

7 COMMUNICATION COMPETENCES OF A TOURIST GUIDE AS PRESENTED IN THE FILMS *MY LIFE IN RUINS* *AND JUNGLE CRUISE*

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Tourist guides play a vital role in tourism by forming one of the most important professions in the tourism industry. This chapter presents the tasks and competences of the guides as shown in the selected films *My Life in Ruins* and *Jungle Cruise* and highlights the communication competences that they must have to meet the demands and expectations of tourists. For this purpose, we analyzed the selected characters' communication competences through content analysis and presented our findings. However, since the assessment of the development of communication competences should not only rely on fictional characters, we also conducted semi-structured interviews with professional tourist guides, which gave us a broader and more realistic picture of the expected communication competences.

DOI
[https://doi.org/
10.18690/um.ft.1.2024.7](https://doi.org/10.18690/um.ft.1.2024.7)

ISBN
978-961-286-813-0

Keywords:
communication
competences,
tourist guide,
representation,
film,
interpretation



University of Maribor Press

7.1 Introduction

In this chapter, we present the research prepared by Tadej Nered as part of his diploma thesis under the mentorship of Assoc. Prof. Dr. Jasna Potočnik Topler, where we analyzed the profession of tourist guides focused on their representation (the main focus is put on their communication competences) in two films - *My Life in Ruins* (2009) and *Jungle Cruise* (2021).

Why the profession of tourist guide? Because their work is vital in being the first contact of the traveler with the destination. As a result, it mostly depends on guides whether the visitors will feel welcome, how they will experience the destination and the trip, whether the entire experience will remain in their fond memory, and whether they will ever return to the destination in the future (Association of Tourist Guides of Slovenia - Združenje turističnih vodnikov Slovenije (ZTVS), n.d.). Although their main task seems simple at first glance, guides hide a lot of knowledge, abilities, skills, and personality behind the scenes. One of the many is communication, with which they fulfill their duties to tourists who have volunteered their hard-earned money to escape from everyday life. As a result, tourists have certain expectations, and the guide should ensure that a group of people enjoy their vacation.

According to the definition drawn up in 2003 by the World Federation of Tourist Guide Associations (WFTGA, 2022), a tourist guide guides visitors in a chosen language and interprets an area's cultural and natural heritage. This person usually has qualifications for a specific location, usually issued and recognized by the relevant authority. Tourist guides are ambassadors of the country and thus play an essential role in creating unforgettable experiences for tourists, mainly because of their direct connection with them (Jahwari, Sirakaya-Turk & Altintas, 2016). Guides are promoters of the country or destination and important interpreters of its natural, cultural, and UNESCO heritage at home and abroad (ZTVS, n.d.). Le Nguyen (2015) also adds that tourist guides are the first employees in the tourism industry, who play an essential role in attracting tourists to a destination, and that the tour guide service is the main component of the tourism services offered by such companies. The author also notes that providing quality services to tourists by guides is necessary for business success and the destination's image.

Based on what has been written, the reputation and the success of a tourist destination or tourism depend on the quality of the services of tourist guides, their knowledge, professionalism, ingenuity, practicality, and skills. In addition, current research shows that tourist guides contribute their share to the destination's image, marketing, and branding. To carry out their essential work, professional tourist guides must have, among many other qualities, effective communication skills, which they must constantly improve due to their daily contact with tourists from different cultural, ethnic, social, religious and other backgrounds. Globalization and the shortening of distances through transportation and information technology developments are increasing the frequency of face-to-face interaction. Still, people from different cultures can only interact successfully in today's world if they maintain polished and sharpened communication skills. These tourist guide competences can increase tourist satisfaction and destination loyalty (Jahwari et al., 2016).

7.2 Research questions and methods used

Within the research, we established the following research questions:

- How necessary is knowledge of speech culture and mastery of rhetoric and interpretation for a tourist guide?
- What non-verbal communication skills distinguish an excellent tourist guide?
- How are the characters of the tourist guide in the films *My Life in Ruins* and *Jungle Cruise* presented from the point of view of communication?
- Regarding communication skills, which character makes a better tourist guide and consequently a better base for future tourist guides, and why?

