


Subject: **Tourism & Hospitality**

Production of Courseware

 -Content for Post Graduate Courses



Paper 9: **Tour Guiding Essentials**

Module 15: **Tour Commentary**



THE DEVELOPMENT TEAM

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Items	Description of Module
Subject Name	Tourism and Hospitality
Paper Name	Tour Guiding Essentials
Module Title	Tour Commentary
Module Id	Module no-15
Pre- Requisites	Basic knowledge of Tourism and its types
Objectives	<p>After completing this chapter you will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learn about the importance of tourism • Know the historical background of tour guiding • Basics of tour guiding
Keywords	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drafted commentary

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1.	Introduction
2.	Tourism
3.	What is commentary
4.	Dynamics of commentary
5.	Elements of commentary
6.	Microphone
7.	Sense of humor
8.	Summary
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10.	References
11.	Further reading

QUADRANT 1

15.0 Introduction

The Commentary is the backbone of a tour package. During tour tourists remember things you have covered in commentary. A good tour guide is remembered due to his oratorship. In this module, we will explore and understand good commentary making.

15.1 Tourism

Tourism is related to sightseeing and visiting different places. These places are different from our usual environment which we have in our home place. Journey gives us happiness and a great experience. Many great writers document that there are benefits of travel. Tourism is relatively a new concept. It is related to the movement of people from one place to another for a particular time with certain objectives.

15.2 Who is a tourist?

Tourist is a person who travels from one place to another for a purpose except activity remunerated from within India or residing in the country except some exceptional cases (for Nepalese). People travelling are staying outside their usual accommodation for not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business or any other purpose.

15.3 Tourism and Travel in India

Tourism has got a special place in India. There is a custom of visiting places of spiritual importance since ancient times. People have a custom to visit temples, holy cities and also live there for many days.

During vacations hotels have good demand of hotel rooms due to domestic visitors. Almost all well-known destinations receive a good number of tourists for example: *Manali, Dehradun, Nainital, Ooty, Jaipur* etc.

Govt. of India and state governments started many good schemes to promote tourism across the country. These schemes are:-

1. Prasad circuit
2. Tourism related scheme for senior citizens in Madhya Pradesh
3. *Har Ghar kuch kehta hai* in Himachal Pradesh
4. *Chhattisgarh Braman* scheme by government of Chhattisgarh
5. *Bharat Darshan Scheme* by Government of Madhya Pradesh

People, have also recognized the branding move of government i.e. Incredible India and our philosophy i.e. *Atithi Devo Bhavah*.

Now, people have realized impact of tourism. They know that it is a smokeless industry and creates employment of all kind of people across the country. If we are encouraging tourism in planned manner, we can stop bad impacts like: 'rush and crush traffic' and keep control on carrying capacity.

15.4 What is Commentary?

Many times, you must have experience of listening great leaders. When they speak, each and every word of their speech has some meaning and we can recall their message. We like to listen to them. May be due to their quality of knowledge, oratorship, style of speaking and command over language. When there is coverage of some subject through voice or speaking mode and people listening feel captivated and impressed, it is an example of good commentary. It is the basic job of a tour guide to research the place, develop story line, and rehearse it again and again. Being a tour guide see light and sound show. It is a good method to learn commentary made by a novice tour guide. Light and sound show gives you the best idea to develop commentary. Do not copy it. Try to come out with the best commentary in your style and idiosyncrasy,

The Commentary is information exchange about the place, product, attraction, happenings, related stories, facts and figures etc. Commentary must have flow of information from tour guide to the audiences. Commentary must be in positive tone. Commentary must be in steps. You must remember that commentary help people to understand and appreciate what they actually see. Many students seek adventure through tours. They can begin with the basic information and plan a tour and tour commentary. They can learn effective touring and tourist psychology, group dynamics and other practical challenges by the course of time. These steps could be:-

1. Creating atmosphere
2. Talking around the topic
3. Core commentary
4. Summarizing commentary
5. End of commentary

Creating atmosphere

Start your commentary with meeting and greeting with the tourist. Use light words. Try to engage them in talks with you. Try to catch attention of clients. Welcome them warmly.

Talking around the topic

Talk about their country, your country, weather, political scenario, celebrities, something special about the place etc.

