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**English for Tourism is Distinctive with that of
Other ESP Genres****Abeyweera, G.H.**Department of English Language Teaching
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Uva Wellassa University of Sri Lanka**Abstract**

English for Specific Purposes (ESP) which came into existence during 1960s is referred in particular to the teaching and learning of English as a Second Language where the major focus is to use English in a specific context. According to John Swales (1988), the central focus of ESP was on English for Science and Technology. Later, this was particular to encourage communication across languages on areas such as commerce and industry which has later expanded to other areas such as English for Academic Purposes (EAP), English for Vocational Purposes (EVP), English for Occupational Purposes (EOP), English for Management Purposes EMP), English for Agriculture and English for Tourism etc. The Central focus in this paper is to explain why English for Tourism is distinctive from that of other ESP genres with particular reference to English for Tourism where the study shall provide an analysis from the perspective of lexicality and grammar, its style, culture and performance. Thus, this paper researches aforesaid elements of ESP alluding to English for Tourism with some excerpts from the field of tourism industry both from local and international contexts.

Keywords: elements of ESP, perspectives, English for Tourism, genres

Introduction

Recognizing the various branches of English which came to be used particularly with the development of industry, science and technology has manifold benefits for researchers in the field of language studies. According to Hutchinson & Waters (1987) on their retrospective studies on the 'Birth of ESP', the ESP has first come into use after the Second World War in 1945. There had been a rapid development particularly in the fields of science and technology where English language started playing a pivotal role as the lingua franca of science, technology and business. This was prominent during 1960s as ESP becoming a much more innovative activity in teaching English as a second language. With this development, the number of universities offering ESP programmes too was also gradually increased. During the period of 1980s, the number of ESP programmes were significant that learners are able to follow programmes such as English for Technology, English for Science, English for Academic Purposes, English for Management, and English for Tourism so on and so forth. Later, ESP programmes paved the way for learners and researchers to find out how each of these branches of ESP is distinctive from one another. Thus, this paper attempts to provide a substantial description of English for Tourism to distinguish the difference of English for Tourism with that of other branches of ESP in Second language learning and teaching.

Lexical Diversity

Lexical density of a specific discipline adds value to its richness. This richness is further enriched with the syntactic variation of its structure. The study of register peculiar to the given discipline contributes a considerable extent to distinguish its identity. In this sense, the register deals with words specific to a given discipline despite the general use English vocabulary.

Terms are used as words or phrases used to describe things or to express a concept especially in a particular branch of language. Thus, the terms are comprised with words, phrases or idioms. Accordingly, there are a very limited number of words and phrases used in the field of tourism which are labelled as tourism English. For instance, the terms such as **air-sickness**, **altitude sickness**, **fire-blankets**, **motion sickness**, and **upset stomach** etc. might be new to a passenger who takes the flight for the first time as such terms are used only at the airport and air travel industry only. The other phrases and idioms "My beat is usually 8.00Am to 4.00PM and I spend most of my time **on my feet**" are used in tourism field. Further, some acronyms such as **SCUBA** diving (self-contained underwater breathing apparatus), **PADI** (Professional Association of Driving Instructors), **RV** (Recreational Vehicle) and, **SUV** (Sport Utility Vehicle) are unfamiliar to a tourism who engages in enjoying for the first time. Not only that the terms **off-season** in little England, **bed-board** house, turboprops are all specific to situations and they are context dependant.

Nominalization

Nominalization is used in most of the disciplines and the use of nominalization varies depending on the disciplines. Nominalization is the use of nouns. Amongst many types of nouns, the use of proper nouns is most common to English for Tourism. The use of proper nouns is observed in every context in tourism industry and is comprised of a major selection of vocabulary for tourism English. One of the significant aspects in proper names is that these proper nouns range from one's tourist destination such as a country, place, city, airport, tourist spot, name of a hotel, or a mountain hike involving in the tourism industry. In Sri Lankan context, the great ancient cities Anuradhapura, Polonnaruwa, Dambadeniya and Sigirya are some of the places having proper names. The waterfalls such as Dunhinda waterfall, Diyaluma waterfall, Bekers fall, and Bambarakanda waterfall are all named by its location. Then the mountains such as Pidurutalagala, Namunukula, Hortain Plains are all popular tourist destinations with proper names.

