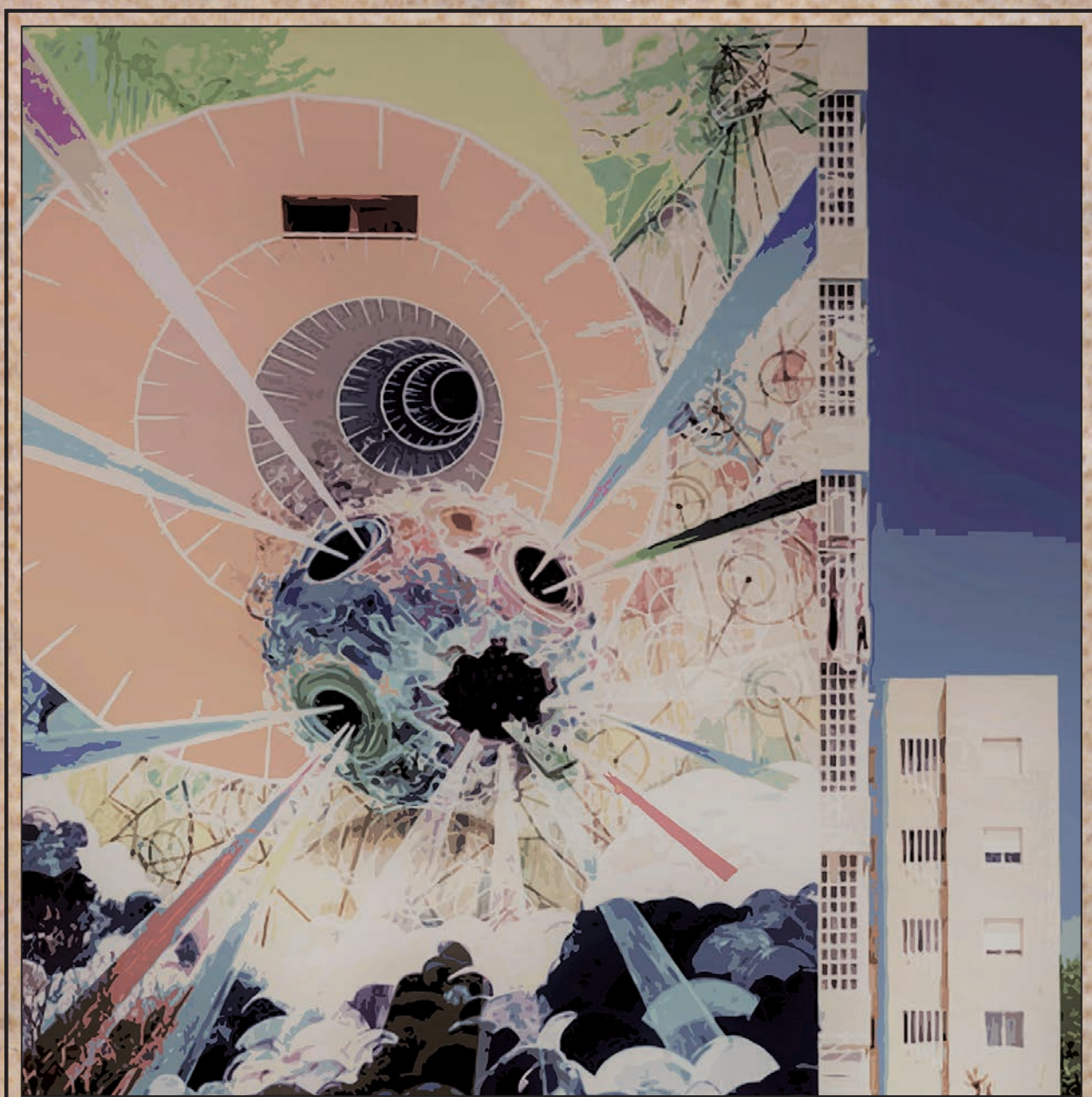


# ANNALES

*Anali za istrske in mediteranske študije*  
*Annali di Studi istriani e mediterraneei*  
*Annals for Istrian and Mediterranean Studies*  
*Series Historia et Sociologia, 34, 2024, 4*





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**Series Historia et Sociologia, 34, 2024, 4**



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**Založnika/Editori/Published by:**

Zgodovinsko društvo za južno Primorsko - Koper / *Società storica del Litorale - Capodistria*® / Inštitut IRRIS za raziskave, razvoj in strategije družbe, kulture in okolja / *Institute IRRIS for Research, Development and Strategies of Society, Culture and Environment* / *Istituto IRRIS di ricerca, sviluppo e strategie della società, cultura e ambiente*®

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SI-6000 Koper/Capodistria, Garibaldijeva/Via Garibaldi 18  
**e-mail:** annaleszdjp@gmail.com, **internet:** https://zdjp.si

Redakcija te številke je bila zaključena 16. 12. 2024.

**Sofinancirajo/Supporto finanziario/  
Financially supported by:**

Javna agencija za znanstvenoraziskovalno in inovacijsko dejavnost Republike Slovenije (ARIS)

*Annales - Series Historia et Sociologia* izhaja štirikrat letno.

Maloprodajna cena tega zvezka je 11 EUR.

**Naklada/Tiratura/Circulation:** 300 izvodov/copie/copies

Revija *Annales, Series Historia et Sociologia* je vključena v naslednje podatkovne baze / *La rivista Annales, Series Historia et Sociologia è inserita nei seguenti data base* / *Articles appearing in this journal are abstracted and indexed in:* Clarivate Analytics (USA): Arts and Humanities Citation Index (A&HCI) in/and Current Contents / Arts & Humanities; IBZ, Internationale Bibliographie der Zeitschriftenliteratur (GER); Sociological Abstracts (USA); Referativnyi Zhurnal Viniti (RUS); European Reference Index for the Humanities and Social Sciences (ERIH PLUS); Elsevier B. V.: SCOPUS (NL); Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ).

