Online Promotion of Private Hospital Promoting Medical Tourism: A Multimodal Analysis from A Cultural Perspective

WAN FATIMAH SOLIHAH WAN ABDUL HALIM
Universiti Utara Malaysia

INTAN SAFINAZ ZAINUDIN
NOR FARIZA MOHD NOR
Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia

ABSTRACT

The medical tourism industry, which was seriously affected by the coronavirus disease of 2019 (COVID-19), needs to give attention to its online promotional message strategy to boost the industry. Cultural variability is also crucial since the market for the medical tourism industry is global. However, studies involving cultural variability have only focused on examining single discourse mode, mainly the linguistic mode and overlooked the multimodal perspective. This study, therefore, examined the way in which the Prince Court Medical Centre (PCMC), a private hospital in Malaysia is presented and how the various modes in the hospital's website are combined to deliver promotional messages to international medical tourists. A total of three web pages from the website of PCMC were analysed using the Systemic Functional Theory framework. This study employed Halliday's metafunction theory (for language analysis and Kress and van Leeuwen's model for image analysis. The ways in which the multimodal features of the website reflect communicative style from the cultural perspective were also explored. Hall's (2000) cultural dimension of context dependency which classifies cultures into high-context and low-context cultures was used to present the analysis. The findings revealed that PCMC's hospital website has elements that are mainly encountered in low-context cultures such as elaborated code systems as well as direct, explicit, and highly structured messages. The findings help create awareness of communicative strategies in designing medical tourism websites that involve meaning making through texts and images and the possible cultural interpretation especially among copywriters, website designers or medical tourism stakeholders.

Keywords: *Multimodal analysis, systemic functional theory (SFT), cultural context dimension, online promotional discourse, medical tourism.*

INTRODUCTION

Medical tourism is considered one of the rapidly developing services in the tourism industry. Driven by a few factors such as cost effectiveness, advanced technology and better quality of care provided by health institutions, the global medical tourism market size was valued at USD 44.8 billion in 2019 (Sharma, Vishraj, Ahlawat, Mittal & Mittal, 2020). However, as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, the global medical tourism market is projected to experience a drastic downfall in the year 2020 (Research Dive, n.d.). In fact, many leading medical tourism destinations have been severely affected by COVID-19 including those in Thailand, Singapore and Malaysia which are known to be among the most popular medical tourism destinations in Southeast Asia (Gopalan, Siti Nurani & Mohd Salim, 2021). Moreover, as many of the Southeast Asian countries are greatly dependent on China for their supply chain, labour flow, and tourism sector in the region, they have become exceptionally vulnerable to economic

threats since China is one of the earliest countries to be severely affected by the virus (Oxford Analytica, 2020).

Before the outbreak of the pandemic, the number of international patients arriving in Malaysia increased threefold during the 2001-2006 period (Lianto, Suprapto & Mel, 2020). In a study, it was revealed that the number of Indonesian medical tourists traveling to Penang, Malaysia for medical reasons was 500 000 people per year and the number was expected to grow (Fathia, 2018). However, Covid-19 has caused a tremendous drop in medical tourism revenue, especially from private hospitals. The Chief Minister of Penang, Malaysia mentioned that the decline in revenue of a leading private hospital in Penang was 66% and 55% in April and May of 2020, respectively (Buletin Mutiara, 2020). The situation is expected to be further exacerbated as the Malaysia Healthcare Travel Council (MHTC), a government agency entrusted to make Malaysia the leading global healthcare destination, has decided to defer the Malaysia Year of Healthcare Travel 2020 (MyHT2020) campaign which was supposed to resume in 2021 (MHTC, 2020a). In combating the decline in revenue from the medical tourism industry, many countries have taken aggressive approaches to contain the revenue drop that they have had to bear as a result of the pandemic. Thailand Medical News (2019) reported that Thailand has taken steps to improve the lack of proper medical marketing professionals as they believe online medical marketing requires a lot of strategic planning since having websites alone is not enough. However, the approaches taken by Thailand and Singapore cannot be materialised if effective online promotion is not put in place to convince prospective medical tourists. Loda (2011) and Mason and Wright (2011) emphasised the role of online promotion by claiming that high-quality online information is extremely important to attract the attention of medical tourists.

The Malaysian government realises the importance of online promotion in regaining the confidence and trust of international medical tourists in the wake of the pandemic. It has thus demonstrated its commitment to revitalise the Malaysian economy by improving the online promotion of the medical tourism sector. MHTC (2020b) reported that Malaysia has actively pursued an aggressive public relation and branding campaign, boosted social media activities, and supported their member hospitals and agents in other countries as a means of positioning Malaysia as 'top of mind' when patients decide to travel again. Additionally, Malaysia has also allocated RM35 million in Budget 2021 for the healthcare travel sector through digitalisation (MHTC, 2020c), demonstrating that the government is aware of the need to maximise the use of digital platform in reaching out to the international medical tourists, especially now that people's movement is restricted because of the pandemic.

The Malaysian government has always strived to be an exemplar in pursuing its dream of becoming the leading healthcare destination globally. This is proven when Malaysia was recognised as the first Southeast Asian country after the USA to have a high number of publications on medical tourism, demonstrating the government's commitment in the issue and the large number of researchers interested in studying the phenomenon (Campra, Riva, Oricchio & Brescia, 2021). Medical tourism practices are mainly hospital-centric; for this reason, among the online promotional platforms requiring attention are private hospital websites that promote medical tourism. Moreover, Aghbolagh, Hashim and Cheong (2021) claimed that one of the factors that determines the success of medical tourism revenue earnings is how effectively these private hospitals promote themselves to attract prospective medical tourists. Private hospital websites are seen as significant marketing channels for showcasing and promoting the destinations' medical facilities and their array of expertise,

services, treatments and equipment to both domestic and foreign patient-consumers (Mason & Wright, 2011; Turner, 2011; Woo & Schwartz, 2014).

Online promotion via websites does not only include text, but also collections of images, multimedia, interactive elements, animated graphics, and audio (Würtz, 2005). Such complexity specifies that the creation and construction of interesting and resourceful web pages are challenging. Further complicating the task is the fact that websites are constructed and presented in diverse cultural backgrounds because of the culture-sensitive nature in their content, design and multimodal communicative acts (Stoian, 2015). Varieties in communicative approaches among cultures are likely to present difficulties for websites to convey their messages in a favourable manner. This is because websites are culturally sensitive and the used websites features differ according to the country of origin (Cermak, 2020).

Considering the complicated task of promoting medical tourism online in a culturally diverse world, many studies have focused on comprehending and analysing intercultural communication dissimilarities in website design as a result of the impact of online and international promotion. Some studies have shown that communication styles matter on the websites. Much of the literature on culture and websites have investigated website design or discourse across cultures (Cermak, 2020; Moghavvemi, Ormond, Musa, Isa, Thirumoorthi & Mustapha, 2017) and intercultural communication in websites (Oswal & Palmer, 2018). Some studies have investigated how and to what extent website design and content reflect the particular communication style of those who develop the websites, especially concerning high-context versus low-context culture (Sari & Putra, 2019; Usunier & Roulin, 2010).

Although cultural significance has been considered in the publicity outline of such websites, these studies have only focused on a single discourse mode, namely the linguistic mode and overlooked the fact that these websites combine words, images and sounds into complex structures. In an attempt to explain the intended meaning, it is necessary to analyse this type of promotional text from a multimodal perspective. Analysis from the multimodal perspective starts from the premise that simply focusing on linguistic analysis is not sufficient to provide modern patterns of textuality, as discourses have been fundamentally distorted by the new technologies such as the Internet (Bloommaert, 2011; Stoian, 2018). In this respect, multimodality is seen as an efficient approach to the study of medical tourism websites and their discourse. Therefore, visual analysis is needed to describe the multimodal contemporary signs which are generally crucial for both verbal and non-verbal communication. Furthermore, the lack of knowledge in non-verbal communication could lead to deficiencies in communication competency (Farid & Mamat, 2021).