Qualitative research methods have been used in both theoretical and empirical parts, answering questions about experience, meaning, and perspective that cannot usually be counted, measured, or expressed numerically. Qualitative research methods include (Hammarberg, Kirkman and de Lacey, 2016):

- Focus groups on investigating beliefs, attitudes, and concepts of normative behaviour,

- semi-structured interviews to find in-depth information on the selected topic or with key informants to obtain basic information or an institutional perspective,
- in-depth interviews to understand the situation, experiences, or events from a personal point of view, and
- content analysis to become familiar with extended or private knowledge.

Qualitative researchers defend the integrity of their work in different ways – the evaluation criteria are (Hammarberg et al., 2016):

- reliability – the method of implementation, procedural decisions, and details of data acquisition and management must be consistent with the purpose of the research;
- credibility – research results must be recognizable to people who share similar experiences;
- applicability – research findings can be integrated into contexts outside the study situation and must be relevant and valuable in experience;
- consistency – given the same data, other researchers would find similar patterns and get similar results.

In the research, we used the methods of description, content analysis, and semi-structured interviews. The latter is characterized by open-ended questions and a topic list in which broader areas of interest and sometimes sub-questions are defined. Predetermined topics can be derived from the literature, prior research, or primary data collection methods. The list of issues is usually adjusted and refined early in the data collection process as the interviewer becomes familiar with the area. In different interviews, the emphasis on different sets of questions or individual questions can differ (Busetto, Wick and Gumbinger, 2020). We interviewed six professional tourist guides from diverse backgrounds and various Slovenian agencies, as this number is perfect for quickly determining the communication skills that professional guides possess in the time allotted for the interviews. The findings thus show the communication skills that tourist guides have developed in practice, what skills they should have according to the literature review in the theoretical part, and how realistically the skills are presented in the selected films. Namely, for a qualitative evaluation of the communication skills of fictional film characters, it makes sense to

include a view from practice obtained by the interviews. With this, the interviews allowed a comparison between theory and practice.

After completing the film content analysis, we used the evaluation method to assess which character has better-developed communication skills, and based on general assumptions, formed a certain conclusion (Dictionary, 2021) and deductively concluded what kind of example the two film characters represent to existing tourist guides who would like to improve their guiding, and to newcomers to the world of tourist guiding.

7.3 Competences and communication of a tourist guide

The competences that guides must master to perform their work are related to different work areas. The most frequently exposed competences in the articles are knowledge of the field, empathy, charisma and authenticity, adaptability, resourcefulness, punctuality, and organization. Effective communication is the most repeated skill, often divided in more detail and defined individually.

In its simplest form, the concept of communication can be described as the transfer of meaning from one person to another or many people, and it can be shown as a simple triangle consisting of a sender, a message in a particular context, and a receiver (Suardhana, Nitiasih & Putra, 2013). Various models have been developed to analyze the communication process. Still, one of the most famous models is the Shannon-Weaver model of communication, which Warren Weaver and Claude Shannon developed in 1948. They developed communication model theory to describe communication between sender and receiver. The model, divided into six smaller elements, applies to almost all types of communication (Dickinson, 2022):

- sender – the person who has the information to be transmitted,
- encoder – a person or device that converts a message into a signal that can be transmitted from the sender to the recipient,
- channel – a medium that transmits information from the source to the receiver,
- noise - disturbances that occur during the transmission of a message from the sender to the receiver,

- decoder – receiving point where the signal is converted into a message that can be deciphered,
- receiver – the endpoint of the communication process.

The original Shannon-Weaver model was complemented by Norbert Wiener, who added feedback as the seventh element - the receiver's response to the sender. With this, he responded to criticism of the model that it is one-way communication. This addition to the model changed the communication process from linear to cyclical (Dickinson, 2022).

Communication is divided into verbal and nonverbal, with oral being defined as communicating with words and limited to language (Suardhana et al., 2013). However, Bansal (n.d.) describes non-verbal communication as communication we transmit without speaking or words. Tourist guides actively use both forms of communication in their work, where communication skills refer to the ability to explain roles and relationships, such as tourist attractions, historical backgrounds, or stories. These skills aim to educate tourists and entertain and promote awareness of the conservation and value of the attractions. More importantly, the tourist guide uses techniques to grab the tourists' attention even before revealing the critical information they want to show. As the guides are - as already mentioned - ambassadors of the destination, they must be well educated and able to tell the story accurately, and it is even better that they express it in a way that arouses satisfaction in the tourists. Communication skills, therefore, should be taken seriously (Chanwanakul, 2021).

