

The Analysis of Guide Words About Xiamen Based on Systemic Functional Grammar

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Abstract

With the booming development of tourism, tour-guide English has gradually been favored by many people. Some studies about tour-guide English are increasing. The essay is based on the guide words about Xiamen in the aspect of SFG, especially the five processes of ideational metafunction. The guide words about Xiamen simply introduce some scenic spots including Gulangyu Islet, the Sunlight Temple, memory hall of Zheng Chenggong and so on. The guide words is analyzed through the material process, mental process, relational process, verbal process and existential process so that convey new information to readers and preferably understand English text about guide words.

Keywords: Systemic-functional grammar; Ideational function; Guide words.



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1. Introduction

The guide words that is the bridge and bond of communication plays an important role between tour guides and tourists. Whether the scenic spot is described concretely or indistinctly and whether tourists are able to understand the specialty and core of famous places, the guide words are extremely indispensable. The English guide words is regarded as a kind of language in the specific context and applied to tourism. The guide need to inform tourists basic information and explain doubts whenever and wherever possible. If the guide explains the scenic spot vividly, informatively and interestingly, the place will be welcomed by more and more tourists. Moreover, China had traditional cultures of 5000 years, more and more foreigners want to know more about mysterious and awesome China with inquisitive mind. The phenomenon causes the prosperity of tourism about the reception of foreigners. Therefore, it is indispensable for guide words in English in the field of tourism. English guide words is developing vigorously because of the advent of foreign tourists. It is a valuable discourse that worth analyzing. The guide words in the essay is about the simple introduction about some scenic spots in Xiamen.

Systemic functional grammar is suitable for discourse analysis because of operability and practicability (Liu, 2013). It refers to many different domains and helps those domains investigate the detailed implications, such as literature, news, advertisement and so on. In the view of functional linguistics, in order to understand meaning of language and analyze the function of words, grammar is extremely important. Halliday believes that linguistic structure can be interpreted clearly from the perspective of function (He and Zhang, 2017). He proposed that semantic function had three constituents that is ideational function, interpersonal function and textual function (Zhu, 2001). They are called three metafunctions which can appear in the discourse. In order to comprehensively and prudently understand every sentence of text, three metafunctions play a significant role in analyzing texts. For example, when reading the articles, who is the participants, what is the main process, relative constitutes of environment and the relationship between the process and participants need to be clear basically. We should judge what is happening, who are involved in the interaction, what is their relationship and how is the message organized to create focus and emphasis.

The main material of this essay is the text of guide words about Xiamen. In the view of five different processes in ideational metafunction, the text is analyzed carefully, for example, when introducing the details of scenic spot, the words are objective and impartial. Moreover, the guide pays attention to feeling and experience of tourists. In the essay, it has six parts. The introduction mainly talks about text of guide words and SFG. Data collection focuses on source of the guide words about Xiamen. Analytic framework is about five different processes of ideational metafunction. Data analysis is mainly about detailed explanation in the five processes. The following parts are findings and discussion. The last one is the conclusion.

2. Data Collection

The essay analyzed a text about guide words of Xiamen. The text about guide words comes from the internet. It is the website about ruiwen. The website is <https://mip.ruiwen.com/daoyouci/1453934.html>. The original text is too

long. During the process of dealing with the text. It was curtailed because of words restriction. Some information about the driver, Sunlight Rock, Dragon Head Hill are moved out. The remaining text is about the guide, Linxi, introducing the Gulangyu Islet, the Sunlight Temple, memory hall of Zheng chenggong and so on. The text concludes 353 words that is simple and easy to understand. Through the analysis of the text about guide words, It can be divided into 36 clauses. The text is divided into two paragraphs. The first paragraph is about the guide's greetings and welcome to tourists. The second paragraph is mainly about some resorts in Xiamen. In the first paragraph, the most words and sentences are appeared in friendly and intimate manner while there are some numbers and places that seem to be relatively objective and strict in the second paragraph.

