

Language Commodification in Digital Tourism Landscape: A Corpus-Based Approach to Destination Branding Strategies

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ABSTRACT

The digital landscape has become the primary medium for tourism promotion, where language plays a vital role in constructing destination image. While digital marketing continues to attract growing interest, there's still a noticeable gap in research when it comes to understanding how language itself is turned into a commodity in digital tourism. Addressing this gap, the study aims to reveal how language is commodified in digital tourism promotion and to analyze the branding strategies reflected in its linguistic features. A total of 18 official tourism destination websites in Indonesia over the period of 2023 to 2024, the data were analyzed using AntConc software, generating a corpus of 39,135 tokens. The analysis focused on word frequency, collocation, concordance, and semantic prosody to identify dominant linguistic patterns. The findings reveal that digital tourism promotion is dominated by affective and visually charged vocabulary such as “indah”, “pengalaman”, “unik”, “spot” and “instagrammable”, which collectively contribute to constructing an aesthetic and emotional narrative of the destinations. The identified branding strategies include emotional appeal, visual-social imagery, exclusivity, cultural authenticity, and comfort and accessibility. The implications of this study underscore the importance of linguistic data in designing more effective tourism promotion strategies grounded in emotional resonance and social relevance. This research contributes to the development of applied linguistics within the context of the digital tourism industry and provides strategic insight for destination managers in crafting more compelling and competitive branding narratives

Keywords: *Branding Strategy, Corpus Linguistics, Digital Tourism, Language Commodification, AntConc.*

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1. INTRODUCTION

The development of digital technology has changed the way tourist destinations are promoted and consumed by travellers. Today, digital media such as official tourism websites, social media platforms, and experiential content have become key tools in shaping destination images (Tanjung. et al, 2024). In this digital landscape, language is no longer just a tool to convey information, but has become the main instrument in shaping the perceptions, emotions, and imagination of potential tourists (Isti'anah. et al, 2024). Modern tourism promotion is not enough to mention the names of places, facilities, or travel routes. The more important is how language is packaged to build a strong visual, emotional, and social impression.

Digital tourism is evolving in tandem with branding strategies that place language as a key foundation for attracting travelers (Pencarelli, 2020). In promotional media, words are strategically chosen to influence readers' emotions, direct expectations, and reinforce the destination's image

(Garcia, 2024). A commodification of language ensues, where the use of certain words is calculated rhetorically and aesthetically to sell not only the physical location, but also the experience, lifestyle, and social status attached to the tourist activity. In this case, language undergoes a transformation from a mere communication tool to a strategic commodity that is shaped, packaged, and sold digitally (Calude, 2023).

Calude emphasized that the commodification of language in digital media is closely related to image construction and destination attraction enhancement (Calude, 2023). Word choice is not just a spontaneous expression, but part of a consciously developed branding strategy. The words build a narrative that seduces potential tourists with promises of uniqueness, comfort or exclusivity. Even simple phrases such as *“menikmati keindahan alam”* or *“pengalaman budaya yang autentik”*, are loaded with meaning that aims to create affective closeness and a desire to explore. As such, language in digital tourism promotion can be considered a very powerful and psychologically effective persuasion tool. To understand how language is commodified in the digital context, an approach that is able to parse data systematically and evidence-based is needed. One such approach is corpus linguistics, which allows researchers to analyse linguistic patterns based on authentic and representative textual data (Wallis, 2020). Through AntConc software, a corpus of digital promotions can be analysed to identify word frequency, collocation, concordance and emergent semantic prosody (Gomide, 2020). Thus, corpus linguistics not only facilitates quantitative data collection, but also enables qualitative interpretation of the meanings and language strategies used in destination promotion (Mattei, 2023).

Corpus linguistics has great potential in researching language variation and use in specific contexts (Herpindo et al., 2023; Biber et al., 1998). In tourism promotion, this approach becomes a very relevant tool to explore the extent to which word choice in digital texts plays a role in shaping destination branding. Through corpus analysis, the researcher can find out what words are most frequently used, in what contexts they appear, and what meanings are associated with them repeatedly (Egbert, Larsson, & Biber, 2020). This approach opens a new space for applied linguistic analysis that is not only academic, but also makes a real contribution to the development of communication strategies for tourist destinations (Levshina, 2022). Within this framework, this research aims to explore the forms and patterns of language commodification in digital tourism promotion, specifically through analysing a corpus of promotional texts taken from official tourist destination websites. It also aims to analyse the branding strategies applied in the digital landscape as reflected in the use of language.