7.4 The Role of Interpretation

One of the communication competences is interpretation, which often appears in tourist guiding. In tourism, interpretation can be described as an educational activity that aims to reveal the meanings and relationships of the places tourists visit to what they see and do. Although the profession of a tourist guide seems relatively new, this is not entirely true, as tourist guiding dates back to the time of ancient Greece and ancient Rome, where there were specialists called "interpreters". These were people who, for a fee, interpreted the history of certain cities and areas to small groups of people or individuals who were passing through (Potočník Topler et al. 2017).

Brito and Carvalho (2022) note that the quality of interpretation distinguishes tourist guides. Indeed, in their 2012 study, tourists who travel with a guide claimed that although these professionals have many different, critical, and complementary roles, interpretation of the trip's content is undoubtedly the most vital skill. From the late 1970s to now, there have been many changes in tourism regarding the motivation and experience of tourists, and in this context, guides must constantly adapt to new trends. Today, a much broader, deeper, and more complex knowledge of heritage interpretation is required to meet the needs of the highly informed 21st-century tourist. They also name another group of tourist guides – interpretive guides – which they define as guides who provoke people's curiosity and interest by connecting the attraction with the participants' knowledge, experience, background, and values.

When satisfying needs during leisure time, the DRAMMA model should be mentioned, which includes six psychological needs that connect leisure time with better well-being (Kujanpää et al., 2021):

- detachment – mental disconnection from work-related thoughts and tasks;
- relaxation – psychobiological unwinding in combination with low activation and strong positive influence;
- autonomy – the feeling of control over life, actions, and choices is an essential component of free time;
- mastery – experiencing expertise and skill in tasks that a person deals with in their free time;
- meaning – a sense of purpose and meaning in life and activities;
- affiliation – the feeling of close emotional connection with people.

In the DRAMMA model, meaningful experiences during leisure time are essential to linking leisure time to subjective well-being. Travel is undoubtedly one of the most common ways of spending free time, and quality experiences substantially impact people's satisfaction. A high-quality experience is ensured, among other things, by a high-quality interpretation.

Weiler and Ham (2022) note that the tourist experience should create an intellectual, emotional, and even spiritual connection between people and places, with interpretation being the key to establishing this connection. These authors also argue

that a guide can and should play a key role in facilitating clients' understanding and appreciation of natural and cultural phenomena. They also prove that the application of the principles of interpretation, which the guide must use as a way of meeting the needs and expectations of all group members, is an essential element of tourist management, and they define five of them:

- Interpretation is not teaching in the academic sense.
- Interpretation must be pleasant for visitors.
- The interpretation must be relevant to the visitors.
- Interpretation should be well organized so that visitors can easily follow them.
- Interpretation must have a motive, not just a theme.

Another definition of the interpretation effect was written in his work by El-Menshawey (2016), who summarized the words of Cohen from 1985, who defined the interpretation effect with the term "intercultural mediation" and explained it as the translation of foreign and unknown elements of the host culture into a cultural idiom, which is close to the guest. Prakash and Chowdhary (2010) express practical interpretation as "the ability to explain by creating mental images," for which the guide, as the main speaker needs good speaking skills.

Speaking skills are also called rhetorical skills. Rhetoric, also called classical rhetoric, originates from ancient Greece and has been preserved in this form until today, at least in Western civilization. Although rhetoric is often mistakenly equated with good speaking, it is the art of persuasion at its core. Although oratory existed in that space long before that – it was then a public performance with a speech on a particular occasion, the purpose of which was to convince the audience in one way or another. Rhetoric as an independent skill began to appear in the 5th century BC when an intellectual movement called sophistry appeared, whose representatives significantly influenced the development of rhetorical theory and practice and thus provided the basis for Aristotle, who is considered the founder of rhetorical theory. His work is a systematic division and definition of rhetorical skill within the framework of some new categories, which are still felt today (Žmavc, n.d.).