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## TRAVEL WRITING AS AN INSTRUMENT OF CULTURAL HERITAGE PROMOTION

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### ABSTRACT

*This study contributes to the research literature through its approach to equipping tourism content creatives who are entering the professions of destination image communication with platform expertise alongside cooperation and co-creation leadership. Productive skills for travel writers and social media content producers in tourism are significant in the co-creation of sustainable tourist experiences since they are interactive and participative. The two purposes of this study are to implement and improve the dialogue journaling process as a re-usable methodology. The new 3-step processual research methodology is explained through a case study with stakeholders and project leaders in Brežice, Slovenia. The paper contributes to pragmatic tourism management concerns and practice by reporting findings from a real-world process project on cultural heritage that provides a re-usable solution.*

**Keywords:** tourism development, stakeholder engagement, dialogue journaling, cooperation and co-creation, cultural heritage promotion, travel writing

## LA SCRITTURA DI VIAGGIO COME STRUMENTO DI PROMOZIONE DEL PATRIMONIO CULTURALE

### SINTESI

*Questo studio contribuisce alla letteratura scientifica attraverso il suo approccio nel fornire competenze sulla piattaforma ai creativi dei contenuti turistici che si stanno avvicinando alle professioni della comunicazione dell'immagine di destinazione, affiancato dalla cooperazione e dalla leadership nella co-creazione. Le competenze produttive per gli scrittori di viaggio e i produttori di contenuti sui social media nel settore turistico sono significative nella co-creazione di esperienze turistiche sostenibili poiché sono interattive e partecipative. I due obiettivi di questo studio sono implementare e migliorare il processo di journaling dialogico come metodologia riutilizzabile. La nuova metodologia di ricerca processuale a 3 fasi è spiegata attraverso uno studio di caso con gli stakeholder e i leader di progetto a Brežice, Slovenia. La ricerca contribuisce alle questioni e alla pratica della gestione pragmatica del turismo riportando i risultati di un progetto di processo del mondo reale sul patrimonio culturale che fornisce una soluzione riutilizzabile.*

**Parole chiave:** sviluppo turistico, gestione stakeholder dialogue journaling, co-creazione, promozione del patrimonio culturale, scrittura di viaggio

INTRODUCTION<sup>1</sup>

Every geographical location, whether it be an urban area, a designated tourism site, or a destination, constitutes a complex system that demands thorough comprehension, strategic branding, and effective management strategies. It is significant to emphasise that each such place possesses unique attributes shaped by its geographic coordinates, cultural identity, and historical background, all of which should be taken into account when considering and designing destination marketing strategies and planning tourism products. Laznibat and Obad Šćitaroci (2023, 32) point out the role of heritage as a “developmental resource”. Travel writing can be employed as a tool for branding and promotion of cultural heritage. This work proposes that the practice of travel writing can be remodelled into a research inquiry process which can then be employed by content authors to create value both for the texts they produce and for the destination/attraction places they describe in their texts. The work explains the design of this new model, which will be called the dialogue journaling model (Mansfield *et al.*, 2024), and explores its use in a short case study with creative professionals entering industry. The role of catalyst texts in cultural and particularly literary tourism, has been thoroughly explored over the last decade (Mansfield & Potočnik Topler, 2023a, b; Mansfield, 2015; Thompson, 2011; Venkovits, 2010/2011) whilst the emergence of digital content marketing and the freelance job market has now turned travel writing into a realistic career path for recent graduates around Europe who understand content marketing within the travel industry (Mathew & Soliman, 2021). Travel texts have also been used in teaching tourism management for the last two decades (Mansfield *et al.*, 2024; Mansfield & Potočnik Topler, 2023a, b; Armstrong, 2004) and in creative placemaking (Mansfield & Potočnik Topler, 2023a, b; Rapanta *et al.*, 2021). The quality of public spaces determines not only the quality of living in the city (Solarek & Grochowska, 2021) but also influences the tourism experience. Identity of place “represents the key characteristics with which a particular place (region, village, town, neighbourhood, public place, etc.) is associated” (Verovšek *et al.*, 2016, 575). Research postgraduates in tourism management are aware of that, but lack preparation for their fieldwork. New methodologies in travel research using narrative non-fiction remain underdeveloped and are not reviewed in the academic journals. Tribe (2002) points out that the notion of reflection is essential. Authors of this article

argue that this is where teaching, practicing, and researching dialogue journaling has the potential to become an answer. By employing travel writing, the concept of transformation and degrees of change (Tribe & Paddison, 2021; Hayes & Tucker, 2022) in tourism could be further developed and bring actual changes at different levels. Also in terms of sustainability and achieving Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that remains a challenge (Arbeiter & Bučar, 2022). This paper, thus, sets out a model for researchers who would like to use literary travel writing as a valid research methodology for an innovative type of place and cultural heritage inquiry that includes stakeholders and produces output that is accessible to a larger public, the locals and to policy-makers. Also with the goal to build sustainable places by inclusion of communities (Alonso & Nyanjom, 2017; Hwang & Stewart, 2017; Iazzi *et al.*, 2020; Huy, 2021; Amoako *et al.*, 2022), where it is imperative to recognize the presence of diverse stakeholders within these destinations and actively solicit their collaboration (Mansfield *et al.*, 2024). The primary objective of the authors is to foster innovation, facilitate stakeholder engagement, and promote the utilization of proposed educational methodologies within the fields of tourism and management studies.

## MATERIAL AND METHODS

**Research Design and Conceptual Framework**

Case Method (CM) is an educational and empowering active learning tool widely used, which immerses learners or trainees as protagonists into a real case scenario to elevate their thinking abilities, enhance their understanding of particular complex issues; develop their problem-solving skills to be able to make critical and informed decisions, acquire managerial skills, develop some ethical values, take ownership of their learning, build on their confidence (Kunselman & Johnson, 2004; Puri, 2022), and work as part of a team (Hassall *et al.*, 1998). Equally important, Banning (2003) explains that CM can improve learners’ tolerance for ambiguity (ambiguous environment), and as a result, question assumptions (Hassall *et al.*, 1998).