In addition, This research also aims to explore how corpus linguistic techniques can offer fresh perspectives on the effectiveness of branding strategies used in digital tourism promotion. To do this, the study focuses on three key questions. First, how is language turned into a commodity in digital tourism media? Second, what kinds of branding strategies can be seen through the choice of words in promotional content? And third, how can corpus linguistics be applied to systematically examine these strategies? These questions guide the overall analysis in this study, with the goal of contributing not only to linguistic theory but also offering practical insights for improving digital tourism marketing.

More broadly, this research is expected to be a valuable reference for tourism practitioners, policymakers, and academics in shaping more effective and data-driven communication strategies for tourism promotion, especially in today's rapidly evolving digital landscape. By understanding how language is used as a commodity in digital tourism, stakeholders can craft destination narratives that are not only engaging and emotionally resonant but also capable of strengthening a destination's appeal and competitiveness on the global stage.

This research focuses on three main aspects, namely the commodification of language in digital tourism, the use of corpus linguistics in destination branding analysis, and the digital landscape in branding strategies. Each of these aspects supports the understanding of how language is commodified in tourism promotion and how destination branding strategies are developed to attract tourists.

The use of language in tourism promotion not only functions as a communication tool but also as a marketing strategy designed to create tourist attraction (Munir, 2024). The language used is often persuasive, emphasising aspects of exclusivity, uniqueness, and beauty of the destination (Isti'anah et al., 2024). Ecolinguistics studies also show that tourism promotion often changes the original meaning of the environment for commercial interests, by presenting nature as an object of consumption (Stibbe, 2015; Isti'anah et al., 2024). In addition, the commodification of language in digital tourism is a growing phenomenon, along with the complexity of the interaction between local cultures and the tourism industry. This process refers to the transformation of cultural elements, including language, into commodities that can be traded and promoted through various digital platforms. It is argued that this phenomenon often triggers identity conflicts among local communities who feel their culture is distorted to meet the demands of the tourism market (Komala, 2021; Wiraseptya et al., 2023).

In the context of language, the use of terms and narratives in tourism promotion, as is the case in various tourist villages in Indonesia, demonstrates how language can be transformed into an effective marketing tool. A relevant example is research related to the use of English in Jatiluwih village, which shows that English language training promotes better relationships between tour guides and visitors, while increasing tourism attractiveness (Santika et al., 2024). With increased cross-cultural communication, tour guides can also use formal or honourable language, to demonstrate professionalism that strengthens the value of the tourism product offered (Andriyani et al., 2019).

Digitalisation and the use of technology also play an important role in the commodification of language in tourism. A study suggested that the integration of digital technology in tourism promotion, including social media, allows industry players to reach a wider audience and create greater engagement (Awaloedin et al., 2024; Tran & Rudolf, 2022). Communication through digital platforms not only extends the reach of promotions, but also allows tourism actors to convey cultural values in an engaging and accessible way (Nuenen & Scarles, 2021). However, the tendency to commodify cultural elements, including language, also faces criticism regarding its negative impacts. This commodification process can lead to a loss of cultural authenticity and change the way local communities interact with their own cultural heritage. In some cases, communities feel that their identity is reduced to a mere tourist attraction, leading to conflict and loss of cultural dignity (Salim & Rahman, 2022; Pamungkas et al., 2019). Therefore, it is important for tourism managers to consider the long-term impacts of the commodification strategies they implement.

Through an integrated and collaborative approach between tourism actors and local communities, it is hoped that languages and cultures can be promoted without compromising their original value and identity. Local initiatives that empower communities to have control over the way their culture is presented are an important step in maintaining a balance between the commercialisation of tourism and the preservation of existing cultural values (Giampiccoli & Kalis, 2012; Prasiasa et al., 2023).

Corpus linguistics is a data-driven approach that enables in-depth analyses of lexical and semantic patterns in digital texts (Ermanto, Ardi, & Juita, 2023). Using software such as AntConc, analyses can be made of key words, collocations, and semantic prosody in tourist promotion texts (McEnery & Hardie, 2011). This analysis provides insight into how language is commodified to create a stronger

impression in destination branding. Dioko in his study shows that there has been a significant growth in research on destination branding and marketing over the past 15 years, which includes keyword analyses from SCOPUS databases and Google Ngram metadata. The results emphasise the need for a deeper understanding of emerging sub-branching themes in destination branding development (Dioko, 2016). In addition, Mityagina and Sidorova emphasise the importance of slogans as an aspect of value in place marketing, analysing the communication and pragmatic characteristics expressed in destination slogans. They argue that a better understanding of these elements can strengthen the attractiveness of a tourist area through targeted branding (Mityagina & Sidorova, 2018).