2.1. Analytical Framework

The analytic framework of the essay is Systemic-Functional Grammar. The SFG regards the text rather than sentences or words as the main unit. The text is a coherent and meaningful unit which is worthy making a research. Moreover, the SFG studies the connection between text and society. The SFG believes the language is the system of constructive meaning rather than the way to express feelings and thoughts (Wang and Bill Winster, 1996). The SFG pays more attention to the meaning given by language rather than view the language as a system with certain rules. The meaning potential given by speakers is more important than what speakers are talking about. Meanwhile, the SFG makes the meaning as the starting point. The core concept of SFG is stratification which divides Language into four levels. The four aspects are context, meaning, vocabulary and structure (Halliday, 1994). In the aspect of context, there are three important terms including field, tenor, model. The field is about actual thing and the subjects of talking. The tenor is interpersonal relationship between participants and purpose of language that said by addressor in specific context. The mode is channel of communication and function of language, including rhetorical style. The use of language creates meaning which involves three meanings including ideational, interpersonal, and textual meaning. They are equivalent to three metafunctions in systematic network of SFG. Actually, the field is ideational function. The tenor is interpersonal function. The mode is textual function. Ideational function expresses the understanding of the reality and subjective word (Xin and Huang, 2013). It has six processes including material process, mental process, verbal process, relational process, existential process and behavior process which will be discussed in detail in following sentences. Interpersonal function indicates the identity, status and the criteria to judge things by speakers. That is to say, people use language to communicate with others, to establish interpersonal relationship and to express their views about reality and internal world (Chang and Cong, 2018). The mood and modality are the most important components of interpersonal function. Mood can be divided into imperative mood, interrogative mood and declarative mood. There are three kinds of modality including low modal, median modal and high modal. Low modal include words as "may," "are allowed to." Median modal include words as "should." High modal have "must," "are required to." Halliday believes that the thematical system and informational system work together and realize the metafunction of text. Textual function is about the concept of theme and rheme, marked and unmarked themes. Theme is the starting point of the clause and predicts how to develop the discourse. It is given information. Rheme is explanation and development of the theme. It is new information. Marked theme is the theme relating to what is typical. Unmarked theme is atypical and unusual in the way a message is structured (Huang, 2016).

The essay mainly talks about text of guide words in the ideational function of SFG. Ideational function mainly refers to convey new information to communicate the content that is unknown to the hearer. The "transitivity" and "voice" are all included in the ideational function. Transitivity mainly includes nature of the action, roles played by the participants, processes, type and nature of the circumstances in which the event occurs. Transitivity is also the expression of various kinds of experiences in real word by language. It reflects the things involved in the objective and subjective word (He and Zhang, 2017). It divides all behaviors, thoughts of human beings into several processes. At the same time, it makes the difference between participants and circumstantial roles involved. They can explore ideational function in SFG. The ideational function consists of six different processes, but behavior process is not explored in the essay. They are material process, mental process, verbal process, relational process and existential process. Material process is mainly about the verb or the action that was done, such as play, kick. It includes actor, material process and goal, that is to say, the action is done by people or article, for example, Mary hits Tom at home. "Mary" is the actor, the word of "hits" is material process. "Jack" is the goal. "At home" is circumstance (Huang, 1988). Mental process involves two participants, sensor and phenomenon. It relates to the organ of sense, such as enjoy, see. It expresses the non-behavioral process about affection, cognition and perception. For example, I see a boy. "I" is phenomenon. "See" is mental process. "A boy" is the sensor. Relational process is about processes of being, such as is, are. It is the relationship between one thing and the other thing or the situation, attribution, characteristic of an article (Cheng, 2005). Verbal process refers to say, tell, talk, describe and so on. It includes sayer, receiver and verbiage. For example, Martin told to Lisa. "Martin" is sayer. "Told" is verbiage. "Lisa" is receiver. Existential process is related to pattern of sentence including "there be." It is the process of existing or happening.

3. Findings

Table-1. The distribution of five processes

Processes	Material	Relational	Mental	Verbal	Existential
The first paragraph	5	4	1	1	0
The second paragraph	17	5	3	0	0
total	22	9	4	1	0
percentage	61%	25%	11%	3%	

From the table above, material process (22) is the most frequently used one among the six processes. Relational process(9) takes the second place. Mental relation (4) ranks the third. Verbal process (1) is the fourth place and existential process is used less frequently.