Preparing a learning organisation to be involved in a case involves 4 steps (Puri, 2022): 1) Framing (identifying the research questions); 2) Labelling (identifying the potential roots and consequences); 3) Synthesising (findings emerging from participation); and finally, 4) Concluding (suggestion of strategies to be adopted). Torres-Harding *et al.* (2018) have

<sup>1</sup> The authors would like to thank the CEO of the Posavje Museum Brežice (Posavski muzej Brežice) Alenka Černelič Krošelj for contributing numbers of the events and visitors of the Museum in Brežice.



explained that the involvement of stakeholders in a case, triggered a variety of emotions (Puri, 2022). First, enthusiasm and excitement (as they were involved in the planning and delivering of the campaign, they found the experience rewarding from a learning point of view), development of sense of community (learners not only were proud to join their community for a common fight, but they also feel they have to contribute positively to that community, and be agents of change); and finally, accomplishment and empowerment (learners found it particularly rewarding to be part of a movement working positive change in the society, and people's lives). Emotional involvement is a specific type of engagement that is required for the production of literary, that is, emotional, writing since this type of writing invites experience co-creation through identification with the narrator of the literary travel text.

### Research questions and hypothesis

Hypothesis: Conceiving of travel writing in process projects using the proposed model of journaling has the potential to be a community empowerment tool that maintains an ethical approach to cultural heritage.

#### Research Questions

- R1: How can this model for travel writing projects contribute to cultural heritage awareness?  
 R2: How can responsible behaviour be encouraged by employing dialogue journaling as a process in travel writing?  
 R3: How can employment of processual and literary travel writing further encourage sustainable destination branding?  
 R4: How to monitor the process of collaborative co-creation in exploring heritage?

This study examines a new approach to equipping those entering the professions of heritage tourism, heritage interpretation and destination image communication with these emerging technology and creative skills. The purpose of the proposed methods is to help professionals build portfolios of resources through managing elicited knowledge in a way that is comprehensible to heritage institutions, including museums and destination attractions, and to ascertain the value of this type of preparation for industry as the key is in connecting stakeholders of the destinations (Saito & Ruhanen, 2017).

#### Originality of the Study

A key feature of the originality of this study is its approach to data collection. Expectations of the structure, scope and type of data are usually constrained

by the methodological design in tourism research. However, in this processual approach, when a dialogue question is formulated and posed, the responses of the correspondent are treated as data. The ongoing results are an unpredictable but rich resource from which to start the analysis. In dialogue, too, the incoming data are processed live, that is, synchronously, during the research and affect the subsequent questioning, often emotionally by developing the sensibilities of the respondents. The aim of this methodology is to make the research more agile, and, thus, for it to self-tune by adapting to the concerns of the tourism spaces under investigation. It can in this way uncover the deeper issues of value and experience in cultural and heritage tourism which are only accessible through the building of trust and sharing of voices, as explained in the section on Bakhtin's heteroglossia below. The most important difference between the scientific method of a partly structured interview and the dialogue is that a scientific interview typically involves one person, usually a researcher, asking questions to another person, often another researcher, an expert or someone with specialized knowledge, in order to gather information, insights, or opinions on a specific topic. The questions are typically structured and focused on obtaining specific information relevant to the interviewer's research objectives or the topic being discussed. The interviewer may also follow up with additional questions to clarify responses or delve deeper into certain areas of interest, while on the other hand, a dialogue is a more open and informal exchange between two or more participants where ideas, perspectives, and opinions are shared freely.

While participating in dialogues that enable the production of literary texts, the so-called literary artefacts, the writers and stakeholders become more aware of listening skills as the key to new knowledge and a successful continuation of the dialogue process (Wegerif, 2006). In his philosophy of dialogue, Buber (1958) argues that "a real conversation is one that is not preconceived and that develops spontaneously, in which an individual speaks directly to his or her partner and is able to respond to the unpredictable response of the other" (Gordon, 2011, 208). Buber (1878–1965) also discusses the significance of the "I-You relation" and emphasizes the role of listening skills in the dialogical approach (Gordon, 2011, 208). When cooperating with tourism stakeholders, high-quality dialogue is driven by the platform keeping the exchanges on display and archived. If moderators of dialogues do not know how to listen and animate the dialogue, then quality dialogue cannot exist. Consequently, the data from the dialogue are incomplete, which leads to weak results.

Regarding interpretation, storytelling is vital as stories enable explanation (Moezzi *et al.*, 2017) embedded within a compelling narrative.



Products, services and destinations have been branded through narrative knowing since it was established that storytelling has the ability to create emotional connections between a tourism product, a tourism destination and its target groups (Keskin et al., 2016, Ilić et al., 2021). Stories even have the potential to help solve complex challenges and facilitate cooperation (Mourik et al., 2021). Moreover, stories that are characterised by high informational density (Bassano et al., 2019) contribute to the distinctiveness of a destination and consequently increase the place value of the destination (Ganassali & Matysiewicz, 2021). This is fundamental, because stakeholders who are reliant on selling ground product or on receiving income from tourists and visitors depend on visitors' engagement through the stories to the products (Mossberg, 2007). Closely related to stories and travel writing is language (languages of travel writers, narrators, stakeholders, language of a destination etc.) and "linguistic landscape" (Mikolič Južnič & Pisanski Peterlin, 2023, 348). When applying storytelling in tourism, it has been discovered that:

*the storytelling concept requires communication between different stakeholders: tourism policy makers, destination organisations and service providers. It includes tourism organisations, public administration at local and regional levels, private partners, different types of service providers (hotels, restaurants, museums and specialised visitor shops) and storytellers (individuals).* (Vitič-Četković et al., 2020, 93)

Thus, successful and efficient storytelling can be a valuable tool for policymakers (Mourik et al., 2021) because it includes expert knowledge in an accessible narrative form from many fields. Tourism creatives therefore need to learn how to create, elicit and store narrative knowledge in their outputs.