Musté et al developed a classification system for linguistic choices in brand slogans at four levels: phonological, lexical-grammatical, syntactic, and semantic, suggesting that in-depth analysis can assist in creating more memorable and effective slogans (Musté et al., 2015). In this context, corpus analysis provides data-driven insights into how language functions in the context of branding and how linguistic elements can be optimised to attract tourists' attention. In addition, research by Cruz-Milán and Hosany on a consumer-based brand value perspective highlights the relationship between branding and destination loyalty, where the appropriate use of language in brand communication will impact visitor revision intentions (Cruz-Milán, 2023; Hosany et al., 2006). In relation to content creation in destination marketing, Macniven et al. suggest the use of semantic distance and word embedding to automatically categorise content, thus analysing consumer perceptions of destination brands in greater depth (MacNiven, et al., 2023). The use of such methods demonstrates the great potential of corpus analysis to understand and improve destination branding strategies more effectively. The application of corpus linguistics in destination branding analysis allows for a better understanding of the language dynamics that contribute to the image and perception of a location. Research that includes deeper analyses of linguistic elements, including slogan usage and word choice, can provide valuable insights for destination marketing management.

Digital media has become a key platform in building destination branding strategies (Dewi, 2024). In addition, tourist destination websites and social media play a central role in shaping destination narratives through the structured and strategic use of language (Calude, 2023). Landscape linguistic analysis shows that the language used in tourism promotion tends to follow certain patterns to attract tourists' attention and establish a distinctive destination identity (Ardhian, 2021). One important approach in destination branding is image management which involves creating a unique identity that distinguishes a destination from others. Studies show that effective branding can have a significant impact on traveller loyalty and influence their decision to revisit a location (Sjuhada & Zulfa, 2024). By leveraging digital platforms such as Instagram and Facebook, many destinations utilise visual content to reach a wider audience and build their brand image (Putra & Razi, 2020; Dartiningsih *et al.*, 2023). Moreover, the visual storytelling model on Instagram not only helps in building brand identity but also in directing visitors' attention to the experiences offered (Mardhiyani & Budiastuti, 2021).

The use of technology-based marketing strategies, such as influencer marketing, has been proven effective in attracting the attention of the younger generation, which is a significant market segment for many tourist destinations (Aribah & Suswanta, 2022; Dewi & Hidayat, 2024). These factors are important in creating positive experiences for travellers and building stronger relationships between brands and consumers, leading to increased engagement and brand value (Nurhayati et al., 2022). However, challenges remain in the implementation of these digital strategies. Some destinations still face shortcomings in terms of technology utilisation, as well as a lack of consistency in the messages delivered (Atmojo *et al.*, 2024). Therefore, research on how to design branding strategies that are

more adaptive to digital trends and the needs of contemporary audiences is urgently needed, so that destinations can compete effectively in an increasingly tight global market (Tamitiadini et al., 2021).

Overall, digitisation in tourism not only offers opportunities for destinations to develop their brands but also requires destination managers to adapt quickly to changes in consumer behaviour and technology. With the right approach in utilising digital technology and innovative marketing, tourist destinations can achieve sustainability and success in the competitive tourism industry (Dartiningsih et al., 2023). With this approach, this research will provide insights into how language is commodified in the digital tourism landscape and how branding strategies can be optimised to attract more tourists. This understanding will be useful for the tourism industry in designing more effective and data-driven communication strategies.

2. METHOD

This research used a descriptive-qualitative approach with corpus linguistics method to analyse language patterns in digital tourism promotion. Data were collected from various digital sources, 18 official websites of tourist destinations in Indonesia, which is over the period of 2023 to 2024, as well as tourist review platforms. The data collected were in the form of promotional texts, destination descriptions, and traveller reviews that illustrate destination branding. The data collection process was conducted through web scraping and manual copy-pasting techniques from trusted sources (Rizquina & Ratnasari, 2023). The collected data was then saved in text format to be analysed using AntConc software. AntConc was chosen due to its ability to analyse corpus text in depth, allowing the identification of language patterns based on word frequency, collocation, and semantic prosody (Fatim, et al., 2024).

