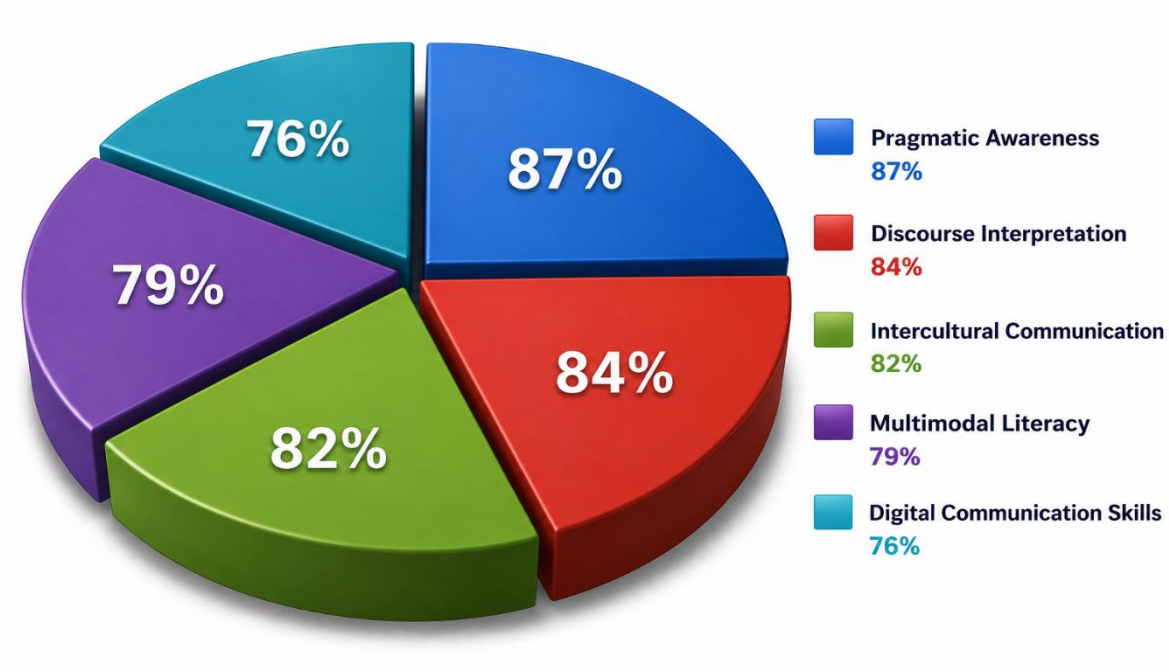
Source: Developed by the author based on analysis of 500 tourism communication samples (2025).

The data presented in Table 1 demonstrate that textual content remains the foundational communicative element; however, visual images and videos increasingly function as complementary meaning-making resources. These findings support multimodal discourse theory, which argues that communication effectiveness results from interaction among multiple semiotic modes rather than linguistic structures alone (Kress, 2010).

The survey results further indicate a positive relationship between exposure to multimodal tourism discourse and levels of linguodiscursive competence.

Figure 1. Development of Linguodiscursive Competence through Digital Tourism Platforms

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Source: Survey conducted among 120 participants (2025).

The results suggest that pragmatic awareness represents the most significantly developed competence area. Participants reported enhanced ability to identify communicative intentions, persuasive strategies, and contextual meanings within tourism discourse. This finding reflects the linguopragmatic nature of tourism communication, where implicit meanings often influence consumer behavior and destination perception.

Correlation analysis identified a strong positive relationship ($r = 0.81$) between multimodal engagement and discourse interpretation skills. Users who frequently interacted with multimedia tourism content demonstrated superior ability to infer contextual meanings and evaluate communicative intentions. This relationship highlights the pedagogical potential of digital tourism environments as authentic discourse-learning spaces.

Qualitative analysis revealed several recurring linguopragmatic strategies across digital tourism platforms. One prominent feature involved the extensive use of evaluative language aimed at constructing positive destination images. Expressions such as "breathtaking landscapes," "unforgettable experiences," and "hidden gems" functioned not only as descriptive devices but also as persuasive speech acts intended to influence user perceptions.