### **Industry Process Models for Co-Creation**

Industry does have an approach to incremental design of deliverables, the Dynamic System Development Method, DSDM (Hussein & Al-Janabi, 2019). Which, as those authors show, is well embedded in large travel companies who have software development needs. This Agile approach to creating new resources using DSDM focuses on visible, usable outputs from early in the project. Stakeholders representing the users are able to see, use and provide feedback on these deliverables early enough in the development process for two key functions: (i) improvement of the quality and

suitability of the deliverable, and (ii) trust-building between developer and client. An additional by-product is the creation of innovative solutions that were not apparent at the outset. These features of DSDM have been incorporated into the processual methodology for this research. It is worth bearing in mind that DSDM includes the role of a facilitator who maintains momentum in the discussion sessions; it is valuable to consider duplicating this role in Dialogue Journaling.

### **The Unknown town syndrome, Respondents and Data Collection**

Smaller towns are often unknown to potential tourists, providing the DMO and the attractions in that town with a communication barrier. The case study town of Brežice (Slovenia) is an excellent example of this for English-speaking tourists from Britain and the US. In Slovenia, tourism revenue accounts for around 13% of GDP. As a destination that brands itself under the slogan I feel SLOVENIA. Slovenia's DMO content campaigns follow new trends, which include storytelling, digitalisation, new technologies, evolving visitor demand, and sustainable tourism growth, since these are considered the mega trends that will influence the future of tourism (Ianioglo & Rissanen, 2020; Carlisle et al., 2021). The Adriatic coastal resorts of Slovenia are well-marketed and have a long history of exposure. However, the inland towns, for example, Brežice, are in that unknown town category for that US and UK demographic. In such towns heritage, culture and cultural events are of great importance (Potočnik Topler, 2021). This so-called unknown town syndrome was revealed through taking a snapshot of backlinks to the website of the key tourist attraction in the town.

The pilot study created a secure intranet platform using Microsoft Teams with a linked PLC-type Microsoft OneNote notebook for a group of 5 professionals in Slovenia entering their careers in the tourism industry (2 male, 3 female; aged 23–27 years). MS OneNote's PLC, nowadays widely used in commercial operations, can be used not only as a digital environment, but also to create a professional learning community. 4,395 companies were using MS OneNote as a data management tool in 2023; over half of these were companies of 1,000 to 10,000+ employees (Lyon, 2023). On this platform, training was delivered from February to May 2023 in dialogue journaling (Mansfield, 2022), and in using personal experience to write heritage interpretation texts (Mansfield & Potočnik Topler, 2023a, 67–70). As a stakeholder responsible for cultural heritage in the Brežice Municipality, the Posavje Museum in Brežice (Posavski Muzej Brežice) took part in the

research. Dialogue with the museum was established in February 2023 and is still ongoing.

A group of stakeholders in cultural heritage in Brežice was identified with whom dialogue could be established to explore the value of the texts created by the trainees, and to elicit tacit knowledge on the types of interpretation that experienced heritage professionals considered of value to their institutions and to their public audience. The sample of case participants was selected in the following way: 1. Trainees in the tourism industry who had little or no experience of using Microsoft OneNote to work as a team in dialogue. 2. Respondents with no experience of the dialogue journaling process, so that any changes in working practice and identity could be better correlated with their use of the process and platform technology. 3. Local tourism and heritage stakeholders (Mansfield *et al.*, 2024). These locals included the museum CEO, the local DMO, the staff of local restaurants and cafes, and locals who were likely to engage with the research and provide data from semi-structured interviews after the development phase.

The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the museum in the town of Brežice proved to be the most responsive to dialogue and also provided traditional visitor data. The case study therefore focuses on this respondent for that reason and also because the museum's collection of cultural artefacts began to emerge as catalysts for the writers as they explored relationships between the food culture of the tourist town and the heritage artefacts. It became clear that the role of a visitor as co-creator of experiences is significant (Antón *et al.*, 2018), and that this agile shifting of the data collection is a positive attribute of dialogue journaling as a method of inquiry. Which data to collect and which cultural practices to document emerge after the start of the research inquiry; this is innovative but difficult to account for in traditional travel research.

Before the study, in early February 2023, in order to generate richer coding for the concept of value in written texts and interpretation media, a pilot question was posed in social media groups to elicit what commercial writers in heritage, culture and travel consider as value in their writing. This gave insight for the research design. Writers' responses to simple dialogue questions concerning value were collected through Twitter (10). Gerund-coding and memo-writing following the methodology proposed by Charmaz (2006) were applied. The research revealed surprising results. Rather than bloggers and writers considering earnings and web-page views as a measure of value the following three fundamental concepts of value emerged:

- (i). Creation of author's identity through recording personal experiences in written form in the public sphere.
- (ii). Demonstration of leadership by the heritage writer by their Invention of cultural tourism activities.
- (iii). The widening of connections with a reading public and with stakeholders by the writer.

The results, especially, from (i) above, were integrated into the first training activity with the new entrants to the profession in February 2023, using training from methods manuals.

The purpose of this research is concerned with the validity and performance of the Dialogic Journaling Process methodology in tourism development, both of tourism product in the heritage sector and in portfolio development in the professional entering the industry.

A dialogue of analysis was initiated with the CEO of the town's museum and elicited initially the museum's seasonal fluctuations in categories of visitor. This was just an initial step in beginning to document the complexity of entanglements that alter, adjust and shift tourism consumption practices. This field, which is more recently being theorised as posthumanist, where more-than-human entanglements with the environment create opportunities for the co-creation of positive experiences (Baugh, 2022), encourages researchers to see beyond the economic imperatives of business to instead seek out opportunities in cultural tourism where visitors can enjoy feelings of accomplishment (Baugh, 2022).