The data analysis in this study involved several systematic steps to ensure linguistic patterns were accurately captured and interpreted. The process began with data cleaning and normalization, where all texts were processed to eliminate duplicates, irrelevant punctuation, and unnecessary formatting, thereby enhancing the accuracy of the analysis. This was followed by concordance analysis, which traced the context in which keywords appeared in promotional texts, providing insights into how language was used to construct destination imagery.

The study then applied collocation analysis using AntConc's collocates feature to identify words that frequently appeared together, helping to uncover patterns of lexical association within destination branding strategies. In the next step, word frequency analysis was conducted to determine the most dominant and recurrent words across the promotional corpus, revealing the core elements emphasized in tourism branding. Finally, semantic prosody analysis was used to explore how specific words were employed in contexts that shaped positive, neutral, or negative perceptions of a destination, offering deeper insight into the emotional tone embedded in tourism discourse.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The results show that corpus linguistics can reveal invisible structures in tourism promotion narratives. Systematic identification of the form and context of word occurrence shows dominant patterns and variants in the use of digital tourism promotion language that emphasises the uniqueness, beauty, and exclusivity of the destination. In depth, the language in digital tourism promotion experiences commodification through lexical patterns, collocation, semantic prosody, and language-based branding strategies.

The corpus data shows a strong tendency towards the use of words with high affective and visual content, which consistently shape the image of the destination as an aesthetic, emotional and exclusive place. The discussion in this section will be presented in 2 (two) broader sub-sections

namely; 1) Mapping Patterns of Language Use, and 2) Branding Strategy in the Digital Landscape of tourism.

3.1. Mapping Patterns of Language Use

Mapping the patterns of language use in digital tourism promotion reveals the dominance of diction that has high affective content and strong visual connotations, which is evident from the analysis of concordance, lexical patterns, and collocation.

Concordance Analysis

The results of the concordance analysis show that words such as “*indah*” (beautiful), “*keindahan*” (beauty), “*menikmati*” (to enjoy), “*pengalaman*” (experience), “*spot*” (spot), “*menarik*” (attractive), and “*terkenal*” (famous) often appear in contexts that reinforce positive and persuasive narratives.

Table 1. Concordance Analysis Result

Keywords	The Context Before	The Context After
	<i>menikmati pemandangan yang</i>	<i>dan udara segar di pagi hari</i>
	<i>pantai pasir putih yang sangat.</i>	<i>dan bersih, cocok untuk snorkeling</i>
	<i>memberikan</i>	<i>yang tak terlupakan bagi para wisatawan</i>
	<i>rasakan</i>	<i>unik budaya lokal di desa adat</i>
	<i>ini adalah</i>	<i>foto favorit para pelancong milenial</i>
	<i>spot foto</i>	<i>yang instagramable dengan latar alam hijau</i>
	<i>wisatawan dapat</i>	<i>keindahan laut biru dan pasir putih yang bersih</i>
	<i>kesempatan sempurna untuk</i>	<i>suasana matahari terbenam yang romantic</i>
	<i>Anda bisa</i>	<i>kuliner khas daerah ini yang menggoda selera</i>
	<i>menjelajahi.</i>	<i>alam yang belum tersentuh manusia</i>
	<i>keindahan</i>	<i>budaya lokal yang sarat nilai historis</i>
	<i>foto yang menampilkan</i>	<i>danau biru di tengah pegunungan</i>
	<i>destinasi ini memiliki berbagai</i>	<i>untuk dikunjungi bersama keluarga</i>
	<i>tempat</i>	
	<i>wisata budaya yang</i>	<i>dan sarat makna tradisional</i>
	<i>paket tur kami menawarkan</i>	<i>dengan harga terjangkau</i>
	<i>pengalaman</i>	
	<i>tempat ini</i>	<i>karena pemandangannya yang luar biasa</i>
	<i>destinasi yang</i>	<i>sebagai surganya para penyelam</i>
	<i>kuliner lokal</i>	<i>di kalangan wisatawan domestik</i>

Source: Data Analysis, 2025

The key words listed in the table 1 such as *indah* (beautiful), *keindahan* (beauty), *menikmati* (to enjoy), *pengalaman* (experience), *spot*, *menarik* (attractive), and *terkenal* (famous) serve not only as descriptive terms but also play a crucial role as rhetorical devices and strategic branding tools. The word *indah* is used to highlight the visual appeal of a destination by creating a strong aesthetic impression, as seen in phrases like “*pantai yang sangat indah*” (a very beautiful beach), which construct both visual and emotional perceptions for the audience. Meanwhile, the noun *keindahan* (beauty) broadens the scope of meaning to encompass cultural, spiritual, and ecological values, as reflected in expressions such as “*keindahan alam*” (beauty of nature) and “*keindahan budaya lokal*” (the beauty of local culture).