Use of Proper Nouns

Considering the typological aspects of proper nouns is also equally important. Accordingly, all these names of destinations given their names are proper nouns ought to start with capitalization which is a unique feature in grammar. The other significant aspect is that once the proper names are established the way they should be written, there is no any other alteration when it comes to manuscripts. More interestingly, the pronunciation of those proper names also should be in the way they are pronounced. Even in translations they should be as it is without alterations. Thus, these names are unchangeable and are accepted by the people with fixed pronunciation together with typological features.

Loan Words or Borrowings

Borrowing words, phrases and idioms from other languages is another significant feature in tourism English. In other words, the vocabulary of English for Tourism is enriched with words, phrases and idioms borrowed from other languages. These are called loaned words, phrases and idioms which are called the study of etymology in language studies. If a Vietnamese visits Sri Lanka, he might at times look for some Vietnamese foods where a Sri Lankan has to say, '**Gui Cuon**- (spring rolls stuffed with coriander, greens, minced pork, shrimp or crab), **Banh mi**- sandwich with vegetables, omelette and various different fillings), or **Cha Ca** – (white fish, sautéed in butter with spring onions) are available here. So, the names of Vietnamese foods become borrowed words from Vietnamese language. Similarly, **Pizza**, **Pasta**, and **Panna cotta** are all borrowed from Italy. In Sri Lanka, someone might say, **noodles** which is not a Sri Lankan food but more often it is consumed by Sri Lankans which is really a Chinese food. **Masala** and **Paneer Butter Masala** are also famous among Sri Lankan Tamils. These names of Indian foods have been borrowed from India. Thus, tourism English has a lot of borrowings from other languages and cultures which is also another significant feature ESP for Tourism. This is particularly due to the fact that tourism means to travel to different places and moving and embracing different cultures and interconnect with different communities who speak different languages.

Idioms and Phrases

Idioms are also frequently used in tourism English. Idioms such as a full plate, (a full schedule and no free time), watch your back (be careful of your belongings), travel light (do not pick a lot of things but only what is needed) and En route (on the way) are all used more often in tourism English. Recently the virus 'covid-19' has gone into many languages and the entire world has been brought to one health issue and all communities in the world has taken the word of their own.

Structure of composition of English for tourism is also distinguished from other ESPs. Accordingly, the use of oral frequency is higher than written usage. During travelling tourists are required to communicate with many of those who provide necessary information and services, such as tour guides, stewards, cleaners, operators, barmen, drivers, and waiters etc. to get a better service their communication ought to be very clear and lucid. If someone observes a communication between two parties, one would find their communication to be simple and only the idea is clearly communicated. It is also observed that no indirect utterances are used instead most of the utterances are direct. The following dialogue exemplifies the simplicity of language in tourism English.

Canceling a Reservation

Customer : Hi! I made a reservation earlier this week but I have to cancel it.

Reservation Officer: That's not a problem; just give me your name, phone number and date of visit.

Customer : My name is Romesh, 62244443322, Friday, December 22nd through Monday 25th December.

Reservation Officer: I see your reservation, let me just cancel it and you will be all set.

In the above conversation, only the simple sentences are used. There is no complex sentence structure being employed in the conversation which is natural. Even though a compound sentence is visible it does not make the utterance perplexed.

Aspect of Tense

Another significant feature of Tourism English is the tense. If the functional aspect is taken into account, communicating accurate information is one of the functions of Tourism English. The use of present tense is mostly visible in Tourism English as the information delivered has to be factual. The present tense is often used to express, things that occur as habits or it is used to express daily routines or universal truths. The following description of a place in Sri Lanka will exemplify the use of present tense in Tourism English.