#### TRAVEL WRITING

Several branches of travel writing have developed as disciplines with their own methodologies for research, for example, anthropology, human geography, history and more recently auto-ethnography (Mansfield *et al.*, 2024). The academic study of travel writing by practice is a more recent phenomenon. In previous decades, research has been oriented towards historic travel literature (Phillips, 2016; Vanek, 2015) to explore the original authors' own hegemonies encoded in their texts (de Pont, 2014). For the reading public, the consumption of travel writing is an enjoyable leisure activity and a way of becoming acquainted with distant destinations through identification with a strong narrator character. For travellers, travel writing is an opportunity to share their own experience from a journey and compare it to the homeland (Venkovits, 2010/2011). Venkovits (2010/2011) claims that travel texts provide new information on two levels, namely on one hand offering an insight into past walks of life not available elsewhere, or detailed descriptions of

traditions, customs, historical and cultural events. On the other hand, such texts include not only what the traveller sees but also how the culture, the society, previous knowledge and preconceptions of the visited place shape the journey and the perceptions of the traveller (Mansfield et al., 2024).

Based on their research and the teaching of travel writing at tourism and business schools across Europe, Mansfield and Potočnik Topler (2023a, b) introduced some travel writing methodologies and the Dialogue Journaling Process Model (Table 1). Nevertheless, they wanted to further explain and facilitate certain processes, approaches, and questions to enhance the planning of research and practical tasks. Therefore, this article aims to introduce advances in the methodology of dialogue as research. As early as in 2007, anthropologist, Paul Rabinow called for more effective methodologies for interrogating culture when he revisited his work on Morocco:

*where a successful cultural form provides an ongoing framework for interpreting and generating experience, here the experience of the other is most comprehensible. [...] Yet it is in the less explicitly shaped and less overtly significant areas of day-to-day activity and common-sense reasoning that most cultural differences are embedded. Thematic observation is disturbingly difficult, for these phenomena are everywhere, thereby proving the most opaque to the methodologies we have developed. (Rabinow, 2007, 58)*

It is with a return to ethnographic approaches within travel writing and a more overt awareness of the interplay between emic and etic perspectives that this new model is set out. A more subtle proposal of the researcher's positionality can be embedded in the character of the first-person narrator (Kotash, 2010), and thus take the readers of the research output into an emic position themselves as they identify with the character in this new, and effective methodology.

This research makes advances in the methodology of dialogue as research, where "each discovery of a piece of evidence helps the participants to see what additional evidence might be necessary or what additional questions might need to be explored" (MacInnis & Portelli, 2002, 35) by incorporating the ongoing journaling in a permanent Web 2.0 archive to track the processual nature of these catalyst moments between researcher and stakeholder. As well as advancing the methodology by the addition of archiving like this, the process also provides interim deliverables to commissioning stakeholders as part of the trust-building. This approach is proposed here as the Dialogic Journaling Process Model.

#### TRAVEL WRITING: WHAT IS IT, WHAT IS ITS ROLE IN TOURISM, ANY GAPS RELATED TO ITS APPLICATIONS?

Travel writing has been a popular genre for centuries (Thompson, 2011) since it plays a valuable role in helping individuals explore the world and fostering a deeper appreciation of the places they visit. It combines elements of personal narrative, cultural exploration, and subjective account about the destinations visited. Travel writers, thus, aim to convey the sense of a place, its people, culture, literature, art, history, and landscapes through their writing. Robinson (2004, 303) describes it as "writing about the experience of travel and visits to 'other' places", but, in fact, research by Culbert (2018), Mathew and Soliman (2021), Mansfield and Potočnik Topler (2023a, b) and others show that travel writing has many potential functions. In the tourism industry, it has the potential to enrich tourism experiences by offering potential travellers information and inspiration, promoting different, authentic or innovative experiences and cultural exchange, additionally contributing to the preservation of destinations, stimulating economic growth, and adding to the destinations and societies, especially by including locals' knowledge, stories and views (Mansfield & Potočnik Topler, 2023a). This article posits that travel writing stands as a valuable instrument for facilitating the engagement of stakeholders and for formulating environmental appeals across diverse textual formats within the tourism industry. The local people, in fact, have become one of the most important stakeholders in heritage protection and management (Fakin Bajec, 2020) and travel writing enables also engaging into dialogues with them and creative co-creation (Melis et al., 2023).

In the frame of international research and teaching consortium between the University of Maribor (leading partner), Dialogue HE Consultancy, Oxford Brookes University and the University of Bergamo, travel writing has been used for encouraging and teaching writing skills, research steps, connecting stakeholders, encouraging dialogue and creativity. The additional value of travel writing in tourism is multifaceted and it has been established that it can benefit both travellers and the tourism industry at least in the following ways: for providing information, inspiration, recommendation and review, for experience design, for engaging in dialogues with the locals, for encouraging activism, for destination branding, for identity development and for contributing to the cultural heritage of a society by producing travel writing texts (Mansfield & Potočnik Topler, 2023a).