In addition, the active verb “*menikmati*” (to enjoy) illustrates the personal interaction between tourists and the destination, creating a sense of direct engagement, as seen in phrases like “*menikmati kuliner khas*” (enjoying local cuisine). The word “*pengalaman*” (experience) places greater emphasis on the affective and transformational dimensions of tourism, where promotional texts often employ the phrase “*pengalaman tak terlupakan*” (an unforgettable experience) to sell emotions and memories. The term “*spot*”, a borrowed word from English, is used to refer to visually appealing and photogenic locations, as in “*spot foto instagramable*” (instagrammable photo spot),

which reflects a shift in the focus of destinations from substantive value to representational or aesthetic appeal.

The adjective “*menarik*” (attractive) is used flexibly to assign a positive label to various types of tourist attractions whether natural, cultural, or culinary, while the word “*terkenal*” (famous) functions as a marker of reputation and social credibility, providing a social proof effect for the audience. Collectively, these key terms construct a network of meanings that not only persuade but also shape visitors’ perceptions and expectations, making them an integral part of the commodification of language in digital tourism promotion strategies.

Lexical Patterns

The lexical patterns reveal a preference for words that are used to create an imaginative atmosphere, connecting tourists with their expectations of a destination. This indicates that language does not merely convey information, but is deliberately constructed to evoke emotions and stimulate imagination. Within these lexical patterns, four dominant categories emerge in digital tourism promotion: Visual Beauty, Emotional Experience, Accessibility and Feasibility, and Visual Media and Social Appeal.

Table 2. Dominant Lexical Patterns in Digital Tourism Promotion

Lexical Theme	Main Keywords	Promotion Function
Visual Beauty	<i>indah, keindahan, memukau, eksotis</i>	Accentuate the aesthetic value of the destination
Emotional Experience	<i>pengalaman, tak terlupakan, menyenangkan</i>	Build an emotional bond with potential travellers
Accessibility and Feasibility	<i>cocok, nyaman, mudah, lengkap</i>	Make a friendly and accessible impression
Visual Media and Social Appeal	<i>spot, instagramable, keren, fotogenik</i>	Attracting digital audiences, especially the younger generation

Source: Data Processed, 2025

Dominant Lexical Patterns in table 2 show that the use of key terms such as *indah* (beautiful), *keindahan* (beauty), *memukau* (stunning), and *eksotis* (exotic) serves to emphasize the visual and aesthetic qualities of a destination. The words “*indah*” and “*keindahan*” frequently appear in phrases like “*pantai yang indah*” (“beautiful beach”), “*keindahan alam*” (natural beauty), or “*panorama yang memukau*” (stunning panorama). Meanwhile, “*memukau*” enhances the emotional impact visitors feel toward the scenery. The word “*eksotis*” adds a layer of value by associating the place with something unique, rare, or unusual in everyday life. These lexical choices function to embed an aesthetic image of the destination as a primary attraction and to reinforce the perception that the place is worth visiting for its beauty. Key terms such as *pengalaman* (experience), *tak terlupakan* (unforgettable), *menyenangkan* (pleasant), and *unik* (unique) show that promotional tourism narratives are often designed to emphasize affective experiences. The word “*pengalaman*” rarely stands alone; it is frequently combined with adjectives like “*tak terlupakan*” or “*unik*” to amplify the emotional value that travelers are expected to feel. Phrases such as “*memberikan pengalaman yang tak terlupakan*” (providing an unforgettable experience) or “*pengalaman unik menyelami budaya lokal*” (a unique experience of immersing in local culture) portray the destination as a medium for memory-making and emotional connection. This lexical pattern is used to associate tourism with personal memories that evoke feelings and intimacy.

The word “*cocok*” (suitable) are commonly used in phrases such as “*cocok untuk keluarga*” (suitable for families) or “*cocok untuk healing*” (suitable for relaxation). The words “*nyaman*” (comfortable) and “*mudah*” (easy) indicate that the place is friendly, accessible, and well-equipped. The term “*lengkap*” (complete) often appears in promotions that highlight supporting facilities and

infrastructure. This lexical category serves to assure prospective tourists that the destination is not only attractive but also convenient and accessible. Meanwhile, the word “spot” is almost always associated with visual activities, such as “spot foto” (photo spot), “spot selfie”, or “spot sunset terbaik” (best sunset spot). The term “instagramable” is a key indicator that the promotion targets visual sharing potential in online platforms. The words “keren” (cool) and “fotogenik” (photogenic) reinforce the aesthetic value within the context of social media, aiming to boost the viral potential and user-generated content through easily shareable visual elements on digital social platforms. This lexical category is characteristic of contemporary digital tourism promotion, particularly targeting younger generations who are highly active on social media.