In terms of frequency, material process(5)→relational process(4)→mental process(1)→verbal process(1)→existential process(0). In the second paragraph, four famous scenic spots are introduced objectively. The ordering of processes is that material process(17)→relational process(5)→mental process(3)→verbal process(0)→existential process(0).

It is clear that material process is the most significant process in the text of guide words. Moreover, the use of material process and relational process frequently happens in the discourse about tourism. Then mental process is the third one. Verbal process follows. However, existential process is relatively less important.

Material process accounts for 61%. Material process is expressed by an action, an actor and the goal. In the text, the sentence pattern of actor-process-goal is frequently used.

Table 2. Examples of material process in the text

Actor	Process	Goal
ladies and gentleman	allow	me
The guide	extend	welcome
We	make	your stay
Gulangyu	become	scenic spot
We	come	temples
We	go to	the memory hall
We	displaced	photos and modles
We	go out	the memory hall
it	give	view
I	can't wait	top
Form	shown	events

Relational process accounts for 25%. In terms of relational process, it includes the intensive, circumstantial and possessive aspects (Chang, 2010). The intensive aspect is about 'A is a'. The circumstantial aspect is about 'A is at a'. The possessive aspect is about 'A has a' (Huang and Thompson, 2000).

Table-3. Examples of relational process in the text

My name	is	Linxi
I	will be	your guide
Your visit	will be	a happy experience
Gulangyu Islet	is	600 meters
Islet	has	population
Its former name	was	Lotus temple
Peak of sunlight rock	is not	high
You	have	questions

Mental process accounts for 11%. Mental process describes the inner world of mind, so whether it is human or non-human, the sensor will feel, think, and see something.

Table-4. Examples of mental process in the text

We	hope	visit
We	see	statue
You	watch	step
You	pay attention to	the islet

Verbal process accounts for 3%. Verbal processes are processes of saying, which cover any kinds of symbolic exchange of meaning. Like the sensor in a mental process, there is a sayer in a verbal process that can indicate a signal. There are other two participants that is receiver, verbiage in a verbal process.

Table-5. Examples of verbal process in the text

sayer	verbiage	receiver
We	ask for	understanding and cooperation

Existential process involves existential construction which is introduced by the word of “there” in position of subject. The typical verb that is the “be”. In the text of guide words, there is no existential process

4. Discussion

After the text of guide words about Xiamen was analyzed in the framework of ideational metafunction in SFG, it can be discussed in this part. In the material process, some words in the first paragraph, for example, allow, extend, hesitate, try, make and so on. They are simple, concise and straightforward so that the guide hopes foreign tourists can exactly understand what the guide said, especially in the beginning. Maybe the reason is that English is foreign language rather than second language for most Chinese, so the guide has a simple exchange with tourists. Those words are simple but standard, so it has no problem for foreigners to understand. The guide and foreign tourists don't know more about each other before the guide words are not said. These words are able to be familiarize each other. At the same time, they also show a friendly and enthusiastic attitude of the guide to tourists. Tourists can receive this kind of amiable information so that they can cooperate well and the following work will be done in an orderly manner. These sentences in the text can give the impression for foreigners that the guides are passionate, hospitality, gentry and humble. For example,

1. We'll **try** our best to **make** your stay of Xiamen pleasant and enjoyable.

2. Please **allow** me on behalf of xx Travel Service to **extend** our sincere welcome to you.

In the first sentence, “we” as actors can rapidly close the relationship between tourists and guides so that interpersonal activity can go on successively. “Try” and “make” as the process can convey the atmosphere of amiable, outgoing, welcome friendly attitude. They present equal mode of relationship. In the second sentence, These verbs indicate attitude of the guide who wants to service for tourists. The guide don't want the distance between her and tourists to be distant and aloof. The guide will pay more attention to take care of tourists.