Arugam Bay

“Arugam Bay is a bay situated on the Indian Ocean in the dry zone of Sri Lanka's southeast coast. The bay is located 320 km due east of Colombo. It is a popular surfing and tourist destination. Due to its popularity among low budget tourists, the area has managed a slow recovery. By private initiatives only. The main road through town has still not been repaved. Work is in progress to improve road access to the area. But in Arugam Bay itself, little has changed. As late as May, 2009 no help has been received from any official source or international organizations. An exception is uncoordinated support for fishing folk as well as many school rebuilding programs, resulting in a continuation to provide only separatist schools for each community”. (https://www.slttda.lk/sri_lanka_touris_attractions)

In addition to use of present tense, the use of past tense also is observed in Tourism English. Usually, when describing historical events or cultural background information, the use of past tense is clearly observed. For instance, providing a description to the ancient city Anuradhapura will lucidly exemplifies the use of past tense.

Anuradhapura

Anuradhapura is one of the ancient capitals of Sri Lanka, famous for its well-preserved ruins of ancient Lankan civilization. From the 4th century BC, it was the capital of Sri Lanka until the beginning of the 11th century AD. During this period it remained one of the most stable and durable centers of political power and urban life in South Asia. The ancient city, considered sacred to the Buddhist world, is today surrounded by monasteries covering an area of over sixteen square miles (40 km²). Anuradhapura is also significant in Hindu legend as the fabled capital of the Asura King Ravana in the Ramayana. (https://www.slttda.lk/sri_lanka_touris_attractions)

Use of Voice in Language

The use of voices: active and passive voice also plays crucial role in language paly. In active voice, the subject becomes more important while in passive voice, the action or the object and thus the subject becomes objective. In Tourism English, the frequency of the use of passive voice less compared to that of other variety of English used in other contexts. Rather it uses active voice making the text more meaningful and less confusing. It is more objective and flexible in communication and can express the speakers' feelings and emotions. The following two examples illustrate the use of active voice in Tourism English.

Horton Plains

Horton Plains National Park "Maha-Eliya" in Sinhala, is a national park in the highlands of Sri Lanka. It lies at a height of more than 2,000 m in the central highlands, and its altitude means that it has a much cooler and windier climate than the lowlands of Sri Lanka, with a mean annual temperature of 16 °C rather than the 26 °C of the coasts. The area was named in 1834 after Lady Anne Horton, wife of Sir Robert Wilmot-Horton, then-governor of Ceylon.

In the above excerpt, most of the time active voice is used to deliver information except at one occasion referring to some historical incident occurred in 1834.

Theophilos Hatzimihail

Dear visitors, I am going to tell you the story of a great modern, Neo-Hellenic Greek naïve painter, Theophilos Hatzimihail and his rather unfortunate life. The main themes of his work are Greek characters, the illustration of Greek traditional folklife and historical episodes. His father, Gabriil Kefalas, was a shoemaker and his mother, Pinelopi Hatzimihail, was a daughter of an iconographer. When he was very young he was not very good at school, but he had an unusual interest in painting, the basics of which he learned from his grandfather.
(<http://www.ptpest.ee/files/English%20in%20Tourism%20ESP%20Language%20Course.pdf>)

The above excerpt exemplifies the fact that the text fully utilizes active voice and they are highlighted for convenience. This too distinguishes Tourism English from that of other variety of English used in contexts.

Mood in Expressions

The other important linguistic feature that goes with tense line with line is the mood aspect. Mood in language implies the modality which is the use of verbal inflections that allow the speaker to express their attitude of what are they are saying about. Accordingly, the mood in Tourism English is imperative giving instructions, or command or order at times. For example, your room number please? Or please gather at Torrington Square at 9.00AM; let's have a visit to Colombo city tomorrow morning. The use of words 'please', and 'lets' implicates the politeness and suggestive nature of communication from the perspectives of employees' language use.