The four categories outlined in these lexical patterns reveal that digital tourism promotion does not merely emphasize informative content, but is predominantly driven by emotive and visual language designed to persuade, inspire, and facilitate the tourist experience. As Rahman & Hum (2024) further emphasize, tourism promotion must also highlight the unique experiences being offered. Each lexical category represents a core aspect of what the destination provides: beauty, experience, convenience, and social media appeal. Thus, these patterns demonstrate how language is strategically commodified to meet the expectations and shape the behavior of today’s digital travelers.

Collocation Patterns

The collocation patterns reveal a consistent use of phrases such as “pengalaman tak terlupakan”, “keindahan alam”, “spot foto instagramable”, and “cocok untuk liburan keluarga”. This indicates that destination narratives are constructed through associations between places and the emotional or social benefits perceived by tourists. The collocation “spot + instagramable” also serves as evidence that tourism promotion has adapted to digital culture and the expectations of millennial and Gen Z travelers.

Table 3. Common Collocations in Promotional Language

Dominant Collocation	Strategic Effects
<i>pengalaman + tak terlupakan</i>	Forming high emotional expectations
<i>keindahan + alam/budaya</i>	Conveys aesthetic and authentic value
<i>cocok + untuk + aktivitas</i>	Customising promotions to specific segments
<i>spot + foto + instagramable</i>	Increase destination visibility on social media

Source: Data Analysis, 2025

The collocation patterns presented in table 3 identify word pairs that frequently occur together in the tourism promotion text corpus. Collocations reflect natural associative patterns in language and reveal underlying linguistic strategies consistently employed in constructing destination narratives. The word “pengalaman” carries emotional weight, while “tak terlupakan” adds a strong dimension of memory. This narrative not only promotes tourist attractions but also offers lasting memories to travelers. Such collocations function to shape emotional expectations and position tourism as an affective product, rather than merely a physical location. Additionally, the collocation “keindahan + alam/budaya” merges aesthetic values with the main promotional elements nature and culture. By combining the two destinations are portrayed as visual spaces that are not only captivating but also rich in cultural and heritage values, serving to merge aesthetic appeal with authenticity, and presenting the destination as both exotic and meaningful.

Meanwhile, the phrase “cocok untuk...” allows promoters to tailor destinations to the specific needs of their target audience: *cocok untuk healing*, *liburan keluarga*, or *backpacker*. Such expressions enhance the impression of inclusivity and flexibility of the destination. This collocation functions to align promotional messages with the preferences of different tourist segments. Another collocation, “spot + foto + instagramable”, reflects the integration of language with digital culture.

The term “instagramable” has become both an aesthetic and social parameter for a destination’s appeal. This phrase encourages tourists to participate in disseminating visual representations of the destination through social media, thereby fostering the destination’s viral potential and expanding its promotional reach through user-generated content (Ermanto et al., 2023).

3.2. Branding Strategy in Tourism Digital Landscape

The branding strategies that emerged from the corpus analysis data are categorized into five major patterns: (1) emotional strategy, (2) visual-social strategy, (3) exclusivity strategy, (4) cultural-authenticity strategy, and (5) comfort-oriented strategy.

Table 4. Dominant Branding Strategy

Strategi Branding	The Main Linguistic Indicators	Communication Objectives
Emotional strategy	<i>“tak terlupakan”, “sensasi luar biasa”</i>	Increase the affective binding power of tourists
Visual-social strategy	<i>“spot foto instagramable”, “kece”, “keren”</i>	Increase viral potential & digital promotion
Exclusivity strategy	<i>“surga tersembunyi”, “belum banyak dikunjungi”</i>	Attracts travellers who seek uniqueness
Cultural-authenticity strategy	<i>“budaya lokal”, “kearifan lokal”, “otentik”</i>	Targeting special interest tourists (heritage/culture)
Comfort-oriented strategy	<i>“cocok untuk keluarga”, “fasilitas lengkap”</i>	Enhance the sense of security and friendliness of visitors