The fruits of his work are, among other things, the canons of classical rhetoric, i.e., the primary operations of speech formation – how to find material for speech (*inventio*), how to arrange it meaningfully (*dispositio*), which words to choose for them (*elocutio*), how to remember the material successfully (*memoria*), and how to present it as convincingly as possible (*actio*). By defining rhetoric as the art of persuasion, Aristotle also introduced the division of two fundamental methods of influence to get one's points of view accepted by listeners. These are external and internal means of persuasion; the difference concerns speaking skills. External means of persuasion exist independently of rhetoric; the speaker supports or justifies his arguments with them. The speaker creates internal means of persuasion each time anew for a given rhetorical situation. They are further divided into three types - *ethos* (depending on the character of the speaker or his reputation and credibility with the audience), *pathos* (those that evoke certain moods in listeners), and *logos* (based on proof) (Žagar et al., 2018).

However, for tourist guides to successfully convey their material to listeners, they must master the currently popular global discourse, which means having a well-developed speech culture, since speech is the essential act of any trip (Potočnik Topler, 2017). Regardless of the language in which the guide leads the group, her or his linguistic competence must include the use of appropriate vocabulary, correct grammar, clear pronunciation of sentences, intonation, respect for punctuation, and use of proper language level with tourists (Chanwanakul, 2021).

For this reason, we chose the film *My Life in Ruins* to analyze the portrayal of a tourist guide's profession and communication competences. The film stars Georgia (played by Nia Vardalos), a Greek-American teacher who travels to Greece to teach classical Greek history at a local college. But she was fired due to budget cuts and is forced to work as a tourist guide, making her feel like she has hit rock bottom. Later, her boss Maria tells her she has received negative feedback from tourists who say she is boring. On the other hand, Georgia describes tourists as incompetent, as they seem more interested in souvenirs than in learning about history and culture. But along the way, seasoned traveler Irv helps her understand why she cannot connect with the group and shows her how to be more attractive to people and have fun in her work. As a result, Georgia finds her *kefi* (a Greek word that means spirit, passion, or joy in translation - to find your *kefi*, at least for whatever you do, you need to know

your job well, constantly struggle, adapt, and above all to enjoy it and never give up) which makes tourists start to enjoy the trip under her leadership.

The protagonist of *Jungle Cruise*, Frank Wolff (played by Dwayne Johnson), who offers cruises on the Amazon River and the Amazon jungle in Brazil, seemingly has no problem with monotony. Indeed, he embellishes his voyages with false theatrical dangers and (unfortunately for the passengers) banal puns, making him a better example of a tourist guide at first glance.

While Georgia presents a bad example of a tour guide at the beginning of the film - one who does not do her job with heart and extreme zeal and is dull as a result - she changes entirely throughout the film and ends up being a guide who makes trips exciting and fun. On the other hand, there is Frank, who shows clearly at the beginning of the film what kind of guide he is and maintains this leadership style throughout. In each film, the character of the tourist guide is presented in a slightly different light, but on the other hand, they have certain similarities. This prompted us to think about how realistically the profession of a tourist guide is presented in the film compared to what it should be like in real life, especially in terms of communication. Therefore, we will examine which character is a better starting point for establishing how to train future tourist guides or determine what they can learn from the portrayal of characters.

Jamet (2017) notes that Eurostat statistics say that Europeans most often traveled for a maximum of three nights in 2015 and that a resident of the European Union made 2.3 trips in the same year. The most frequent travelers are members of Generation X, who travel three to four times a year, excluding business trips (Gaytravel, n.d.). In general, Europeans travel more than Americans, and there are many reasons for this, one of them being that residents of European Union countries have four weeks of paid vacation per year. In comparison, other countries may have two to three weeks (Discover Hervey Bay, n.d.). Although many would certainly like to travel much more than they currently do, this is often only possible for several reasons. Throughout the year, people would like to spend about 30-45 days traveling, starting with two trips of the mentioned length, and should also include some shorter (three- to four-day) trips in their life (Brumelis, 2023), in a total of which we exclude business trips.

On average, people do not travel so much. However, a study by the LG company, published by the New York Post, reported that the average individual spends more than 78,000 hours in a lifetime in front of the television. During this time, a person watches an average of 3,639 films and 31,507 episodes (Salo, 2019). This number of hours is even more relevant if it is converted into a percentage based on the life expectancy of the average Slovenian, which is approximately 80 years. The calculation results show that people spend a good tenth of their lives watching movies and series on television, which makes a little less than two and a half hours of viewing content daily. However, this number was slightly higher in the last three years, when the world came to a standstill due to the covid-19 epidemic, and many people were forced to stay at home. So, we can say with a clear conscience that watching video content occupies a specific part of every individual's day or that people are exposed to it daily. At the same time, professional tourist guides only a few times a year, if at all, and the statistics also confirm this.