In the beginning, we must introduce the tourist place. If you are starting from hotel, talk about the city, its population, economy, political scenario, celebrities, movies, handicraft, specialty of the place, food, fun points, festivals etc.

Core commentary

After reaching at the monument, tour guide must show top visual priorities (TVPs) means important things catching attention of the tourists. Explain them each and every part of the destination. Tell them the background. For example: if you have taken tourists to *Qutub Minar*. Tell them about the nearby places to the *Qutub Minar*. Why it was constructed? If you are at *Humayun Tomb*. Tell them about the people gathered during the time of construction, market place for them, and their life style. Core commentary means tell the tourists about structure of *Qutub Minar*. Architectural details of *Qutub Minar*. Unfinished toward and why it was constructed?

End of commentary

A tour guide must ask queries of group members before concluding the commentary. Some up commentary with the concluding note. At the end, sum up your note. Connect it with the present context.

15.5 Important points to remember in commentary

There are a number of clues to improvise the commentary. Main points are:-

- (i) Promote your country
Never ever criticize your country during commentary making. Highlights achievements.
- (ii) Educational but not boring
Your commentary should be informative, captivating, not boring. It must create interest if group members. It should be able to bind all the group members.

- (iii) Informative but not overwhelming
Do not overwhelm during commentary making. Try to give more and more information.
- (iv) Good stories
Include good stories in your commentary. Stories must be from the local area. Information should be delivered in manner that must be interesting to the guest. Commentary must be presented in such a manner, so that, it must create interest among group members. There should be humor in the commentary. Do not be stressful while commentary making. Also, do not create stress among group members.
- (v) Use simple words
Use simple words while making commentary. Words of your language (not the language of tourist) must be pronounced properly and tell them meaning of local words. For example: what is Dwarpal (usually found in palaces/ temples)
- (vi) Get confirmation remark
When I was a child, my grandmother used to tell me stories of Panchatantra. I had to say 'yes' after each sentence. It was the acknowledgement that I am listening her. So, try to confirm that group members are able to understand what you are speaking.
- (vii) Give pause when required
- (viii) Speak louder
- (ix) Use both the hands
- (x) Facial expressions

15.6 Elements of a commentary

A tour guide must prepare a commentary having following arts:-

- Introduction
- Presentation
- Closing
- Steps how to make commentary

- Start with greeting or introduction
- Sense of humor must be part of the information
- Draft tour commentary related information
- Present scripted commentary
- Respond to queries raise by customer
- Modify scripted commentary in response to unexpected events
- Identify the commentary information that needs to be conveyed
- Keep proper tone while making commentary
- Volume must be appropriate. If volume will be very high, you will not be able to continue for long time. If it is too low. People cannot listen you.
- Rate of speech must be appropriate roughly 125 words per minute.

15.7 Types of commentary

- Scripted commentary
- Non-scripted information

A scripted commentary must have:-

- (i) Draft commentary
- (ii) Trail/ practice the draft
- (iii) Revise and refine the draft according to the group
- (iv) Practice the simulated commentary
- (v) Present it

15.8 How to prepare and present tour commentary to the tour group

A tour commentary refers to information provided by the Tour Guide to the tour group members as part of the tour.

- Preparing tour commentary information.
- Prepare draft script for commentary that needs to be conveyed to the tourists/ group members.
- Trial draft script
- Revise draft scripts
- Learn ancillary information

- When you are preparing a tour commentary information:
- Realize that there is a scripted element plus an unscripted component to all commentaries.
- Identify tour group, if possible, and their requirement, wants and preferences.
- Prepare new commentaries for all custom/ private tours
- Use established and approved scripts for the commentaries for regular/ schedule tours.
- Activities involved in preparation of a scripted commentary:-
- Research the tour
- Check the advertising/ promises made
- Know/ learn the route
- Involve/ get input from others

Demonstrate the skills and knowledge necessary to guide tours

1. Activities involved in preparing a scripted commentary:-
 2. Research the tour
 3. Check the advertising/ promises made
 4. Know/ get input from others
- Preparing tour commentary information
5. Performance criteria for this elements are:-
 6. Find out information to be conveyed through country.
 7. Research on the collected information.
 8. Classify it keeping in mind the type of clients you have in your group.
 9. Develop a theme for the commentary information to be conveyed to the clients.
 10. Kinds of tour guides
 11. Freelancer
 12. Freelancer tour guide is working for many companies.
 13. Staff tour guide is connected with a travel agency and gets remuneration for services.