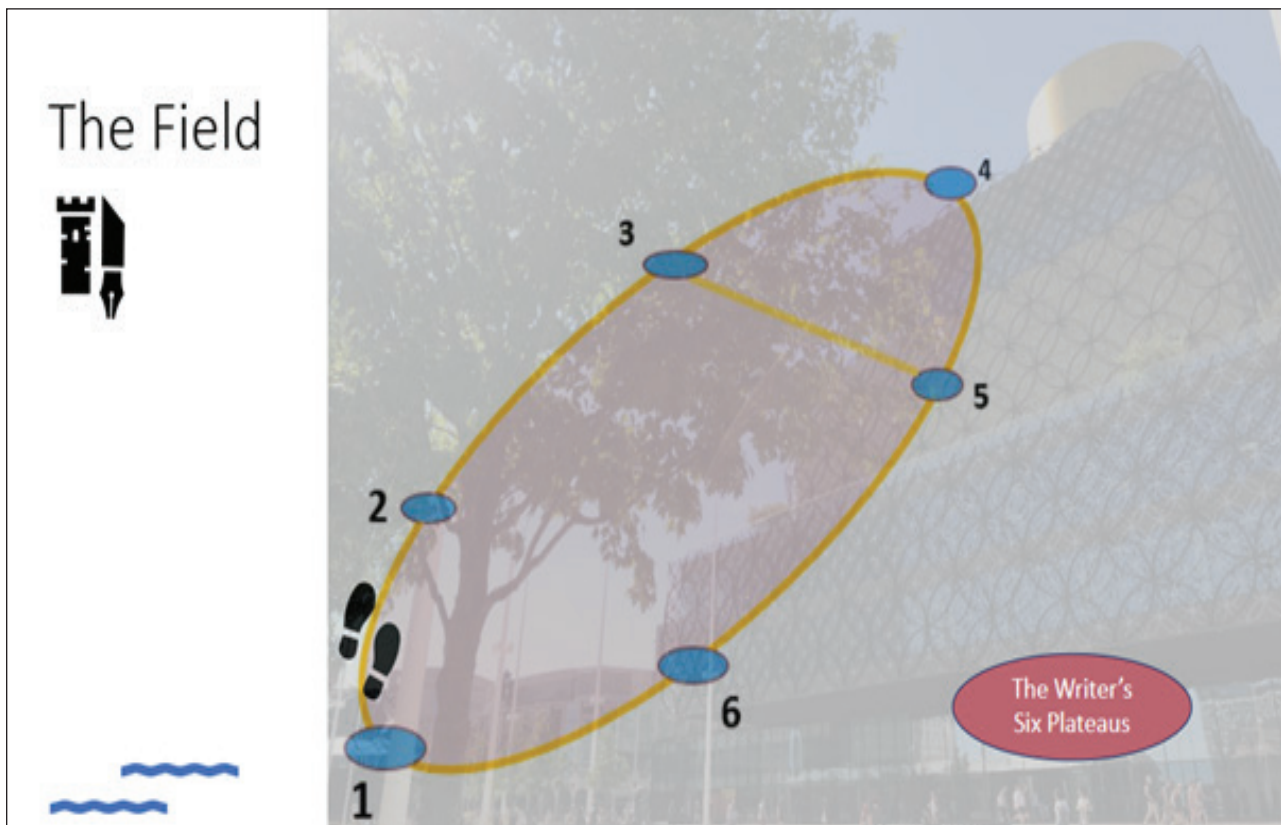


Figure 1: *Writer's Plateaus* (Source: Mansfield & Potočnik Topler, 2023b, slide 12).

### Description of the Travel Writing Process

Potočnik Topler and Mansfield (2023a) propose a 3-step process:

1. The Library Step
2. The Field Step
3. The Lab Step

Table 1 shows a detailed list of possible activities, resources and outputs in each step. For our classroom and fieldwork Potočnik Topler and Mansfield designed a template in Microsoft OneNote for learners to use while writing travel writing notes and texts – during the so-called journaling. As the writer returns with care to the pages, they become a working archive. Further on, by sharing the Notebook with peers, lecturer and eventually stakeholders dialogue can generate trust and shared knowledge.

Route-Planning during the Step 1 - Library Step as Field Preparation is vital. Google Maps or other online mapping systems are useful when planning a walking route for writing at the destination. For a destination town, authors are advised to pick a point of entry like the railway station or the hotel, then plan 5 more stops along an elliptical route to bring the writer back to the start or the so-called first plateau.

Mansfield and Potočnik Topler (2023b) call these points the writer's plateaus (Figure 1). Google Maps also provides information on how hotels, restaurants and visitor attractions have interacted with the tourists who have reviewed their facilities. For a travel writing project on Brežice, for example, we saw that the Pr'šefu Restaurant with Rooms, Prešernova cesta was perfectly positioned for a walking route that turned from the Sava bank into the old part of town.

As early as in Step 2 (The Field Step) the content author can begin to make social media posts on a channel where short texts are expected. For example, by posting about sights seen out in the destination. During the final step, 'Step 3', the content author crafts more structured stories. These are for longer blog posts, LinkedIn articles or for an article in a print magazine.

Journaling can be as simple as taking notes from a book in the library (Step 1) and then returning to these initial notes later to carefully add your own thinking. The Note Containers (Figure 2) encourage you to take notes when you can, then return to spend time later to combine and create ideas from very different sources. The width of our note containers means that you can open your journaling on your mobile phone to add ideas later, on the move.



**Table 1: The Dialogue Journaling Process Model (Source: Mansfield & Potočnik Topler, 2023a, 96).**

Name of Step	Source Documents	Dialogue with	Outputs
1 Deep-mapping and Route Design. The Library Step	Maps, novels, diaries, biographies, reports on land use change, scientific articles	Locals, stakeholders, academic researchers, for example, geographers, tourism and heritage specialists	Journaling. Sketch maps of planned routes for walks. Trust-building correspondence.
2 Fieldwork. The Field Step.	Menus, leaflets, posters, local newspaper, receipts, and the live environment of the field experience	If possible, synchronous dialogue with remote colleague or mentor, preferably on this platform to keep archive. Interviews on the spot.	Field notes. Theme, sub-theme and twill elements for travel story. Blogging and Social Media posts.
3 Recounting the travel story. The Lab Step.	Own field notes. Additional desk research to complete details and fact checking.	An author-editor if available to read drafts. Blogging extracts for feedback from trusted stakeholders.	Finished travel story for publication in various formats or for digital delivery to commissioning stakeholder.

Table 2 shows a list of the key storytelling components that can be included in writings on destinations for social media campaigns. These storytelling components have the ability to engage writer’s audience with writer’s content.

It is advised to choose just one component to work with, from that list of storytelling components in Table 2.

How to make the I-narrator relate to cultural heritage? This is how one of the course participants started her writing (this text was one of the best and was published at the beginning of 2024): “Already from afar, after the highway exit for Krško from the direction of Ljubljana, I notice the silhouette of Brežice, highlighted by the Water Tower and the bell tower of the Church of St. Lovrenc, which I read about before the trip [...]” (Leben, 2024).