Ramsay (2018), an online blogger, wondered in one of his blogs why watching movies and series is so attractive to people or why it is more attractive than doing housework, cooking, and hanging out with friends. He concluded that people watch movies to feel and escape reality. Movies take us to another time, place, or situation that we may never be able to experience. The emotions we feel when watching a film keep us returning for more (Ramsay, 2018).

Gabriel (2021), a professor of psychology at the College of the University of Chicago, offers a possible answer as he argues that the cinema is a space dedicated to collective behaviors that are unique compared to everyday life and, therefore, sacred. These sacred spaces are separated from the mundane and profane, where powerful, transformative events occur for individuals as part of the community. Different rules apply in these spaces and bring different ways of relating to society, ancestors, time, and fundamental concepts of meaning and significance. He calls the film a human act of mythical proportions.

Watching movies is not only a hobby or entertainment that we can enjoy when we have a free moment from life's obligations, but it can also be beneficial for a person's mental health. Some positive effects of watching movies are mood improvement, relaxation, stress reduction, and motivation. Films can stimulate social and cultural reflection, and they can also improve interpersonal relationships. In this case, the

person is most influenced by the film's educational function, in which the viewer treats the film as something inspiring. Watching movies is also sometimes used as part of psychotherapy, where we are exposed to a character who may be going through a similar emotional experience but can encourage us to look at our situation from a different perspective and thus offer new ways of dealing with it (Johnson, 2022). Javier (2021) adds to this empathy, which occurs when the viewer feels that the character in the film is the same or very similar to her or him, whether it is the portrayal of the character or something in their personality.

These findings are reflected in today's world when due to global distribution and affordability, many Westerners have access to platforms such as Netflix, Amazon, Apple TV, or simply the Internet, where pirated video content can be found. As a result, movies affect the viewers' perception of the real world. There is also an identification with the performing character or several of them. This happens for many reasons, which are studied in more detail in the theoretical part of the article.

7.5 Findings from an analysis of the communication competences of the character Georgia from *My Life in Ruins*

Because of this last thought, we chose the film *My Life in Ruins* to analyze the communication competences of tourist guides, which can very clearly be divided into two parts. The first part is from the beginning of the film to the emotional breakdown, which is a kind of peak of the film because then Georgia experiences her transformation from a history teacher who lives for history but does not know precisely how to share this passion with people, to a tourist guide who can do precisely that. Being a teacher of history, full of knowledge, is essential. Still, as we found out based on professional sources, more is needed since this represents only one part of the entire performance or set of tasks that a tourist guide must perform. At this point, Georgia only (unsuccessfully) establishes an intellectual relationship between her group and the destinations visited, neglecting the emotional one. After an emotional outburst over her group member Irv, Georgia must try to improve her relationship with him, realizing that she can only do this by becoming a better tourist guide. From then on, with the help of Irv and Poupi, she begins to experience her rebirth, and the curve turns upwards. She establishes an emotional and spiritual relationship which is much more acceptable for the group members. As a result, by the end of the film (somewhat clichéd, but still), she becomes the guide that every

tourist wants - fun, engaging, and able to bring out the best in tourists and find something for everyone. This is also clearly shown at the end of the film, when the group's opinions about Georgia altogether shock Maria, who, given her previous experiences and thoughts (which were mediocre in turn), cannot believe that she got such high-flying marks. Only after the group members assure her that they wrote the reviews does Maria realize that Georgia is now the guide she must keep on her team.

Tourist guiding is a rhetorical situation; therefore, knowledge of internal persuasive skills is necessary, which is crucial during management. The emergence or lack of individual skills can also be observed in the film, which is set in the rhetorical situation under discussion. In the film's first part, Georgia only establishes an intellectual relationship between people and the destination; that is, it relies too much on *logos* based on logical proof. However, she is unsuccessful, as the group members need to share her passion for historical facts. Georgia's *ethos* is established as a history teacher (who acts as if she will have the group write a test at the end of the trip) rather than a tourist guide. Because of this, people do not listen to her and are not enjoying their journey. Later in the film, Georgia transitions from being a history teacher to establishing her *ethos* as a tourist guide. From what has been written, it can be concluded that she never had problems establishing an *ethos* and, thus, her credibility. However, in the film's first part, the *ethos* needed to be corrected, which could be seen through her relationship with the tourists. She completely neglected emotional connection and, thus, *pathos* - the only emotion she evoked was boredom. Later, she also included feelings in her program, which the listeners better accepted, so her group started to enjoy the trip.