14. Develop themes for commentary and information to be delivered to the guest through commentary

Theme must be finalized on the basis of

- (i) Identified requirements of customer and
- (ii) Characteristic of the tour group

15.9 How to make a commentary

- Start with the smile, meeting and greeting, introduction.
- Brief about the tour.
- Review inclusions and exclusions.
- Tell them about distances and time taken for the tour.
- What is expected from the tour?
- Take necessary precaution.
- Do not miss important points/ landmarks/ place on the way.
- Announce short breaks/ comfort stops on the way.
- Always do the head count to ensure that all are in the group?

In commentary we will give introduction. It will include population, climate, history, important places, agriculture, economy, distance of major cities, eminent personalities.

Dynamics of commentary

Commentary should be interesting.

15.10 Do's and do not's during commentary making

Being a tour guide, you must present commentary in rhythm. Do not pause unnecessarily. Give emphasis on proper pronunciation. Always, face towards the group. Keep yourself motivated and smiling.

Never ever fight with Driver or support staff during commentary making. Do not allow other staff to give commentary. It will create bad impression on the group members.

15.11 A Gwalior Tour

There is a group of college students with the tour guide. They have Gwalior Darshan program. They would visit various places. These are:-

- i. Surya Mandir

- ii. Jai Vilas Museum
- iii. Tansen Tomb and Mohemmed Gaus Tomb
- iv. Gwalior Fort (Urvai Gate, Gurudwara, Teli Ka Mandir, Man Singh Palace)
- v. Gopachal Parvat

Commentary at Surya Mandir

Dear students, now we are at Surya Mandir. There were few industrial houses in India after independence. Birlas are one of them. They have credit to construct Surya Mandir. Gwalior has one ancient Surya Temple at Fort. I think that is the reason behind the construction of Surya Mandir at Gwalior. Now, let us proceed towards the main entrance of the Surya Mandir. You can see Surya Mandir is building in the shape of Chariot. Deity Lord Surya is in our front side. It is constructed in such a way, first ray of Surya falls on the feet of Lord Surya. Temple is illuminated by natural Sun light. It is open morning till evening.

Commentary at Jaivilas Museum

Dear friend, now we are at jai Vilas Museum. This palace was constructed by Late Maharaja Jiwaji Rao Scindhia Ji. It has about 200 rooms. We will enter in the museum from western gate. Now, here you can see photographs pof their family members. Schidhia are originally shinde. They are from Maharastra. Now, let us proceed to the next room.

Commentary at Gopachal Parvat

Please, see in front a grand statue of Lord Parshvanah. Its Height is He is a Jain Teerthankar. This hillock is known as Gopachal Parvat. Parvat is the hindi name of hillock. On your left side there is a water reservoir within the hillock. It is known as ek pattar ki vavdi (step well made up of one stone). On your right side there is Hanuman Temple. So, this place is a symbol of religious unity. It is said that there are a number of tunnels from this hillock to many other places.

Commentary at Mohemmed Gaus Tomb and Tansen Tomb

Now, we are in the heart of heritage city Gwalior. This area was the most happening area 30 years back. There was a famous Jeewaji Suiting Mills in this area. The road where we left our bus/ coach is Tansen Road. Tansen was originally from a nearby village i.e. *Behat*.

Mohammed Gaus was a Sufi saint came from Afghanistan in the age of 16 years. He was a revered saint in India. Mughal ruler used to visit his place quite often. This tomb is unique in north India. You can see that it is an onion shape tomb. People, used to come here for prayer on Thursday. Thursday is believed to be the day of teacher.

Now, let us move to the adjoining block. Here you can see the mosque of Tansen. Tansen was among 9 jewels of King Akbar. It was believed that there was on Tamarind (Imali) tree near this mosque. It had magical properties. Miyan Tansen was a famous singer. He had quality to captivate his audiences.