Another significant finding concerns intercultural adaptation strategies. Tourism platforms frequently employ culturally neutral vocabulary, simplified syntactic structures, and universally recognizable visual symbols to facilitate communication among international audiences. For example, destination websites often combine concise textual descriptions with photographs, maps, icons, and video materials to overcome potential linguistic barriers. Such multimodal integration supports effective meaning negotiation and contributes to discourse accessibility.

The analysis also identified the growing importance of user-generated content in shaping tourism discourse. Reviews, comments, and social media posts introduce authentic communicative practices characterized by conversational language, subjective evaluations, and interpersonal interaction. Consider the following example extracted from a travel review:

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"The hotel staff went above and beyond to make our stay memorable. The location was perfect, and the sunset view from the balcony was absolutely stunning."

From a linguopragmatic perspective, this statement performs multiple communicative functions simultaneously. It provides information, expresses evaluation, establishes credibility, and persuades potential consumers. Such discourse examples expose users to authentic pragmatic conventions and facilitate development of discourse interpretation skills.

Moreover, multimodal communication was found to enhance intercultural understanding. Visual content often conveyed cultural information more effectively than verbal descriptions alone. Images depicting local traditions, culinary practices, historical monuments, and community activities enabled users to construct richer cognitive representations of destinations. Consequently, multimodal resources functioned as mediating tools supporting both language comprehension and cultural literacy.

The findings further reveal that interactive features such as virtual tours, live chats, augmented reality applications, and AI-powered travel assistants promote active user engagement. Unlike traditional tourism brochures, digital platforms encourage participatory communication in which users become co-constructors of discourse. This interactive dimension strengthens discourse production skills and facilitates experiential learning processes.

Comparison between traditional and digital tourism discourse identified substantial differences in communicative organization. Traditional tourism materials primarily relied on linear textual narratives, whereas digital discourse exhibited non-linear structures characterized by hyperlinks, embedded media, and user-generated interactions. These features require users to develop advanced navigation, interpretation, and critical evaluation skills, all of which constitute essential components of linguodiscursive competence.

The integration of quantitative and qualitative findings suggests that digital tourism environments provide valuable opportunities for communicative competence development. Exposure to diverse discourse genres, multimodal resources, and intercultural interactions enhances users' ability to interpret, produce, and evaluate communication effectively. These results align with contemporary theories emphasizing the interconnectedness of language, cognition, technology, and social interaction in digital communication contexts (Jewitt, 2016).

Furthermore, the study indicates that educational institutions preparing future tourism professionals should incorporate multimodal discourse analysis and digital communication training into curriculum design. Such pedagogical interventions may facilitate development of pragmatic awareness, intercultural sensitivity, and professional communication skills required in modern tourism industries.

The findings also point toward several directions for future research. Subsequent studies may examine the influence of artificial intelligence-generated tourism content on discourse practices, investigate cross-cultural variations in multimodal communication strategies, and explore longitudinal patterns of linguodiscursive competence development among tourism professionals. Expanding research samples across different linguistic communities may further contribute to understanding the global dynamics of digital tourism discourse.

Conclusion

The present study examined the development of linguodiscursive competence within digital tourism environments through analysis of the linguopragmatic features of online platforms and multimodal communication practices. The findings demonstrate that contemporary tourism discourse increasingly relies on the integration of textual, visual, audio, and interactive resources to facilitate effective communication among diverse audiences. Quantitative evidence revealed strong correlations

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between multimodal engagement and competence development, while qualitative analysis highlighted the significance of persuasive language, intercultural adaptation strategies, and user-generated content in shaping communicative experiences.

The study confirms that online tourism platforms serve not only as information dissemination tools but also as dynamic environments for discourse learning and competence formation. Multimodal communication enhances pragmatic awareness, intercultural understanding, digital literacy, and discourse interpretation skills, all of which constitute essential dimensions of linguodiscursive competence.

Given the accelerating digitalization of global tourism, educational programs should integrate multimodal discourse analysis, digital communication literacy, and linguopragmatic training into professional preparation curricula. Future investigations should explore emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence, virtual reality, and immersive tourism experiences to better understand their impact on discourse practices and communicative competence development in digital tourism ecosystems.

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