Even if the stereotypical characters of tourists in the film are shown to be excessively bad, this is mostly not true in real life – people want to spend their vacation relaxing and having fun while at the same time getting to know something new that they cannot do in their home environment. Therefore, it is unlikely that a tourist guide would be given such a group in real life. Still, the movie (more specifically, the second part) is an excellent example of dealing with such a group and bringing out the best in them. Georgia became a successful guide for this specific group only when she put her philosophy (tell all the historical facts, visit only the historical sites, and deliberately leave out everything else) second and the guests' wishes first. She understood that guests came to Greece to admire the history and culture and, even

more than that, to have fun. In the first part, she treated them as typical representatives of stereotypical types of people. She did not allow them any other option, but later she understood that people are more than that and have their desires and needs to fulfill. It was only when she allowed people to introduce themselves to her and allowed herself to get to know them better that she recognized their desires and adapted to them. It was a turning point when she understood her mission as a tourist guide and why she had not been interesting to her tourists until now. And when people also saw that Georgia now listened to them, they began to behave differently towards her. With this, she attracted better qualities from them, and as a result, the trip became unforgettable for all participants. From this, Georgia learned that every tourist has their own story. As a result, every trip is at least a little different from the previous one - people have other wants and needs, and only a guide who has empathy for this and can adapt to the audience will succeed.

7.6 Findings from an analysis of the communication competences of the character Frank from *Jungle Cruise*

In the film *Jungle Cruise* Frank's job as a tourist guide is not in the foreground and plays a secondary role. In any case, Frank's first scene in the film is an example of him cruising down the river, which shows us what kind of person Frank is and indicates what we can expect from him later in the film. Over the course of the film, the viewers get to know him even better, and we realize that Frank is a unique character. Still, he has well-developed communication competences, especially "technical" ones - we are referring to his speaking technique and interpretation of the material and somewhat less to the content that would probably be perceived differently in real life.

At first glance, Frank seems very convincing as a person - he is confident, well-versed, and very experienced (which he conveys well even without words), which makes him better than others who would try to deliver the same message but would be less sure of themselves, which would significantly affect their non-verbal communication. By seeming to put his passengers in danger and with specific lines, he could come across as rude or indifferent and a bit childish due to the use of banal puns. However, with his smile and friendly tone at the end of each tour, he makes an impression that softens the still vivid memory of the dangers the tourists have experienced. From this, we can conclude that the content of his cruises (false

theatrical perils, banal puns that are so bad that they are almost comical, and lines that could be described as rude or stilted - especially when viewed through the prism of time and space, since the film takes place in 1916 Brazil, when society is highly stratified, with Frank belonging to the lower class and his passengers to the upper class, which could lead to dire consequences for him) is accepted as it is only because of his performance and convincing delivery of the message. Indeed, Frank is a master of effective verbal communication and clear non-verbal communication, as well as incredible interpretation, with which he can create a spectacle from banal everyday or objectively unconvincing things (an excellent example of this is the "back side of the water", which he describes as the eighth wonder of the world, but before that, he builds up the tension as if he is going to show people something unique but only a tiny stream of water appears, which people do not think is anything special, but they are still under the influence).

Considering the film's time frame and social characteristics, the same situation would not be accepted as positive today. But it is also true that Frank highly influences the case with his confident and convincing performance, and everything ends well for him. But it should be remembered that Frank is a fictional movie character in a family movie, primarily intended to entertain the audience. It would be interesting to see how Frank's groups would perceive him were he a real guide - probably some better than others (depending on the characteristics of the group members), but certainly different from the situation observed in the movie.