This study aims to contribute to the field of online medical tourism promotion by providing new insights, derived from the multimodal analysis of a private hospital website, from the intercultural communication perspective. According to Croucher, Sommier and Rahmani (2015), intercultural communication is communication between parties from different national cultures. Cultures contain maps of meaning to help people understand the world better. However, these maps of meaning do not weigh the same in every culture (Lehtonen, 2000). Therefore, this study analysed how communicative styles are reflected in a Malaysian hospital website that is used to promote medical tourism to prospective international medical tourists. Every cultural dimension demonstrates cultural particularities and features, in particular domains and aspects. For this study, Hall (1976, 2000) and Hall and Hall's (1990) cultural dimension of context dependency have been selected because of their

relevance since the cultural dimension framework proposed by Hall emphasises how meaning is formed and construed. Furthermore, Hall's framework is applicable to online communication and is feasible for analysing various types of communication for online business (Hermeking, 2005; Würtz, 2006). The framework can be associated with the metafunctions explained in the theoretical framework, as its analysis highlights the features of different dimensions. Additionally, cultural dimensions are also important for communicative style prediction (Şerbănescu, 2007).

To summarise, this study aims to analyse the way in which a private Malaysian hospital website uses images and language to convey promotional messages in promoting medical tourism to prospective international medical tourists based on the intercultural communication perspective. Specifically, the objectives of this study are twofold; the first is to analyse the way in which a private hospital website constructs its web pages using language and visuals to promote medical tourism, and second is to investigate whether the identified choices can be accounted for from the point of view of cultural differences.

As this study involved two phases of analyses, two separate frameworks were utilised. Halliday and Matthiessen (2004) was chosen for the multimodality framework which involved analysis of the linguistic mode while Kress and Van Leeuwen's (2021) model was utilised for the visuals analysis, based on Halliday's metafunctions. This paper employed Systemic Functional Theory in analysing the websites. The multimodal discourse is able to depict the utilisation of language and images, their purposive representation, and the result from the audience's interaction (Stoian, 2018). For the second phase of analysis, this study utilised Hall's context dimension (1976, 1990, 2000) for the cultural framework as the focus is on the way meaning is created and interpreted.

This study is expected to raise the awareness of medical tourism providers, private hospital management or copywriters regarding the intricacies of medical tourism promotional websites that consist of not only text and collections of images and other interactive elements, but also some elements of cultural sensitivity. It is hoped that the findings and insights gained from this study can guide the stakeholders towards designing and producing a more efficacious marketing approach in promoting medical tourism online through websites to attract the attention of medical tourists from around the world.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Online Promotional Messages

The global market of the medical tourism industry has resulted in online promotional materials. Websites, especially, continue to grow as they present many opportunities for medical tourism players such as private hospitals and government agencies to improve efficiencies in communication engagement. Jun (2015), Viladrich with Baron-Faust (2014) and Janet (2018) reported that online promotion about medical services should be employed as the primary channel to deliver health information to medical tourists as well as a primary channel to promote medical tourism in the respective countries. Jun (2015) asserted that her study of "top-level" public hospitals, together with other service providers of medical tourism in Korea, using data from online promotional messages can serve as a guide for future researchers in analysing the medical tourism messages on the Internet. Studies by Viladrich and Baron-Faust (2014) discovered that the online promotional messages and strategies employed have successfully highlighted and promoted Argentina as a destination that is increasingly gaining attention and trust for cosmetic surgeries where Argentines are

demonstrated as surgically enhanced role models to be followed by other foreign medical tourism stakeholders. Meanwhile, in the local context of Malaysia, Janet (2018) in her study revealed that in promoting medical tourism, online magazines can provide promotional messages which serve to attract, persuade, and allure prospective medical tourists to travel to Malaysia for medical tourism purposes.

Promotional medical tourism discourse has also received attention from the cultural research field. Companies are mostly aware that local marketing strategies may not work in international business because of the cultural differences (Gupta & Santhosh, 2017), and at the same time culture also influences discourse (Şerbănescu, 2007). In recent years, a number of studies have been conducted in the field of promotional discourse that involve cultural perspective, covering a variety of topics. Among them is the issue of cultural differences being the main factor of the translation failure in the tourism industry (Sulaiman & Wilson, 2018). Researchers have also examined the basic elements of advertising text through pragmatic, psycholinguistic, and sociolinguistic theories, discussed the findings on the interrelationship between cultures, and revealed that texts create connotations by interacting with other forms of discourse and are inextricable from the practices of textual marketing. These previous studies attempted to shed light on the importance of cultural elements in effective composition of promotional discourse.

Additionally, studies on promotional discourse from cultural grounds have also received attention from the field of online promotional materials such as websites. Some studies have examined the importance of cultural context in online promotion (Karaçay-Aydın, Akben-Selcuk & Aydin-Altinoklar, 2010; Frederick & Gan, 2015; & Wu, 2018). Wu (2018) investigated the ways different destinations with different cultural contexts promote the local attractions to global audiences through online tourism marketing while Karaçay-Aydın et al. (2010) examined the extent of web communication variabilities on cultural grounds and revealed crucial variance in the portrayal of cultural values in the websites analysed. In investigating the ways medical tourism facilitators differentiate themselves from each other on their websites. Frederick and Gan (2015) found results which are consistent with Karaçay-Aydın et al.'s (2010) findings; there were regional differences which were due to cultural factors. These past studies show that many studies have focused on explicating and understanding intercultural communication disparities in website design as a result of the impact of online and international promotion. However, these studies have only focused on a single discourse mode, mainly the linguistic mode and overlooked the fact that the websites combine words and visuals into complex structures. Therefore, in order to explain the intended meaning, it is necessary to analyse this type of promotional text from a multimodal perspective.

Multimodal analysis has been acknowledged to furnish appropriate instruments for examining promotional discourse resulting from the consolidation of iconic and verbal codes toward creating a reputable image of a destination (Stoian, 2018). Past studies have also explored the contribution of multimodality in official tourism websites using the framework of Systemic Functional Linguistics (Stoian & Dejica, 2016), and spam letters using rhetorical analysis (Jalilifar & Yazdani, 2017). In the literature, some theorists have suggested that cultures diverge into dissimilar aspects. For instance, cultural studies have been applying Hall's (1976) cultural typologies widely. Hornikx and le Pair (2017) investigated the influence of Hall's (1976) context culture on perceived advertisement complexity and liking. Meanwhile, Stoian and Dejica (2016), who compared general tourism website promotional

messages, discussed their multimodal analysis findings using Hall's (2000) cultural context, revealing that they were inconsistent with the original theory on intercultural communication. The authors argued that this was perhaps due to the interference of globalisation on language, culture, as well as socio-political changes.

The aforementioned studies have focused on various different fields. However, what is lacking is that attention has not been given to analysing medical tourism promotional messages using multimodal discourse analysis and relating it to intercultural communication perspectives. Specifically, this study intended to fill this gap by employing theoretical perspective from a school of functional linguistics. As mentioned earlier, websites are complex creations since they are constructed by a combination of several resources and modes. Systemic Functional Theory (hereafter SFT) (Halliday, 1985, 1994; Kress & van Leeuwen, 1996, 2021; Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004), with its perspective on meaning-making in context, was considered a revealing model for the analysis of websites (Djonov, 2005). This model was selected to analyse the promotional messages of the web pages chosen, from the perspective of how their combination can create meanings. Both visual and verbal modes were analysed in detail, initially as separate modes, and subsequently analysed together, as multimodal acts. This deconstruction attempts to explore the way each mode contributes to promotion, particularly to better understand the combined message.

Fundamental of Cultural Perspective
Constructing website discourse does not only require a prudent selection of the words and visuals, but Cermak (2020) emphasised that it must start from the premise that the website is a culturally sensitive medium. Several researchers have proposed a few frameworks to be applied to the culture classification (Hall, 1976; Hofstede, 1984, 2001; Hall & Hall, 1990; House, Hanges, Javidan, Dorfman & Gupta, 2004; Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005; Nardon & Steers, 2009). The focus of their models was on numerous elements of norms, societal beliefs or values. Every model proposed different cultural dimensions to relate to the cultural variability perspective. Therefore each of them identified and described characteristics of certain cultures. However, there is an overlap among these models in some cases, where it can only support their possible validity and utility (Nardon & Steers, 2009). In addition, these models are subject to criticism for not being very imprecise, applicable or stereotypical, particularly in the present globalised world (Dahl, 2004; Jones, 2007; Cardon, 2008). Of all these models, despite not being very recent (Clyne, 1994; Würtz, 2006; Guillén Nieto, 2007; Matsumoto & Juang, 2007), studies by Hall (1976, 2000) with Hall and Hall (1990), are the most frequently-cited and crucial in the realm of intercultural research, that categorised cultures based on polychronic and monochronic time, space, low-context and high-context. All of these models are able to be applied in real life circumstances in providing a base for improvement of intercultural circumstances and cultural awareness.