Politeness

Being always polite is good for both sides to maintain the healthy relationship which is a mandatory requirement particularly in the tourism sector in a country if it is to conduct successful businesses. Thus, every individual involved in the tourism people: tourists, tour guides, clerks, attendants and then organizations such as hotels, restaurants and tourist spots etc. being courteous will have enormous benefits in the industry. There are many ways to show one's politeness ways such as through behaviour, mannerism and in communication.

One of the ways of being polite to the tourists in Tourism English is to say thank you. This occurs both ways. When a need is fulfilled on a request and if the customer is satisfied then in retrospect thanking will be offered to show the gratitude. This can be illustrated from the following,

Customer: I want to cancel my booking

Reception: That's not a problem, I need you name, date of visit and your Passport number please

Customer: My name is Johnson, May 12th to June 30th 2020, Z 23435670

Reception: ok, let me cancel your booking. Mr. Johnson you will be all set.

Customer: Thank you so much.

In the above conversation, offering thanking reflects politeness and being courteous to the customer which is one of the ways of being polite.

The other way is to use the word 'please'. Using the word please also shows to which extent is either side of conversationist of conversation polite. Therefore, the use of words, 'please' and 'thank' are frequently observed in Tourism English.

The use of modal verbs in interrogation also reflects the idea of being polite. There are three types of modals used in English such as modal verbs of possibility, modal verbs of possibility and modal verbs of ability. For instance, the following examples can be used to illustrate this further.

What would you like to do in the afternoon?

I think I would like to have a rest in the afternoon and start an excursion the following day.

Would you prefer to stay with us today or to go for a different place?

Will you be able help me in this case to find accommodation?

Politeness in Language

While politeness is important in every aspect of life, being polite is a significant feature in Tourism English. The language and culture is also another prominent feature one would observe in Tourism English. If further explained, language is an inseparable element in a culture. On the other hand, culture is something that every individual has in his or her social life. The elements of one's culture are transmitted through a given language. What is remarkable in culture language in Tourism English is that the peculiar terminologies used in a given culture are attributed to English for Tourism. With reference to Sri Lankan context, both local and foreign tourists used to visit a place called Dambana where indigenous tribes (Vadda People) are living. For communication with Vadda people, one has to use several words used in their language in order to get clear information. Thus, Tourism English is destined to deliver such cultural information, their life styles, eating habits and rituals. The words such as, botakanda (elephant), kankunaa (deer), karia (bear), okma (buffalo) and kandaarni (bee) ought to be translated into Tourism English to deliver the meaning of Vadda language and their culture.

Linguistic and Tonal Style

English for Tourism has its own style and tonal pattern. Stylistic in particular is a branch of applied linguistics which is the study and interpretation of both spoken and written corpora with regard to linguistic and tonal style.

Generally Tourism English is very simple. That is the style of English for Tourism is plain and neutral. It is not complex and complicated as in other subjects like literary works. The English used in tourism is very simple in style and is used to explain facts and simple descriptions such as pictures taken, habits or livelihood. This too can be further illustrated by referring to the following excerpt taken from a description of an historical story called Isurumuni Lovers.

*The **Isurumuniya** Viharaya is situated close to Tisa Wewa in Anuradapuraya. There is a Viharaya connected to a cave and above is a cliff. A **small** stupa is built on it. **Isurumuniya** is famous for its stone carvings, and the one known as "**Isurumuniya Lovers**" is the most-admired and world famous*

In the above simple description, there is no complex patter of language instead simple, direct and unambiguous language is used. This shows the tone and style is simple in Tourism English.

Conclusion

This study chiefly attempts to provide a description as to how English for Tourism or Tourism English is distinctive from that of other ESP genres with a particular reference its language and style, politeness in the language use, mood in expression, tense and voice, loan words, idioms and phrases, nominalization and lexical diversity. It was observed that this study also contributes to the enrichment of research in language and linguistics study in particularly in the area of ESP context. On the other hand, this will undoubtedly provide a platform for other researcher to conduct advanced research nourishing the genre English for Tourism studies.

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