7.7 Interviews with tourist guides

However, since we cannot rely only on fictional characters when analyzing communication competences, we also conducted six semi-structured interviews with six professional tourist guides (three men and three women, aged between 25 and 60 years old, with experience from two to 35 years) from various Slovenian agencies and organizations. It should be emphasized that the guides are freelancers who work for different clients. According to their education, the interviewees had bachelor's or master's degrees in various fields, but interestingly not in the tourism profession. They all have a Slovenian tour guide license, and most can speak English, German, and Italian. The interviews lasted 20–30 minutes and were analyzed by content analysis, specifically by coding keywords.

The answers to the questions were very similar to the competences we highlighted based on the literature review – communication, intimate knowledge of the destination, organization, punctuality, professionalism, ability to adapt, and others were highlighted in the guide's main attributes. When we asked them about communication competences and skills, they collectively mentioned correct pronunciation of words, reasonable speed, and intonation, calmness, body posture, facial expressions, gesticulations, and interpretation of content. As the most critical task of the tourist guide, a responsible approach to work was highlighted, which combines all of the above, and all of this is in some way communication with the guests – from neatness, punctuality, and friendliness (appearance in front of the guest and first impression) to the presentation of the material.

Considering that the interviews took place in a private environment and not during the tour itself, we also asked our interviewees about their favorite trip, their first tours as tourist guides, and their favorite contents (while at the same time observing their interpretation skills). We found that most interviewees had enough material, which testifies to rich cosmopolitan experiences and, ultimately, a good memory, which we discovered is also an essential part of preparing the tourist guide's material. When listening to the interviewees' stories, we often felt like journeying with them. Although we did not observe them while leading their groups, we could travel the world, at least in our minds, by focusing on their communication skills and stories.

In general, tourist guides with more experience stressed the same communication skills and competences that we presented based on the literature review as necessary for the guests' satisfaction and, consequently, the guide's success. Professional tour guides highlighted communication as the essential skill as strongly as it was presented in the literature. Still, they talked the most about communication, even before asking specifically. This testifies to the fact that the interviewed guides are aware of the importance of communication in the performance of their work and strive to constantly improve their knowledge and skills (also by current trends and speech culture) so that they can adapt to their guests and try to provide the best possible experience for them. It is essential to feel that the guide lives for travel and that she or he does their job with heart, enthusiasm, and abilities.

Although it was not an immediate plan, we used the interviews with expert tourist guides not only to talk about but to observe their communication competences and skills. Through observation and participation in live interviews, we assessed that all the interviewed guides have well-developed communication skills and competences according to the guidelines we obtained from the literature review. However, it should be emphasized once again that all guides have many years of experience in tourism.

7.8 Conclusion

Based on the analysis, it can be concluded that Georgie and Frank, the two protagonists from the films, are examples of good tourist guides and possess communication skills that are desirable in most cases. After conducting interviews with professional tourist guides, we can also positively conclude that the protagonists from the films are presented relatively realistically. Both characters find themselves in certain situations and have traits that might not be as accepted in real life as they were in the movies. However, overall, both characters represent an excellent example of a tour guide to follow.

The fact is that nowhere in the literature can one find exact guidelines that would dictate being the perfect tourist guide in terms of receiving precise instructions for specific actions. Instead, guides are often only exposed to policies to which each individual attributes their meaning and acts according to their conscience, experience, and knowledge, which is a result of the heterogeneity of humankind. In reality, specific approaches that work with one group may be less successful with another or may have the exact opposite effect. Therefore, it is the task of guides to get to know each group as well as possible and adapt to it based on the characteristics of its members. This ability indeed comes with experience; from this point of view, the disadvantage is that there is nowhere to get exact instructions. However, guides must be well-versed in theory, have a sense of recognizing requirements, and, above all, learn quickly to avoid repeating the same mistakes. If embarrassments and complications arise due to inadequate management, they must be resourceful enough to turn such situations to their advantage or mitigate them somewhat.

For this reason, we pointed out that there needs to be more emphasis on theoretical work and more practical experience in the education process. Although it is impossible to prepare for all situations where guides may find themselves, it is essential to start preparing candidates as quickly as possible for potential complications, which can be solved more smoothly later due to the experience gained. The profession of a tourist guide is very personal and individually oriented in that not a single guide is precisely the same as another. Everyone brings to their work themselves, their personality and their way of solving problems, as well as thinking and behaving, which is the added value that the quality of the services provided distinguishes guides and thus their likeability, and consequently also their success.

Acknowledgment

Supervisor & mentor: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Jasna Potočnik Topler, PhD.

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