Hall's dimension of cultural context (1976, 1990, 2000) was chosen as it is more appropriate for this study since the focus is on the ways meaning is created and interpreted. According to Hall (1990, p. 6), context is "the information that surrounds an event; it is inextricably bound up with the meaning of that event". The combined elements that produce a given meaning usually depend on culture. Moreover, the highlighted features or characteristics from the analyses will be able to reflect cultural communicative styles. The cultural patterns of communication can be predicted by various cultural dimensions, such as context (Hall, 1976, 2000; Hall & Hall, 1990). Context dependency can thus be related to

Halliday's metafunctions and their application to visual design since the overall organization of discourse and its logical composition, the reality presented and the relation between its producers and receptors can indicate the preference for a certain context of communication.

There are two kinds of cultural context namely low-context and high-context. However, there is possibility for the two types of cultural context mentioned above to deviate from the main cultural pattern in certain contexts and situations, since cultures are "dynamic, continuously developing, and evolving" (Neuliep, 2020, p. 45) and are inclined by several different elements such as economic, geographical, religious, historical, political or social (Şerbănescu, 2007). Hall (1976) has never classified Malaysia, but he once mentioned that Asian countries are mainly known for its high-context cultures. Hall asserted that for countries who possess an agriculturally-based economy, their social mobility is low, which situates them in a high density population, thus making the sharing of knowledge convenient. This scenario of people sharing a long history together is normal in many Asian countries and therefore part of the culture becomes more high-context compared to the Europeans (Hall, 1976). As such, for the purpose of this study, Malaysia is considered as a high-context culture country. This study investigates whether the ways in which private hospital websites construct their web pages and use images and language to compose promotional messages for international promotion are consistent with these cultural classifications.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Multimodal Framework

The multimodal framework in this study adopted the Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) approach, which involved Halliday and Matthiessen's (2004) model for language analysis and Kress and Van Leeuwen's (2021) model for semiotic analysis. The analysis started with the language analysis followed by visual analysis using the metafunctions for selected web pages in each website. As metafunctions are systemic clusters belonging to a group of semantic systems that make meanings of a related kind, Halliday (1985) described the concept of metafunction as one of a small set of principles that are necessary to explain the organisation of the semantic system of language.

a.   Linguistic Analysis

Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), founded by the works of Halliday, is a "very useful descriptive and interpretive framework for viewing language as a strategic, meaning-making resource" (Eggins, 2004, p. 2). In this study, the linguistic analysis is organised following Halliday's proposal of metafunctions (1985, 1994) and Halliday and Matthiessen (2004) which looked at each function individually. These communicative functions include ideational (logical and experiential), which is concerned with how reality is developed in a discourse; interpersonal which is concerned with the grammatical choices that assist individuals to enact their different and complex interpersonal relations; and textual which relates to the communicative nature as well as internal structure of a text (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004). The logical analysis characterised the texts from the point of view of distribution of types of clauses: clause simplexes and complexes. The clause complexes were analysed for tactic and logico-semantic relations. The experiential analysis considers each clause and looks at its processes, participants, and circumstances. The interpersonal focuses on mood structure, types of subjects, finites, adjuncts, modality, polarity, mood choices and speech roles. Finally, the textual includes the types of themes and their thematic progression.

b. Visual Analysis

The visual analysis follows Kress and van Leeuwen's model of visual design (1996, 2021). The three visual metafunctions analysed for the six web pages are the representational, interactive, and compositional. Representational function analysis looks at represented participants, processes, and circumstances; in the case of the interactive function, image act, social distance, perspective, angle, modality markers; and in relation to the compositional function, at information value, salience, and framing. This organisation of both linguistic and visual analyses is followed repeatedly in the analysis of each webpage for each set of websites with the purpose to allow the reader to see the whole picture which comes out of the numerous different meaning-making strategies used by the web designers and their copywriters.

Cultural Framework

In this study, the dimension of cultural perspective is further analysed to understand the variability in communicative acts that may be rooted in a country's culture. How visuals and verbals are utilised to describe places, circumstance and people explain the social interactions practised in the country and at the same time develop an expressive multimodal act that can demonstrate cultural patterns (Stoian, 2013). As for the analysis, the cultural dimension of context is selected (Hall, 1976, 2000; Hall & Hall, 1990), as it seems to be the most relevant to the type of message studied and its function.

Hall proposes two types of culture which are high-context and low-context. According to Hall and Hall (1990), members of high-context cultures have less need to be explicit and thus rely less on words and more on nonverbal communication to convey meaning, knowledge being situational and relational. Within this context, some elements are expressed indirectly or not at all, since meaning is assigned on the base of shared experiences and expectations, which leads to inferences and contextual predictions. Low-context cultures, on the other hand, are just the opposite. The members of low-context cultures depend much less on nonverbal clues and more on the explicit verbal code to create and interpret meaning. Due to this, communication within these contexts involves the transmission of direct, explicit, and highly structured messages, the linear organization of text in logical arguments and the focalization of information and details. Figure 1 explicated how the first stage of analysis (multimodal discourse analysis) and the second stage (intercultural analysis) of analysis were carried out.
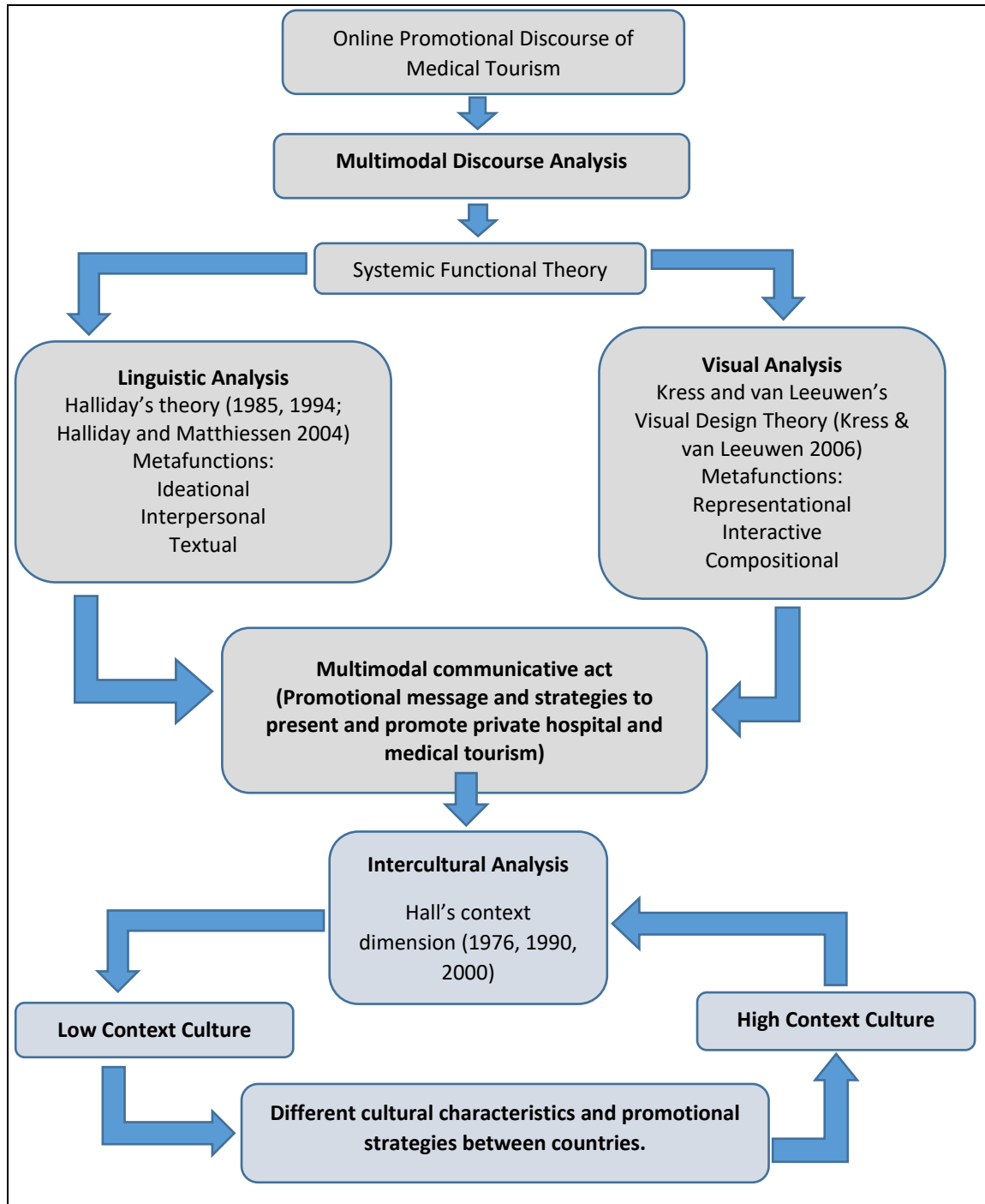
Figure 1: The Theoretical Framework