When the writers are out in the field, they are advised to use all their senses to deliberately experience the places on their route of plateaus. Course participants were given the following advice: Touch the stone of buildings to activate senses other than simply looking. Focus on how gravity affects your legs, or cobbles make walking more apparent. When you are with others, ask them what they really like about this spot; their dialogue will often surprise you because they have experienced a different aspect of the place.

For posting on social media channels, online dialogues with stakeholders from the destination provide journaling opportunities. The journaling lets authors build up assets of short texts and images for the social media posts before the actual travel.

When the authors are nearing the end of Step 2, and have completed journaling out in the field, it is time to plan the strategy on a pair of social media channels. This is where the authors will recount their story to a wider public audience. It is suggested to choosing one of the following two pairings of channels: Instagram and LinkedIn, or Facebook and Google Blogger. A pairing like this will provide authors with viewer metrics to measure the impact of their campaign.

Step 3 In the Lab, within the journaling process notebook (Figure 2) is intended for writing and refining the posts, each in their own OneNote page, and store the image asset with them for reference.

Those who do not have access to technology or are hesitant towards it can write in notebooks. Writing in a notebook is one of the options; it should be noted, though, that additional time is required to transcribe the text into the desired medium.

### Establishing the dialogue journaling model

The Dialogue Journaling Process Model improves the productivity and performance of content creatives. The

model, as a working method in commercial practice, ensures the necessary productivity to deliver required word counts and to meet deadlines. Whilst, through dialogue around the delivery of interim output texts, the writer’s performance is improved. Performance in literary non-fiction texts is an amalgam of quality, emotional affect, narrator identification, and inclusion of stakeholder requirements and voices.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The objective of this article is to propose an industry-compatible process method for travel writers, which contributes to cultural heritage awareness. More specifically, a dialogue-journaling method is analysed and proposed.

Contributions to Knowledge

One of the contributions to knowledge made by this work is the themes which emerged from coding the creatives’ travel journaling contributions. Two broad categories of content type could be identified from the data. These two were classified as (i) Literary content and (ii) Existing tourism product description, within each of these, new sets of 5 themes are proposed. This total of 10 themes provides a starting point for any further research in literary travel writing, and firmly establishes a base from which value in travel texts can be identified and improved for the writer and their commissioning organisation.

The second substantial contribution came from the dialogue with the museum stakeholder as the process moved into Step 3. These contributions to value in the travel text and in the process can be summarised as follows:

(1) True dialogue emerged where the specialist and highly-engaged trust partner responded to the near-final literary travel writing paragraphs of 4 stanzas. This meant that heteroglossia could be added to the final copy for storage as a travel story on the tourism platform. High value explanations were elicited at this stage because the stakeholder needed to make the content creative understand and, at the same time, knew that an interested audience existed. Thus, the process had generated two motivating reasons to spend time on a careful and thorough response.

(2) Treating the stakeholder’s contributions as data, offers the scientific researcher more material for analysis. The researcher can see what positions or statements in the near-final copy act as catalysts for dialogue of new value.

(3) Reciprocal value to the stakeholder. The museum has the opportunity to read an uncorrected, detailed story of the route and decisions taken by the writing creatives as they make their way through the museum. This was a unique opportunity to see the

**Table 2: A list of the key storytelling components that can be included in writings on destinations for social media campaigns (Source: Potočnik Topler & Mansfield, 2024, 27–28).**

List of Key Storytelling Components	
1.	Create an I-narrator and other characters.
2.	Give historical background to place or a cultural practice or artefact.
3.	Apply imagistic language. Simile and metaphor for affect.
4.	Use verbs to give movement by the narrator, a vehicle, or other agents in the scene.
5.	Build plot. Aristotle defines this as creating reasons, so ask why?
6.	Include dialogic voices. Write to include two or more voices that do not fully agree.
+	Past tenses – please see the section on pp.18-19 ‘The six past tenses in English narrative writing’ in the book.
+	Twill – please see the section on pp.20-23 ‘Twill as research synthesis’, in the book.

choices and personal cultural capital of anglophone British visitors, and how that cultural capital engaged with, or failed to engage with, experiences curated from the museum collection and put on display for the spring and summer season.

From the findings after analysing the texts using the framework method, it emerged that two themes were rarely included by the travel writers: C-Deixis, and D-Senses. These unexpected diagnostics mean that any future training of travel writers should include examples from other writers of these literary devices. They could be presented in the spirit of dialogic education as questions asking writers to identify these features in short extracts by published authors. The nature of the two missing themes, though, also suggests that more field experience would help the writers to accumulate sensory and phenomenological experience.