Now, both these sites are heritage sites.

Commentary at Gujri Mehal (Place)

You know Gujri was the eight wife of King Mansingh. She was very beautiful. This palace was constructed for her. It is in separate premises. During that time King managed to bring water of river to Gujri Palace. Now, it is converted into museum. Here, we can see statue of Shalbhanjika. Shalbhanjika is known as Monalisa of India.

Commentary at Mansingh Palace

Now we are at Mansingh Palace. Here you can see that out walls of the palace are beautifully decorated by colours. These colours are made up of stones. There are parrots, shardul, makar, Peacock engraved on the wall. Makar was a spiritual creature. This palace is eight floor palaces.

Now let us move inside the palace. This place was used for the King. This elevation was used for the king to get down from the Elephant. Now, we are in Rang Mahal (Palace). Dancers used to dance here. On the top you can see eight windows for queens to enjoy dances. Now, let us move to deewane aam. King used to meet common public.

On your right side there is winter bed room of the king. Gallery around the bed room was use by staff to wake him up. On the right side you can see green room. These are the rings for curtains.

Now, let us move to the deewane khas (assembly place for VIPs) . This place was used by the King to meet selected ones. There is engraving on walls for lighting of the courtyard.

Towards, your right is summer bed room of the king. Here, you can see technique for air circulation. From this place we can enjoy beautiful panorama of Gwalior city.

Now let us come to the down floor. Here, you can see place for Jhoola (swings) for queens of the King. This pond was perfumed with natural ingredients during those days. Later on this place was used by the Kings to imprison many prisoners.

Last few floors are closed down due to safety purpose.

Bavan Khamba Vavdi (stepwell)

Now, we are at Vavan khamba vavadi (stepwell). Basically, it was a Shiva temple. There is a step well in front of you. That is a beautiful structure. It was probably used by the royal family. Now, there is no Shivalinga. Later on this premise was used to imprison Kings.

Gurudwara

Now, we are at Gurudwara. All are requested to deposit shoes, bet and al leather items. Pl. collects one scarf to cover head. It is available free of cost. We will go inside the Gurudwara. Pl. washes your hands and feet. Once you are inside focus on *Guruvani* and get blissful experience. You will find ultimate peace inside the Gurdwara (Sikh temple). Do not forget to collect Prasad (i.e. Halwa). After Darshan, we will have Langar. Many pilgrims visit here every day to pay respect to Guruji. Does not chit chat inside the Gurudwara premises?

Teli Ka Mandir

Now, you can see a temple. It has somewhat different architecture. It looks like south Indian architecture. Temple was constructed by architects from Talangana region. So, that impression is there.

Sahasrabahu Temple

Now, we are at a group of two temples. These temples are popularly known as Saas bahu ka temple. But, it is Sahasrabahu temple. From this point view of Gwalior town is very beautiful.

Sun temple

Now, we are in front of a pond. This water reservoir is very old. See you front. There is a small temple. That is sun temple. Sun temple was the ancient temple. This reservoir was having water with magical qualities.

On the Gwalior fort, you can enjoy mornings and evenings during winter. It has one very reputed Scindhia school. Scindhia School is a boarding school. There is Doordarshan

tower. Gwalior Fort is among few well maintained forts of India. It is like a beautiful pearl in the neck less of forts in the country.

(Purpose of commentary is to give you basic idea about commentary making. Facts and figures may be included during real time situation.)

15.11 Microphone

Microphone handling is a skill. You must handle microphone in such a way that there must be best audio available to the tourists listening you. It should not be too close to the mouth or too far from your mouth. If mics are too close, it will be very loud. If it is too far, your voice will not be clear and you cannot hold it for longer time (especially in the moving coach). I think, you must practice and identify the most suitable place to hold the mics. Many feel comfortable to hold it at the cheek. But, different people have varied opinions.

15.12 Sense of humor

A quality of being amusing someone is known as humor. It is very important in tourism industry. A tour guide must have ability to appreciate mood and state of mind. A tour guide having good sense of humor is mostly popular among the group members.

15.13 Summary

Commentary is the strength of a tour guide. He must have good command over commentary making. Commentary must be presented in structured manner. Guide must do rehearsals before presenting the commentary.