METHODOLOGY

Data Collection

This study gathered data from the website of a private hospital in Malaysia following a number of search criteria. Firstly, English, as a leading language of advertising in general (Sulaiman & Wilson, 2019), has been set as the language of promotion since the study focuses on international promotion. Secondly, the focus of this study is on a private hospital from one of the Southeast Asian countries that is a dominant player in the medical tourism market and thirdly, the study selected a private hospital that recorded the highest number of

international patients. Therefore, one private hospital website from Malaysia was chosen from the Medical Travel Quality Alliance's (n.d.) (henceforth MTQUA) list of the top ten hospitals in the world in 2019 for medical tourists. MTQUA listed Prince Court Medical Centre (henceforth PCMC) from Malaysia in the sixth rank and therefore PCMC website (http://www.princecourt.com) is included in this study. The website was accessed and viewed in January 2020.

This small-scale comparison study examined the promotional texts and visuals in the PCMC website for the illustration of the Systemic Functional Theory (SFL). Since this theory can indicate the way experience, relations and content are constructed linguistically and visually, this study explores the multimodal communicative act or the promotional message of the websites from the perspective of how the linguistic and visual modes are combined to make meaning. SFL views language as a resource that people utilise to achieve specific purposes through the functions of language (Halliday & Hasan, 1989). As for the linguistic analysis, it involved a meticulous and detailed process as the functions of each word was analysed individually. The clauses were also analysed to understand how contexts were reflected in the linguistic choices that the copywriters or website designers have made in the website construction. As such, selected sections of three web pages from one private hospital website in Malaysia is adequate for the purpose of this study. These webpages were chosen based on their function which best describes the facilities and expertise of the private hospital as well as the closest to promoting medical tourism to their prospective international medical tourists. The web pages were also chosen based on the presence of multimodal elements (texts and visuals) in the webpages. The three webpages chosen from the PCMC website are the International Business Lounge (IBL), About PCMC (PCMC) and Medical Tourism (MT). The screenshots of the selected sections of the three web pages are included in the Appendix.

Method of Analysis
There are two stages of analysis in this study. The first stage is multimodal analysis to analyse how verbal and visual in the websites are combined to make meaning while the second stage is intercultural analysis to interpret the multimodal findings from a cultural context. The analysis of the selected private hospital websites was done manually and went through several steps. Firstly, once the six webpages from the two websites were selected, the texts were divided into clauses. This was followed by the identification of the linguistic features based on the SFL metafunctions; ideational, interpersonal, and textual metafunction. Thirdly, the most prominent visuals in all selected web pages were analysed based on representational, interactive and compositional metafunctions. Fourthly, the information in relation to the linguistic features and descriptive information on visuals were tabled. Finally, the identified linguistic features and visual features were interpreted through the intercultural perspective of Hall's cultural dimension of context approach (1976, 2000; Hall & Hall, 1990). The flow of the data analysis process is illustrated in the Figure 2 below.
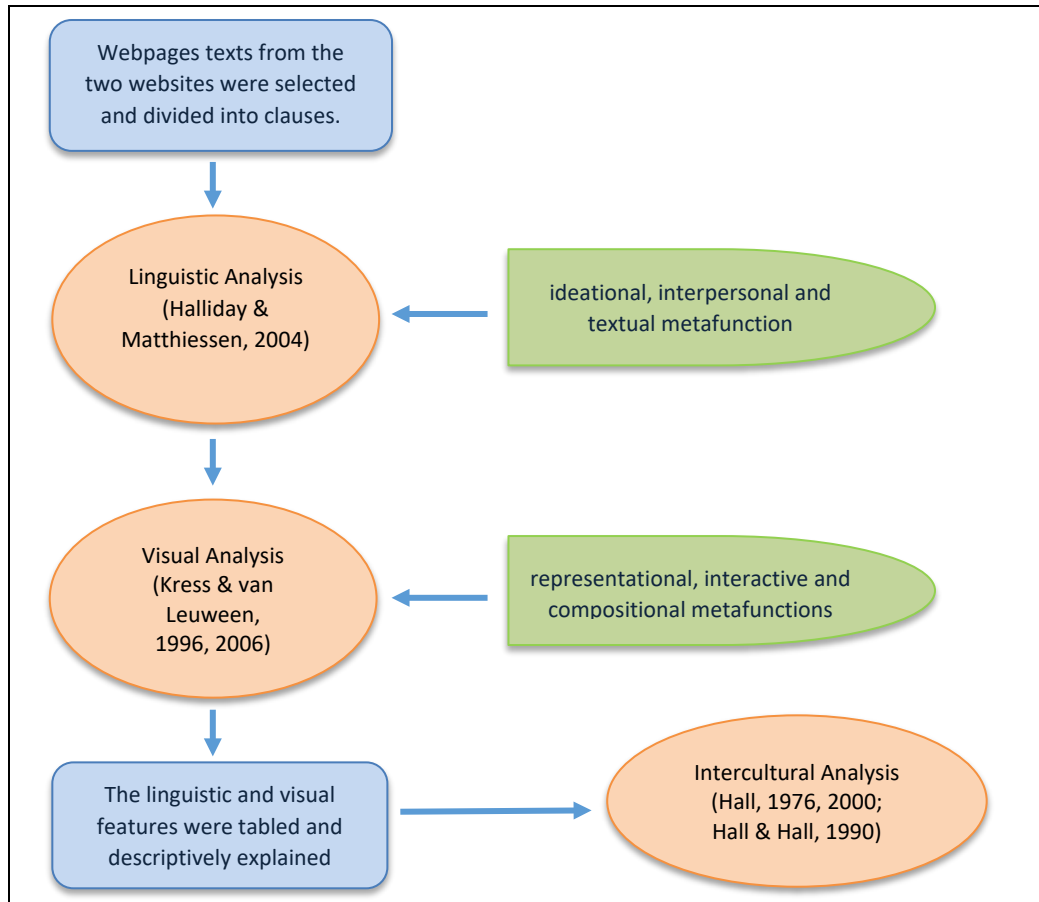
Figure 2: The Data Analysis Process

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of the linguistics and visual analyses are presented followed by the cultural interpretation for each website. The screenshots of the webpages are included in the Appendix.

PRINCE COURT MEDICAL CENTRE – MALAYSIA (PCMC)

The linguistic and visual analyses of the text from the Prince Court Medical Centre (PCMC) website is presented in Table 1. Table 1 provides the linguistic and visual characteristics of three web pages taken from the PCMC website namely the International Business Lounge (IBL), About PCMC (PCMC) and Medical Tourism (MT).

Table 1: Linguistic and Visual Analyses of Prince Court Medical Centre (PCMC) Website

Metafunction	Linguistic	Visual
Ideational/Representational	**Clause complexes** *(consist of two or more simplex clauses)*	**Narrative structure** *(present unfolding actions and events, process of change)*
	Hypotactic relation *(unequal relation between clauses)*	**Action structure** *(participants in the images show action)*
	Relational process *(either identifying or attributive)*	**Complex**
	Material clause *(consists of an Actor, a Process, and a Goal)*	
	Participant-Identifier	
	Subject – Hospital and Country	

Interpersonal/Interactive	**Declarative** (statement, not imperative or interrogative) **Fused finites** (hidden finites that embed verb to be with action verbs eg. provides) **Expressed finites** (passive finites) **Low Modality** (modals) **-Negation** (Negative form of clause)	**Offer** (presented for contemplation) **Far personal distance** **Objective** **Frontal** **Eye-level** **Medium Modality** (image modality is how viewers judge realism in images)
Textual/Compositional	**Simple themes** (themes is the element which serves as the point of departure of the message) **Unmarked** **Continuous** **Multiple** **New**	**Salience** (important elements in the visual) **Framing** (any semiotic entity is given internal unity and the possibility of internal coherence-framing devices establish boundaries between elements by a variety of devices)

Linguistic Analysis
• **Ideational-Logical Analysis:** The texts are medium length and is mainly built by complex clauses, i.e., having characteristics which can indicate a highly structured message e.g. "Our aim is to be the leading healthcare provider in Asia, *offering comprehensive medical care to the highest international standards through world-class facilities, innovative technology and excellent customer services"*, (Prince Court Medical Centre, n.d.). A reduced non-defining relative clause such as *"offering"* is rather common in tourism discourse (Thompson, 2004) and such clauses are usually incorporated to supply secondary details to the conveyed primary meaning. The text appears to offer as much detailed information as possible about the hospital and the services they offer to attract focus to them, making the message more compact.