Source: Data Analysis, 2025

Branding strategies presented in table 4 reveal the dominant linguistic indicators commonly employed as communicative tools in digital tourism promotion. These indicators serve to construct persuasive narratives that align with specific branding objectives. Based on corpus analysis, five major branding strategies emerge in the language used to promote tourism digitally. The first is the emotional strategy, in which promotional language heavily emphasizes the emotional experiences that a destination offers. Phrases such as *“pengalaman tak terlupakan”* and *“liburan impian”* create affective associations between the tourist and the destination, aiming to evoke psychological attachment and strengthen the desire to visit. The second strategy is visual-social branding, which integrates the visual aesthetics of social media into destination promotion. Terms like *“spot foto”*, *“instagramable”*, and *“keren”* illustrate how tourism language is designed to encourage user-generated content and enhance the potential for virality. This strategy primarily seeks to increase destination visibility and appeal through visually shareable content.

The third is the exclusivity strategy, which uses expressions such as *“surga tersembunyi”*, *“belum banyak diketahui”*, and *“destinasi rahasia”* to position destinations as unique and off-the-beaten-path. As Anom & Ali (2024) noted, exclusivity in branding appeals to tourists seeking rare, personal, and less commercialized experiences, thereby differentiating the destination from its competitors. The fourth strategy is cultural and authenticity branding, highlights local identity and authentic cultural engagement. This approach is realized through lexical choices like *“budaya lokal”*, *“kearifan lokal”*, and *“desa adat”*, which appeal to tourists interested in cultural exploration and educational aspects of travel. As emphasized by Utami & Hardianti (2024), this strategy attracts a niche market focused on heritage and meaningful experiences. Lastly, the comfort and accessibility strategy utilizes words such as *“cocok untuk keluarga”*, *“akses mudah”*, and *“fasilitas lengkap”* to convey safety, convenience, and inclusiveness. This approach aims to assure potential visitors that the destination is welcoming and well-equipped for a wide range of travelers, including families and beginners.

The dominant branding strategies mentioned above serve as key communication targets, which are further supported by semantic prosody analysis within the corpus. The findings indicate that the

key lexical items consistently carry positive connotations. This creates a semantic effect that reinforces the emotional narrative of the destination. In addition, certain words are used to establish credibility and social validation, which in turn influence tourists' trust in the reputation of a place (Natalia et al., 2025).

Semantic Prosody

In the context of digital tourism promotion, semantic prosody functions as a highly effective linguistic persuasion tool that influences readers to respond to words without explicitly realising it.

Table 5. *Semantic Prosody Analysis in Language of Promotion*

Keywords	Semantic Prosody (Connotation)	Effects on Readers
<i>Indah</i>	Positive & visual	Evokes a sense of awe
<i>Pengalaman</i>	Emotional & personal	Generate curiosity and personal engagement
<i>Spot</i>	Visual & social	Triggers the desire to share on social media
<i>Terkenal</i>	Prestige & credibility	Provides social validation of the destination

Source: Data Processed, 2025

The results of the semantic prosody analysis in the promotional language presented in Table 5 show that the word “*indah*” carries a strong positive emotional charge and almost always appears in contexts that praise the aesthetic value of a place, creating an imaginative visual effect for the reader. Phrases such as “*pantai yang indah*”, “*pemandangan indah*”, or “*alam yang begitu indah*” construct visual narratives that serve as inner visual lures, activating pleasant mental imagery and reinforcing the perception of the destination as a visually enchanting object. Lexically, “*pengalaman*” is a neutral word, but semantically it is consistently used with positive adjectives such as “*berkesan*”, “*unik*”, or “*tak terlupakan*”. This reflects a highly affective prosody. Rather than describing a physical object, the word engages the subjectivity of the tourist, forging emotional bonds with the reader, shaping personal expectations, and marketing tourism as an affective product.

Furthermore, the word “*spot*” as a borrowed word from English was originally neutral in meaning. However, in digital tourism promotion, it has acquired a distinctive prosody, one that carries visual and photogenic connotations suitable for sharing. Phrases such as “*spot foto instagramable*” have rendered this term synonymous with locations that are worthy of being showcased online, encouraging user-generated content that builds digital social connections among travelers through place-based imagery. Meanwhile, the word “*terkenal*” carries a social validation connotation, indicating that the place is widely known, holds a strong reputation, or has been experienced by many. This word functions as a claim enhancer and creates a sense of trust in the reader, evoking feelings of safety, confidence, and interest because the destination is perceived to have established social proof.