3. It was **founded** during the Ming Dynasty and **rebuilt** over 400 years ago, in 1956.

4. It **bathes** daily in the first rays of the morning sunshine hence, so its name Sunlight.

In the third sentence, the verbs including “founded and rebuilt” show the history of the Sunlight Temple. In the fourth sentence, the word of bathes tells tourists that the origin of the name about the Sunlight Temple. It is significant for guide to tell the basic information and unique characteristics of a scenic spot to tourists. Material process is closely related to the text of guide words, especially detailed explanation of a famous resort, that is to say, the analysis of text of guide words is mainly achieved by material process, the guide needs to tell specific characteristics or attribution of a place. Therefore, material process is absolutely necessary and plays a dominant role among six processes in the text of guide words. As for relational process, it can express relationship between things or people. Moreover, it embodies attitudes and views.

5. My name **is** Linxi, and I will be your guide during your stay in Xiamen.

6. Your visit to our city will **be** a happy experience.

In the beginning of a trip, tourists and guide are unfamiliar with each other. The guide should express her identity and information to affirm their relationship between tourists and guide. The relational process, “is” and “be”, can help to implement the function in the fifth sentence.

The sixth sentence is the hope of guide. Before the trip, the visit is in initial state, it has not completed yet, guide wants to give tourists her best wishes to have fun in the journey. These words can indicate the importance of relational process according to self-introduction and the hope of guide.

7. Gulangyu Islet, **is** 600 meters off the southwest shore of Xiamen.

8. This tiny, 1.91 square kilometers islet **has** a population of less than 20,000.

In the seventh sentence, the word, “is” demonstrates the length of Gulangyu Islet. The objective attribution is described through relational process. In the eighth sentence, the population of Gulangyu Islet can be made clearly to foreign tourists. At the same time, the attitude of guide which deals with guide words is cautious and objective. The relational process not only makes the relationship between tourists and guide more intimacy, but also has the expository and descriptive explanation about the text of guide words.

9. we **hope** your visit to our city will be a happy experience.

10. Now, please **pay attention to** the islet on your left.

In the mental process, the guide attaches great importance of the experience of tourists. In the ninth sentence, “hope” expresses the thought of guide that tourists will enjoy themselves in the trip. At the same time, the text of guide words adds the subjective thoughts and feelings. It not only embodies a friendly expectation of tour guide, but also brings psychological pleasure to tourists. In the tenth sentence, the phrase of pay attention to shows careful and cautious attitude towards tourists so that they can feel the sincerity and intentions of the service.

In the text, verbal process doesn't appear at all. Maybe because the text is about guide words, the guide should lead tourists and make them know more about scenic spots. Most of chosen words should be objective, therefore, the text doesn't quote what other people said.

5. Conclusion

In the process of analyzing the text of guide words, material process is the most frequently used one among the six processes. It indicates that text of guide words mainly focuses on the description of objective information and

conveys friendly and intimate manner. Then relational process which is less than material process ranks the second. There are some attributions and characteristics of scenic spots which needed to be described. However, the verbal, mental, existential process have a low presence compared to material process and relational process. Therefore, the text of guide words is mainly neutral in describing scenic spot, but it needs to have some exchange and greeting in the beginning to get familiar with each other, which is good for next work. It can be regarded as the combination of descriptive text and argumentative text. The information which appears in the text of guide words are exact and credible. At the same time, it also has interesting features to attract attention of tourists, The text of guide words should be regarded as the bridge in order to communicate with foreigners. It is more than the simple text and has many functions to disseminate culture.

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Appendix: A Tour Guide Presentation of Xiamen

Good morning, ladies and gentleman. Please allow me on behalf of xx Travel Service to extend our sincere welcome to you . My name is Linxi, and I will be your guide during your stay in Xiamen.If you have any questions or special requests,please don't hesitate to let us know. We'll try our best to make your stay of Xiamen pleasant and enjoyable. We really ask for your understanding and cooperation, and we hope your visit to our city will be a happy experience.