• **Ideational-Experiential Analysis**: Experience is mostly conveyed by relational processes which attribute features to the hospital services and hospital facilities. To simplify, the relational processes illustrate the connection of the venue and the expected experience, e.g "Prince Court Medical Centre *is* a 270-bed private healthcare facility". In addition to the relational processes, there are several examples of materials processes that describe impartially the facilities the hospital has to offer, e.g. "Our International Business Lounge *is geared* to welcome you and help you understand". As for the participants, the role of medical tourists appeared most frequently in the text. Organised with its constituents, a message becomes more directly understood than it is indirectly suggested. Its regular function is to provide familiar recognition, for example "Malaysian healthcare" and "PCMC". This is anticipated, due to the numerous identifying and attributive relational processes found in the text. The choice of vocabularies as mentioned above may signify that the copywriter attempts to convince the user in an indirect, but sensory method.

• **Interpersonal Analysis**: The text is composed only by the declarative mood of the texts. It enables details to be specified as factual by means of statements. The mood component is mainly represented by subject and finite. The place of the subject is usually occupied by PCMC and its attractions, such as "Our International Business Lounge", "Malaysian healthcare", etc. Attention is thus drawn to the services offered by the hospital, including the promotion of

medical tourism. As for the finite used in the webpages, they are mostly fused finite or embedded and mainly refer to the present, e.g., "PCMC *promotes* and *develops* the country's medical tourism industry as well as *positions* Malaysia as a healthcare hub in the Southeast Asian region". The messages in the text appear to be timeless and generic due to the preference for these forms of finites. Expressed finites, such as passive forms, concentrates on the subject, e.g., "Our International Business Lounge *is geared* to welcome you" while modalisation lessens the copywriter's forceful tone in demonstrating possibilities, e.g., 'Travelling to a new country *can* be a stressful and anxious experience for some'.

• **Textual Analysis**: The textual analysis shows the dominance of unmarked themes. For unmarked themes, the participants determine a theme placement. For example, '*Prince Court Medical Centre* is a 270-bed private healthcare facility'. Unmarkedness leads to an objective and complete message with no room for mediation. The numerous occurrences of simple themes which were expressed by the textual themes of '*and*', revealed that utilizing conjunctions in writing links a message to the direct context of the previous clause and consequently it is significant for the rational association among the clauses (Alyousef, 2016) that provided a cohesive link to the previous messages in which the copywriter paid attention to the flow of the message. The absence of an interpersonal theme in PCMC web pages is due to the nature of the promotional text (Alrajhi, 2020), attributed to the objectivity and impersonal traits which scientific texts are known for. In terms of thematic progression, the emphasis on the hospital is shown by the continuous thematic pattern, conveying a similar theme from one clause to the subsequent one. This finding revealed that the flow of message in PCMC was primarily drawing prospective medical tourists' attention as the attention was both in the message flow and in the promotional message itself. Additionally, the multiple thematic patterns established cohesion in the text as the elements in the rheme signal connections with the successive themes by highlighting the propositional content to be provided subsequently (Alyousef & Alzahrani, 2020).

Visual Analysis

• **Representational Analysis**: Three structures are used to represent the hospital. The first web page (IBL) and second web page (PCMC) are a narrative structure, since there are vectors that demonstrate action. The use of the analytical visual process is due to the image elements' ability of being associated with the aspect of part-whole structures. The hospital is depicted in its entirety, including its carrier role and its various parts and nearby components, e.g., the building area, the lounge room in the picture – they are possessive attributes of Prince Court Medical Centre. It is unclear how these segments are meant to correspond with each other, making the analytical process to be considered as unstructured. By including the image of people in a picture, the imagery is suggestive of being authentic and conceivable. Simultaneously, the picture becomes more persuasive, as the inclusion of human models begs the viewers to relate to their own experience.

• **Interactive Analysis**: The pictures serve as 'offers', which means for the viewer's assessment. The images are captured from close and medium shots. The horizontal angle for the first and second pictures is frontal, but the third picture is both oblique and frontal, so viewers need to see it closer for a better sight. This method is strategically planned because it involves the viewers by indirectly tempting them to partake in the real-time setting of the

pictures, as demonstrated by the human models. A specific partiality does not apply to the horizontal and vertical angles since the pictures might be shot coincidentally or spontaneously without any planned or modified intention. The markers of modality are consistent with the likelihood of the visitor's capturing the picture themselves as they approach nearer to the buildings. This is displayed by their medium modality. The low illumination and brightness suggest the intention of making the buildings look more enhanced.

• **Compositional Analysis**: The web pages contain framed elements such as the title and the image. In addition, the salient features, such as the title, subtitle, caption, and hyperlink are also available in all visuals of the selected web pages.

Cultural Analysis
The cultural analysis of Malaysian selected webpages is presented in Table 2. It provides the cultural features and cultural patterns derived from the multimodal promotional message and strategies.

Table 2: Cultural Analysis of Malaysian Websites

Multimodal Promotional Message & Strategy	Cultural features	Cultural pattern
Ideational	**Ideational**	
Medium webpage and text = Easy access information	Direct and explicit message	Low-context
Ideational	**Ideational**	
High material process - Language informs	Elaborated code system	Low-context
Ideational	**Ideational**	
Low mental process - objectivity is chosen over sensations	Focalisation of information	Low-context
Interpersonal	**Interpersonal**	
Low modalisation indicates less negotiation of meaning, information is not negotiated, presented as fact	Direct and explicit message	Low-context
Interpersonal	**Interpersonal**	
High circumstances to offer as the background information	Highly structured message	Low-context
Textual	**Textual**	
Dominated by unmarked themes promote objectivity	Focalisation of information	Low-context
Textual	**Textual**	
No interpersonal as impersonal strategy	Focalisation of information	Low-context
Textual	**Textual**	
Low new theme = The message flow and the promotional message are equally important	Focalisation of information	Low-context
Clear thematic progression that promotes interconnectedness of ideas	Linear organisation	
Visual Analysis	**Visual**	
Salient- Title, caption, logo, the staff and patient images- Frame-The title of the webpage and images of staff and patient & the hospital environment	Focalisation of information	Low-context
Visual Analysis	**Visual**	
The images appeared subjective and very real. It is as if the viewer is standing there looking at the hospital staff.	Emphasis on feelings	High-context

The summary of the contextual features presented in Table 2 indicates that PCMC web pages contain both high and low context culture features, but they are mainly encountered in low-context cultures such as elaborated code systems, direct, explicit and highly structured message and focalised information. At the same time, the web pages contain some contextual features that belong to high-context culture as they are also built around shared experience, with emphasis on feelings and nonlinear organisation. It has been emphasised that quite often, high-context communication is more cultured and enables more multidimensional processing of information. Nevertheless, Sari and Putra (2019) asserted that high context communication brings a negative impact on the interactivity aspect of the website. The PCMC web pages are not totally consistent with the culture classification which is high context as it seemed to have transformed to low-context.