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the results and discussion above, it can be concluded that the commodification of language in the digital tourism landscape is a systematic and structured strategy for shaping perceptions, experiences, and emotional appeal toward a destination. The patterns of language use function not only descriptively, but also carry persuasive, affective, and strategic power. The language employed in digital tourism promotion is deliberately constructed to create destination narratives that go beyond conveying factual information, and also construct a symbolic reality that invites, evokes, and motivates action from potential tourists. The words such as “*indah*”, “*keindahan*”, “*pengalaman*”, “*unik*”, “*spot*”, “*menikmati*”, “*terkenal*”, and “*menarik*” appear with high frequency and are consistently used in positive contexts. This indicates that digital tourism promotion employs linguistic strategies to construct visual, emotional, and social appeal. Beauty is

emphasized through visual and aesthetic terms, experience is highlighted using affective language, and the social dimension is reinforced through expressions that signal visibility and presence on social media platforms. These words do not function in isolation, rather, they are interwoven in a complex semantic network that generates a strong and persuasive destination narrative.

By identifying word pairs such as *“pengalaman + tak terlupakan”*, *“keindahan + alam”*, *“spot + instagramable”*, and *“cocok + untuk + aktivitas”*, the analysis reveals how these combinations strategically form positive associations and expectations in the minds of readers. These collocations function as rhetorical structures that convey messages implicitly yet powerfully, influencing how tourists evaluate and choose destinations. Meanwhile, the semantic prosody of key words demonstrates a consistent tendency toward positive connotations that dominate the overall promotional narrative. For instance, *“indah”* almost always appears in visually captivating contexts, *“pengalaman”* is used in emotionally engaging settings, *“spot”* suggests shareable visual content, and *“terkenal”* confers social legitimacy to the destination’s reputation. Thus, in this context, language is no longer neutral but it has become a commodity in itself, produced, curated, and capitalized to support the tourism industry.

The branding strategies identified in this analysis encompass five dominant patterns: emotional strategy, visual-social strategy, exclusivity strategy, cultural and authenticity strategy, and comfort and accessibility strategy. Each of these strategies is supported by specific linguistic devices that strengthen the communication goals and differentiation of destinations amid global market competition. The emotional strategy, for instance employs phrases that evoke feelings and memories, the visual-social strategy leverages the popularity of social media to attract younger audiences, and the exclusivity strategy highlights uniqueness and limited access, while the cultural and comfort strategies emphasize local values and hospitality.

The implications of these findings can be utilized by tourism industry practitioners to design more effective, engaging, and linguistically data-driven promotional content. Understanding how words are used, combined, and emphasized within digital contexts enables the creation of sharper and more targeted destination narratives. In the context of destination branding, corpus-based linguistic strategies can serve as valuable references for crafting slogans, taglines, place descriptions, and social media captions that not only capture attention but also enhance audience recall.

However, this study does come with a few limitations. The corpus is limited to official Indonesian tourism websites collected between 2023 and 2024, which may not fully represent the diversity of digital tourism discourse that particularly content generated by travelers or hosted on social media platforms. Additionally, the analysis focused only on texts written in Indonesian, leaving out the multilingual strategies often used to attract international audiences. While the study relied on established corpus tools, it examined only the textual aspects of promotion, without considering visual or multimodal content, which are undeniably central to digital communication today. Finally, the semantic prosody interpretation was based on manual coding without inter-coder validation, which may introduce subjective bias.

Several recommendations can be made based on the conclusions of this study. Tourism destination managers should adopt a more strategic message design approach grounded in accurate linguistic data. By identifying the most effective words and phrases, managers can create promotional content that is not only informative but also persuasive, emotionally engaging, and relevant to the target audience. The findings of this research can also serve as a reference for policymakers and local governments in formulating tourism communication guidelines rooted in local wisdom while remaining competitive at the global level. Moreover, training in data-driven digital

promotional language can be integrated into community empowerment programs within the tourism sector.

Furthermore, this study opens opportunities for cross-disciplinary collaboration between linguistics, marketing, tourism, and digital technology. Similar research approaches can be applied to other sectors that also utilize emotion-based communication and branding strategies, such as culinary, cultural, or educational industries. In digital tourism promotion, language is not merely a communication tool, but it is also a cultural product, a marketing medium, and a powerful instrument of diplomacy. Therefore, a deep and critical understanding of language commodification is a crucial step toward building inclusive, strategic, and sustainable tourism.

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