Now,please pay attention to the islet on your left. This's Gulangyu Islet, our destination for today. Gulangyu Islet, is 600 meters off the southwest shore of Xiamen across the Xiamen Strait. This tiny,1.91 square kilometers islet has a population of less than 20,000. In April 1995, Gulangyu become a national key scenic spot and No.1 of Fujian Province's Top ten Sites. Just inside the gate we come to one of Xiamen's most famous temples, the Sunlight Temple. Its former name was Lotus temple . It was founded during the Ming Dynasty and rebuilt over 400 years ago,in 1956. It bathes daily in the first rays of the morning sunshine hence, so its nameSunlight Temple.Turing right we will go to the memory hall of Zheng chenggong, Inside thememory hall we will see a bronze statue of him.Words describing his entire life are carved at the bottom of it .The form on its right has shown all of the great events in his life. In memory of him,we have displayed some photos and modles to show the places he visited and the battle ship he used. OK, Let's go out the memory hall now. Though the peak of sunlight rock is not very high,only 92.7 meters above sea level,but it will give you a fine view below and beyond ,a scenic that generously and candidly unwinds before you .Now I can't wait to take you to the top and show you the beautiful panoramic view of xiamen.Please watch your step while you are climbing the stairs.

Sunlight Temple.Turing right we will go to the memory hall of Zheng chenggong, Inside thememory hall we will see a bronze statue of him.Words describing his entire life are carved at the bottom of it .The form on its right has shown all of the great events in his life. In memory of him,we have displayed some photos and modles to show the places he visited and the battle ship he used. OK, Let's go out the memory hall now. Though the peak of sunlight rock is not very high,only 92.7 meters above sea level,but it will give you a fine view below and beyond ,a scenic that

generously and candidly unwinds before you .Now I can't wait to take you to the top and show you the beautiful panoramic view of xiamen.Please watch your step while you are climbing the stairs.

Appendix: Analysis of the Tour Guide Presentation

N	clauses	process	mood	Speech function	Pronoun	modality	Theme /marked
1	Please allow me ...	allow /material	imperative	offer	me		allow
2	to extend our sincere welcome	extend/material	declarative	offer	you		
3	My name is LinXi	is/ relational	declarative	statement	my		My name
4	I will be your guide...	Be/relational	declarative	statement	I,your		I
5	If you have any...	have/ relational	declarative	statement			you
6	please don't hesitate...	Hesitate /material	imperative	statement			
7	We'll try to do our very..	try/material	declarative	statement	We,our		we
8	to make your stay ...	make/material	declarative	offer	your		
9	We really ask for...	Ask for/verbal	declarative	command	We,your		We
10	we hope your visit	hope /mental	declarative	statement	We,your, our		
11	our city will be a...	Be/relational	declarative	statement			
12	please pay attention to...	pay attention to/mental	imperative	statement	your		pay
13	This's Gulangyu Islet...	Is/relational	declarative	statement	our		This
14	Gulangyu Islet...	Is/relational	declarative	statement			Gulangyu Islet
15	This tiny...	Has/relational	declarative	statement			islet
16	In April 1995...	Become/material	declarative	statement			Gulangyu
17	Just inside the gate...	Come/material	declarative	statement	we		Just inside the gate/marked
18	Its former name...	Was/relational	declarative	statement			name
19	It was founded...	Was founded/material	declarative	statement			it
20	rebuilt over 400...	Rebuilt/material	declarative	statement			
21	It bathes daily...	Bathes/material	declarative	statement			it
22	Turning right...	Go/material	declarative	statement		we	we
23	Inside the memory hall...	See/mental	declarative	statement	We him		Inside the memory hall /marked
24	Words describing his ...	Are carved/material	declarative	statement	His it		Words
25	The form on its right...	Shown/material	declarative	statement	Its his		The form
26	In memory of him...	Displayed/material	declarative	statement			In memory of him/marked
27	to show the places...	Show/material	declarative	statement			

28	OK, Let's go out ...	Go/material	imperative	statement	us		Let's
29	Though the peak of...	Is/relational	declarative	statement			The peak
30	but it will ...	Give/material	declarative	statement	it		
31	a scenic...	Unwinds/ material	declarative	statement			A scenic
32	Now I can't wait to...	Wait/material	declarative	statement	I	Can/medi an	I
33	take you to...	Take/material	declarative	statement	you		
34	show you the	Show/material	declarative	statement	you		
35	Please watch ...	Watch/mental	declarative	statement	your		watch
36	while you are...	climbing /material	declarative	statement	you		

<https://mip.ruiwen.com/daoyouci/1453934.html>.