These differences can be rationalised through the cultural fluctuations and impacts from globalisation, and the domestic reshuffling of politics, economy, and society in Malaysia. It could also be argued that Malaysian culture might be affected by the global use of the English language, global mobilisation and the influence of the cultural and communicational changes produced by the expansion of Malaysian multi-racial communities. This finding is in line with Lailawati Salleh's (2005) study that examined the context communication of the Malaysian Malay style. Her study revealed a changing phenomenon of Malay communication which has become more low-context from high-context and concluded that it occured as a result of global mobilisation as people travel to other countries and learnt new ways of seeing and doing things, which they then incorporate into their value system. However, Lailawati Salleh's study focused only on the Malays. This study, which involves online promotion to the international market does not involve just the Malays, but other dominant races that practice their own cultural heritage like Indian and Chinese. Therefore, the departure from the usual cultural pattern in Malaysia can be associated not only with "culturally hybrid" (Hall, 1994, p. 207), but also the existence of "new culture" as a result of the mixing and blending of the three dominant cultures in Malaysia; Malay, Chinese and Indian. This "new culture" concept demonstrates that culture does not just help humans adapt to their environment and overcome challenges better and faster than genetics, but its evolution has become more group-oriented (Waring & Wood, 2021). With regards to this, cultural deviation proves the dynamic nature of the culture, as it is constantly changing and adapting itself to new situations and new sources of knowledge.

CONCLUSION

This study focuses on the communicative strategies of Malaysian private hospital website and its possible cultural interpretation. The multimodal analysis of the website indicates that in terms of information transmission and their preferred mode, the multimodal communicative act demonstrated by PCMC website is primarily informed through textual elements and subsequently demonstrate things to see through their visuals. The resemblances of multimodal features discussed can be accounted for from a cultural perspective. The cultural context dimension variability demonstrates the communicative styles of PCMC website. The multimodal features of PCMC website send direct and explicit message which is a feature encountered in low-context culture. The PCMC website do not follow Malaysia's usual cultural classification of high context as asserted by Hall (1976), Salleh (2005) with Usunier and Roulin (2010). The Malaysian website appears more permeable to change. The cultural deviations presented in the PCMC website may be explained by the influence of the cultural and

communicational changes produced by globalisation, the expansion of Malaysian multi-racial communities and internal changes in terms of economy, politics, and society.

As the theoretical implication of this study, the multimodal analysis framework from Halliday and Matthiesen (2004) with Kress and van Leeuwen (1996, 2021), and intercultural analysis framework from Hall (1976, 2000) with Hall and Hall (1990) have successfully indicated the appropriateness of the dimension for the study of online promotional tourism discourse. The study's adoption of the two-phase framework shows that SFL analysis are not confined to using frameworks on just discourse analysis to reveal particular multimodal communicative act or the promotional messages, but SFL can also be combined with the intercultural analysis to view the emerging communication pattern from a cultural perspective, specifically in this study, from the point of view of one of Hall's cultural context dimensions. Consequently, this study suggested that an appropriate framework and analytical approach should be carefully selected to fit into the context and purpose of the study.

The practical objective of the study has been to provide a more complete picture of the complexity of online medical tourism promotion. Considering discursive and cultural diversity, together with the growing tendency of online medical tourism, particular attention should be paid to this type of communication. Therefore, website stakeholders, promoters and copywriters need to be aware about communicative strategies of medical tourism websites that involve meaning making in image and text of the website and its possible cultural interpretation, especially in their struggle to restore confidence among international medical tourists to travel for medical treatment after the pandemic ends. The findings demonstrated that Systemic Functional Linguistics provides a beneficial means from both the theoretical and practical viewpoints, which can also be applicable in other aspects, such as for creating promotional messages, online marketing campaigns, medical tourism discourse and its strategies and intercultural communication.

BIODATA

Wan Fatimah Solihah Binti Wan Abdul Halim is a lecturer at Universiti Utara Malaysia and a PHD candidate at the Center for Research in Language and Linguistics, Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities, UKM. She is currently pursuing PhD research in multimodal discourse analysis and intercultural studies. Email: wfsolihah@uum.edu.my ; wfsolihah@gmail.com

Intan Safinaz Zainudin is a senior lecturer at the Center for Research in Language and Linguistics, UKM. Her area of interests are translation, bilingual lexiography and corpus based translation studies. Email: intanz@ukm.edu.my

Nor Fariza Mohd Nor is an Associate Professor at the Center for Research in Language and Linguistics, UKM. Her areas of interest are critical discourse analysis, corpus linguistics and digital humanities. Email: fariza@ukm.edu.my

REFERENCES

Aghbolagh, N. S., Hashim, A., & Mei, C. C. Y. (2021). A genre-based investigation of the "About Us" section of private hospitals' websites. *Journal of Asian Pacific Communication*. https://doi.org/10.1075/JAPC.00069.MEI

Alrajhi, M. (2020). Thematization in native and nonnative medical discourse: A systemic functional approach. *International Journal of Language and Literary Studies*, *2*(2), 1–17. https://doi.org/10.36892/ijlls.v2i2.270

Alyousef, H. S., & Alzahrani, A. A. (2020). A functional analysis of the thematic organization in electrical engineering research article introductions written in English by native and Saudi scholars: A comparative study. *Arab World English Journal (AWEJ), 11*(2), 114–141. https://doi.org/10.24093/awej/vol11no2.9

Alyousef, H. S. (2016). A multimodal discourse analysis of the textual and logical relations in marketing texts written by international undergraduate students. *Functional Linguistics*, *3*(1), 1–29. https://doi.org/10.1186/s40554-016-0025-1

Baack, D. W., & Singh, N. (2007). Culture and web communications. *Journal of Business Research*, *60*(3), 181–188. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2006.11.002

Bloommaert, J. (2011). *Pragmatics and discourse. In R. Mesthrie* (Ed.), The Cambridge handbook of sociolinguistics. Cambridge: CUP.

Buletin Mutiara. (2020, October 11). Understanding the Impact of Covid-19 on Penang Medical Tourism. https://www.buletinmutiara.com/understanding-the-impact-of-covid-19-on-penang-medical-tourism/

Burgmann, I., & Kitchen, P. J., & Williams, R. (2006). Does culture matter on the web? *Marketing Intelligence and Planning*, *24*(1), 62–76. https://doi.org/d5gkwj

Campra, M., Riva, P., Oricchio, G., & Brescia, V. (2021). Bibliometrix analysis of medical tourism. Health Services Management Research. https://doi.org/gmcmdp

Cardon, P. W. (2008). A critique of Hall's contexting model: A meta-analysis of literature on intercultural business and technical communication. *Journal of Business and Technical Communication*, *22*(4), 399–428. https://doi.org/10.1177/1050651908320361

Cermak, R. (2020). Culturally sensitive website elements and features: A cross-national comparison of websites from selected countries. *Acta Informatica Pragensia*, *9*(2), 132–153. https://doi.org/10.18267/J.AIP.137

Clyne, M. (1994). *Inter-cultural communication at work: Cultural values in discourse.* Cambridge: CUP.

Croucher, S. M., Sommier, M., & Rahmani, D. (2015). *Communication research and practice intercultural communication: Where we've been, where we're going, issues we face*. *Communication Research and Practice, 1*(1), 71-87. https://doi.org/ggqn54

Dahl, S. (2004). *Intercultural research: The current state of knowledge*. Middlesex University Discussion Paper No. 26. https://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.658202

Djonov, E. N. (2005). *Analysing the organisation of information in websites: From hypermedia design to systemic functional hypermedia discourse analysis* [Phd thesis, University of New South Wales]. UNSW Library. http://handle.unsw.edu.au/1959.4/23915

Eggins, S. (2004). An Introduction to Systemic Functional Linguistics. London: Pinter.

El-Daly, H. M. (2011). Towards an understanding of the discourse of advertising: Review of research with special reference to the Egyptian media. *African Nebula*, *1*(3).

Fathia, L. (2018). Tidak hanya Aceh, banyak orang indonesia memilih berobat ke Penang. berikut alasannya (Not Only Aceh, Many Indonesians Choose Treatment at Penang. Here are the reasons). *Liza Fathia.com*. https://liza-fathia.com/warga-indonesia-berobat

Farid, F., & Mamat, R. (2021). Non-verbal communication of German language in a German film: A coffee in Berlin. *Jurnal Komunikasi: Malaysian Journal of Communication, 37*(2). https://doi.org/10.17576/JKMJC-2021-3702-04

Francesconi, S. (2014). Reading tourism texts: A multimodal analysis. Channel View Publications. https://doi.org/10.21832/9781845414283

Frederick, R. J., & Gan, L. L. (2015). East-West differences among medical tourism facilitators' websites. *Journal of Destination Marketing & Management, 4*(2), 98-109. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jdmm.2015.03.002

Gopalan, N., Mohamed Noor, S. N., & Salim Mohamed, M. (2021). The pro-medical tourism stance of Malaysia and how it affects stem cell tourism industry. *SAGE Open*, *11*(2). https://doi.org/10.1177/21582440211016837

Guillén Nieto, V. (2007). La comunicación intercultural en los negocios. In E. Varó, J. Martínez & F. Ramos (Eds.), *Las lenguas profesionales y academicas* (pp. 93-103). Barcelona: Editorial Ariel.

Gupta, S., & Santhosh, K. R. (2017). Cultural toleranc and its link with language. *International Journal of Arts and Humanities, 1*(1), 42-48.

Hall, E. T. (1976). *Beyond culture*. Anchor Press.

Hall, E. (2000). Context and meaning. In L. Samovar & R. Porter (Eds.), *Intercultural communication: A reader* (9th ed., pp. 34-43). Belmont: Wadsworth Publishing Co.

Hall, E., & Hall, M. (1990). *Understanding cultural differences*. Yarmouth: Intercultural Press Inc.

Halliday, M. A. K. (1985, 1994). *An introduction to functional grammar*. London: Hodder Arnold.

Halliday, M. A. K., & Hasan, R. (1976). *Cohesion in English*. London: Longman.

Halliday, M. A. K., & Matthiesen, C. (2004). *An introduction to functional grammar* (3rd ed.). Great Britain: Edward Arnold (Publishers) Ltd.

Hermeking, M. (2005). Culture and internet consumption: Contributions from cross-cultural marketing and advertising research. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, *11*(1), 192–216. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1083-6101.2006.tb00310.x

Hornikx, J., & le Pair, R. (2017). The influence of high-/low-context culture on perceived ad complexity and liking. *Journal of Global Marketing*, *30*(4), 228–237. https://doi.org/10.1080/08911762.2017.1296985

Hofstede, G. (1984). *Culture's consequences: International differences in work-related values.* Beverly Hills: Sage.

Hofstede, G. (2001). *Culture's consequences, comparing values, behaviors, institutions, and organizations across nations*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.

Hofstede, G. & Hofstede, G. J. (2005). *Cultures and organizations: Software of the mind* (2nd ed.). USA: McGraw-Hill.

House, R. J., Hanges, P. J., Javidan, M., Dorfman, P. W., & Gupta, G. (Eds.). (2004). *Culture, leadership, and organizations.* Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Jalilifar, A., & Yazdani, A. (2017). A comparative study of multimodality in English and Persian spam letters of advertising. *Journal of Modern Languages*, *25*(1), 1-34.
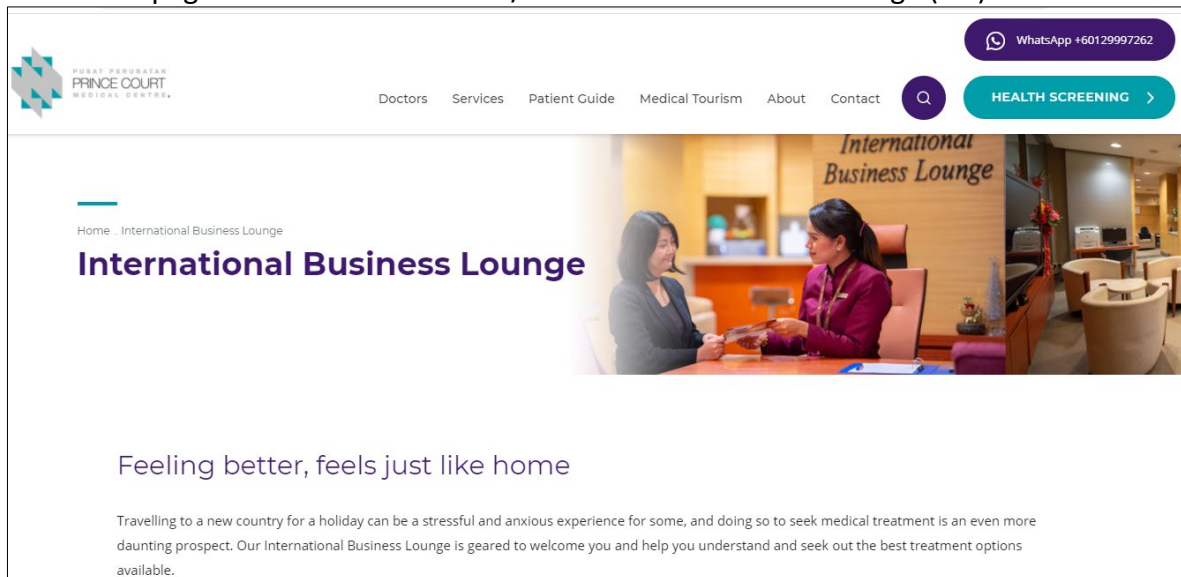
Janet, J. S. (2018). *A corpus analysis of adjectives in online Malaysian medical tourism magazines /* Janet Joseph Samynadan [Doctoral dissertation, University of Malaya]. UM Students Repository.

Jones, M. (2007). *Hofstede – Culturally questionable?* (Conference presentation). Oxford Business & Economics Conference, Oxford, UK, 24-26 June, 2007.

Jun, J. (2016). Framing service, benefit, and credibility through images and texts: A content analysis of online promotional messages of Korean medical tourism industry. *Health Communication*, *31*(7), 845–852. https://doi.org/10.1080/10410236.2015.1007553

Kabasakal, H. E., Asugman, G., & Develioğlu, K. (2006). The role of employee preferences and organizational culture in explaining e-commerce orientations. *International Journal of Human Resource Management*, *17*(3), 464–483. https://doi.org/fjkkhn

Karacay-Aydin, G., Akben-Selcuk, E., & Aydin-Altinoklar, A. E. (2010). Cultural variability in web content: A comparative analysis of American and Turkish websites. *International Business Research,* 3(1), 97–103. https://doi.org/10.5539/ibr.v3n1p97

Kress, G., & van Leeuwen, T. (1996). Reading images: The grammar of visual design. Psychology Press.

Kress, G., & van Leeuwen, T. (2021). Reading images: The grammar of visual design. London: Routledge.

Lehtonen, M. (2000). *The cultural analysis of texts*. London: Sage.

Lianto, M., Suprapto, W., & Mel, M. (2020). The analysis factor of medical tourism in Singapore. *SHS Web of Conferences*, *76*, 01028. https://doi.org/gxvx

Loda, M. (2011). Comparing websites: An experiment in online tourism marketing. *International Journal of Business and Social Science*, *2*(22), 70–78.

Mason, A., & Wright, K. B. (2011). Framing medical tourism: An examination of appeal, risk, convalescence, accreditation, and interactivity in medical tourism web sites. *Journal of Health Communication, 16*(2), 163-177. https://doi.org/cg6fx3

Matsumoto, D., & Juang, L. (2007). *Culture and psychology* (4th ed.). Wadsworf: Cengage Learning.

Medical Travel Quality Alliance. (n.d.). MTQUA top 10 world's best hospitals for medical tourists[TM] for 2019. https://worldsbesthospitals.net/worlds-best/

Medina, A. B., Jesús, M., Medina, R., Bolaños, L., & García, L. L. (2005). Analysing digital genres: Function and functionality in corporate websites of computer hardware. *Analysing Digital Genres: Function and Functionality in Corporate Websites of Computer Hardware*, *9*(9), 123–147.

Malaysia Healthcare Travel Council (MHTC). (2020a, March 18). Deferment of the Malaysia year of healthcare travel campaign 2020 by Malaysia Healthcare Travel Council. https://www.mhtc.org.my/2020/03/18/deferment-of-the-malaysia-year-of-healthcare-travel-2020-myht2020-campaign-by-the-malaysia-healthcare-travel-council-mhtc/

Malaysia Healthcare Travel Council (MHTC). (2020b, July 8). For how long will medical travel be affected by COVID-19? https://www.mhtc.org.my/mhtc/2020/07/08/for-how-long-will-medical-travel-be-affected-by-covid-19/

Malaysia Healthcare Travel Council (MHTC). (2020c, September 23). MHTC pleased with budget 2021 allocation. http://malaysiahealthcare.org/mhtc-pleased-with-budget-2021-allocation/

Moghavvemi, S., Ormond, M., Musa, G., Isa, C. R. M., Thirumoorthi, T., Mustapha, M. Z. B., & Chandy, J. J. C. (2017). Connecting with prospective medical tourists online: A cross-sectional analysis of private hospital websites promoting medical tourism in India, Malaysia and Thailand. *Tourism Management*, *58*, 154-163. https://doi.org/ghfwqq

Nardon, L., & Steers, R. M. (2009). The culture theory jungle: Divergence and convergence in models of national culture. In R. S. Bhagat, & R. M. Steers (Eds.), *Cambridge Handbook of Culture, Organizations, and Work* (pp. 3–22). Cambridge University Press. https://doi.org/10.1017/cbo9780511581151.002

Neuliep, J. W. (2020). *Intercultural communication: A contextual approach*. SAGE Publications, Incorporated.

Oswal, S. K., & Palmer, Z. (2018). Can diversity be intersectional? Inclusive business planning and accessible web design internationally on two continents and three campuses. *Proceedings of the 83rd Annual Conference of the Association for Business Communication*, October 24-27, 2018 – Miami, Florida, USA. SIAS Faculty Publications. https://digitalcommons.tacoma.uw.edu/ias_pub/1055

Oxford Analytica. (2020, September 13). COVID-19 may hurt Singapore most in South-east Asia. *Expert Briefings*. https://doi.org/10.1108/OXAN-DB251060

Prince Court Medical Centre. (n.d.). https://princecourt.com

Research Dive. (n.d.). Impact analysis of Covid-19 on medical tourism market: Global Opportunity Analysis and Industry Forecast 2019-2026. https://www.researchdive.com/covid-19-insights/248/global-medical-tourism-market

Salleh, L. M. (2005). High/low context communication: The Malaysian Malay style. *Proceedings of the 2005 Association for Business Communication Annual Convention* (pp. 1-11). Irvine, CA: Association for Business Communication.

Sari, R. P., & Putra, F. K. K. (2019). The design characteristics of Indonesian and German hotel websites: A cross-cultural comparison. *International Journal of Applied Sciences in Tourism and Events*, *3*(1), 93-107. https://ojs.pnb.ac.id/index.php/IJASTE/article/view/1326

Şerbănescu, A. (2007). *Cum gândesc şi cum vorbesc ceilalţi: prin labirintul culturilor*. Polirom.

Sharma, A., Vishraj, B., Ahlawat, J., Mittal, T., & Mittal, M. (2020). Impact of COVID-19 outbreak over medical tourism. *Journal of Dental and Medical Sciences*, *19*(5), 56–58.

Stoian, C. E. (2013). Online promotion of heritage cities: A multimodal analysis from a cultural perspective. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/283345194_Online_promotion_of_heritage_cities_a_multimodal_analysis_from_a_cultural_perspective

Stoian, C. E. (2015). *The discourse of tourism and national heritage: A contrastive study from a cultural perspective*. Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

Stoian, C. E. (2018). *The discourse of tourism from a systemic functional perspective*. The case of tourism websites. In M. Bielenia-Grajewska, & E. Cortes de los Rios (Eds.), *Innovative perspectives on tourism discourse* (pp. 181-200). IGI Global. http://doi:10.4018/978-1-5225-2930-9.ch011

Stoian, C. E., & Dejica, D. (2016). *Thematic development in online institutional tourism discourse: A contrastive study*. *British and American Studies, 22,* 181-195.

Sulaiman, M. Z., & Wilson, R. (2018). Translating tourism promotional materials: A cultural-conceptual model. *Perspectives: Studies in Translation Theory and Practice*, *26*(5), 629–645. https://doi.org/10.1080/0907676X.2018.1437193

Sulaiman, M. Z., & Wilson, R. (Eds.). (2019). Understanding tourist motivation and industry persuasion. In, *Translation and tourism: Strategies for effective cross-cultural promotion* (pp. 3–16). Springer Singapore. https://doi.org/gxvz

Thailand Medical News. (2019). Problems facing Thailand's medical tourism industry in 2019. https://www.thailandmedical.news/news/problems-facing-thailand-s-medical-tourism-industry-in-2019

Thompson, G. (2013). *Introducing functional grammar* (3rd ed.). Routledge.

Turner, L. (2011). Quality in health care and globalization of health services: Accreditation and regulatory oversight of medical tourism companies. *International Journal for Quality in Health Care, 23*(1), 1-7. https://doi.org/10.1093/intqhc/mzq078

Usunier, J. C., & Roulin, N. (2010). The influence of high- and low-context communication styles on the design, content, and language of business-to-business web sites. *International Journal of Business Communication.* https://doi.org/b8rqbz

Viladrich, A., & Baron-Faust, R. (2014). Medical tourism in Tango paradise: The Internet branding of cosmetic surgery in Argentina. *Annals of Tourism Research*, *45*, 116–131. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.annals.2013.12.007

Waring, T. M., & Wood, Z. T. (2021). Long-term gene–culture coevolution and the human evolutionary transition. *Proceedings of the Royal Society B*, *288*(1952), 20210538. https://doi.org/10.1098/rspb.2021.0538

Woo, E., & Schwartz, Z. (2014). Towards assessing the knowledge gap in medical tourism. *Journal of Quality Assurance in Hospitality & Tourism*, 15(2), 213e226. http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/1528008X.2014.889516

Wu, G. (2018). Official websites as a tourism marketing medium: A contrastive analysis from the perspective of appraisal theory. *Journal of Destination Marketing and Management*, *10*, 164–171. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jdmm.2018.09.004

Würtz, E. (2005). Intercultural communication on web sites: A cross-cultural analysis of web sites from high-context cultures and low-context cultures. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, *11*(1), 274–299. https://doi.org/10.1111/J.1083-6101.2006.TB00313.X
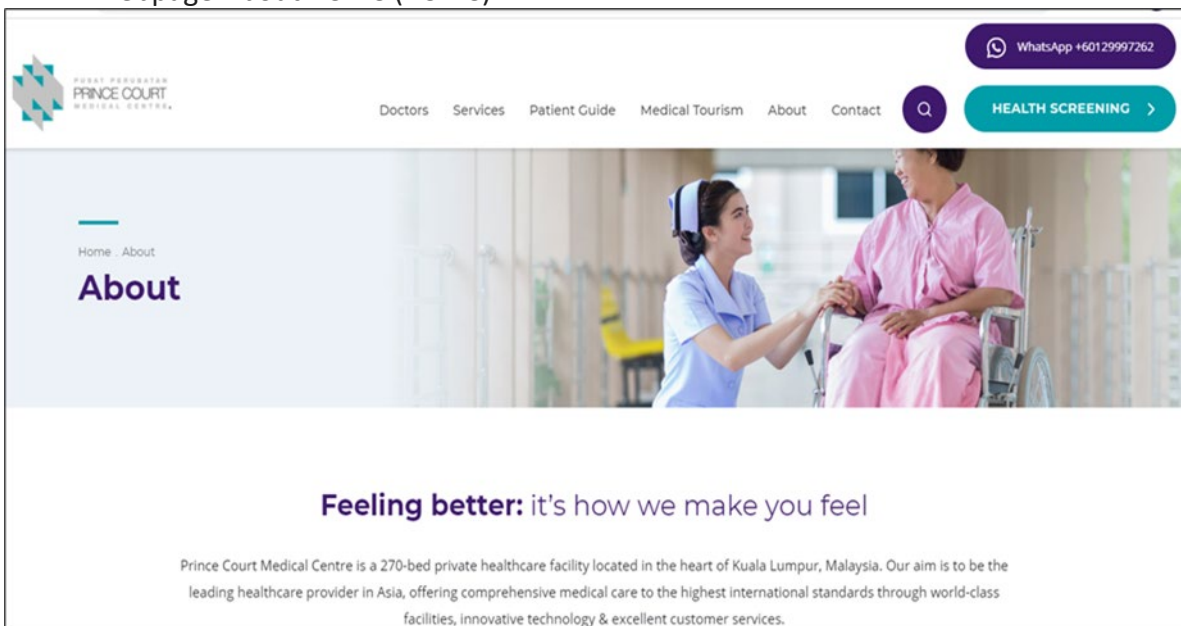
APPENDIX

1. Webpage International Patients / International Business Lounge (IBL)

Source: https://princecourt.com/international-business-lounge/ (Accessed on year 2020)

2. Webpage About PCMC (PCMC)

Source: https://princecourt.com/about/ (Accessed on year 2020)

3. Webpage Medical Tourism (MT).

Source: https://princecourt.com/medical-tourism/ (Accessed on year 2020)