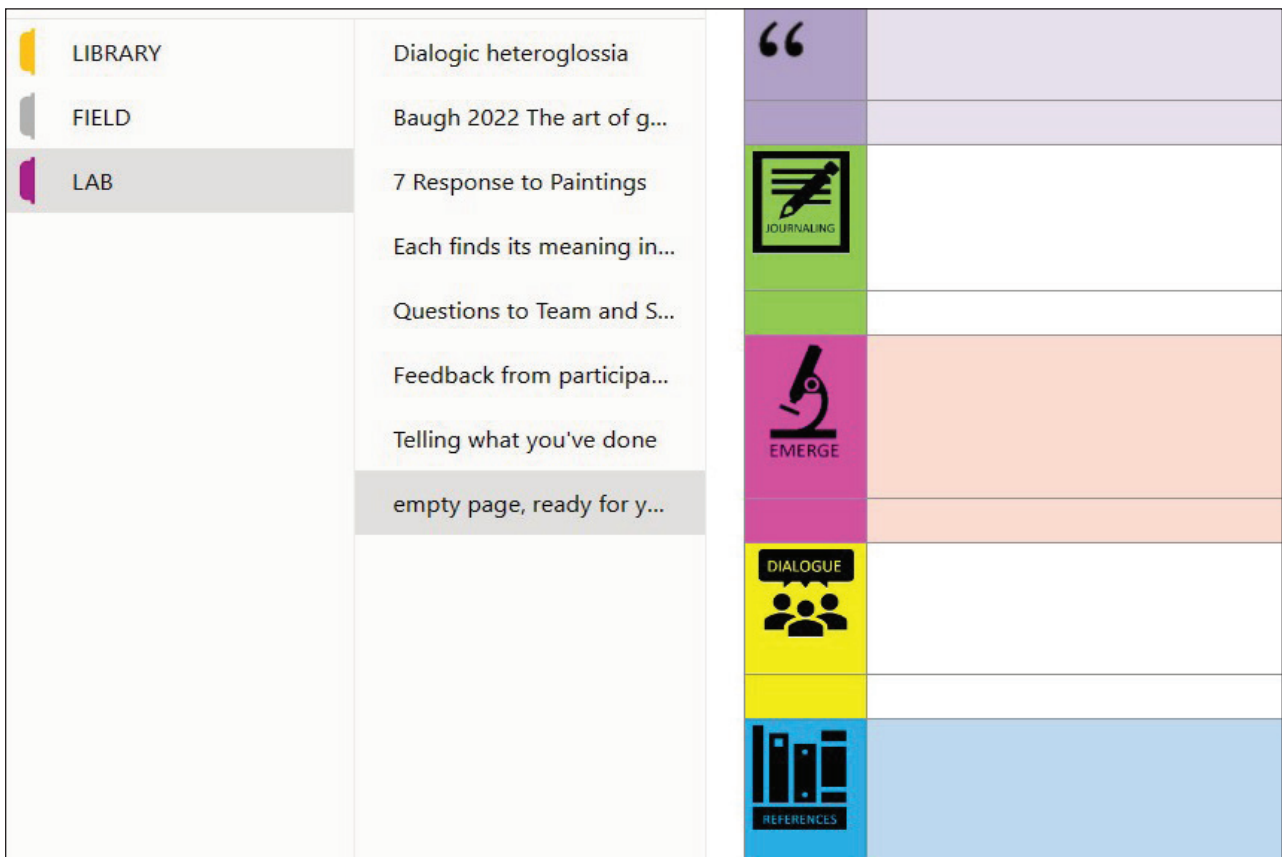


Figure 2: Journaling Process Notebook in OneNote (Source: Potočnik Topler & Mansfield).

Surprisingly rich dialogue occurred as the work moved to Step 3 of the writing process, when the museum stakeholder had the opportunity to read and engage with blog-style travel pieces. If this new knowledge elicited late in the process from stakeholders can be incorporated into the final stored travel text as an additional voice speaking of the experience of the artefacts, then a more Bakhtinian polyvocal text can be held as the final literary artefact from these projects.

### Findings from the dialogue with tourism stakeholders

The chosen case study museum, the Posavje Museum in Brežice (Posavski Muzej Brežice), Slovenia, quickly responded to the trust-building overtures of the research team. They kindly, and readily responded to requests for what is quite sensitive data in a commercial environment. The statistics provide sufficient evidence to see a clear annual trend in ticket sales to visitors, see Chart 1. Of value to this work on dialogue journaling, too, is that the gatekeeper of these data, who was also the respondent in the dialogue saw the transactional nature of dialogue journaling and requested access to the

research team’s results, and acknowledgement in any publication of synthesis of the research. This demonstrates the ethical exchange established as part of the overarching theory of dialogue journaling,

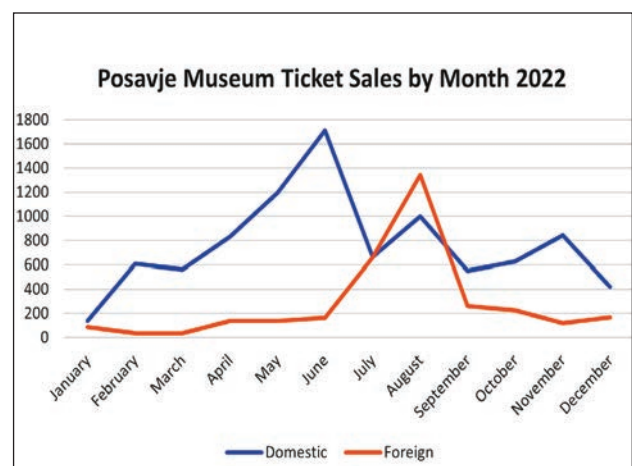


Chart 1: Comparison of domestic versus foreign ticket sales for the Posavje Museum by month during 2022 (Source: Potočnik Topler & Mansfield).

since it both gives voice to, and rewards respondent groups. The Dialogue Journaling Process Model, shown below in Methodology, lists this type of trust-building correspondence in the first or library step of the process.

Findings from this plotted comparison graph show a peak and a shoulder season that will be immediately familiar to many tourism professionals in Europe and in temperate zones in the northern hemisphere. Almost perfectly, the locals enjoy the museum in early summer, then leave for their holidaymaking away from Brežice whilst incoming foreign visitor numbers peak a little later, through July and especially in August. If these data are overlaid with tourist arrivals from outside Slovenia, that August peak shows the expected correlation (see overlay in Chart 2).

Posthumanist approaches, though, require tourism researchers to consider very many more entanglements than simply the climate and holiday-making traditions of western societies. One move in this direction has been the inclusion of ethnobotany in place-branding (Mansfield & Potočnik Topler, 2021), which considers, for example, when pollinators are seeking out flowering plants and how that can be incorporated in the co-creation of experiences for tourists to museum collections. Working within the framework of the processual methodology of dialogue journaling, initial data from these graphs can be taken into consideration by the research and development team to permit adjustments to the later steps in the process. This may be progressed by dialogue with stakeholders and the team while posing questions around the data. For example, what happens in October? What cultural artefacts are held in the museum collection that have a connection with October?

### Findings from post-project feedback with the trainee professionals

Feedback was sought near the end of the main literary writing periods from the team of trainee creatives in tourism and heritage. While this feedback mostly demonstrated how the team acted as catalysts for one another in their creation of narrative interpretations of the museum’s paintings it also found an echo in the theoretical writing of Baugh (2022): “the individual has enjoyed what Gilles Deleuze calls a ‘good encounter’ with its environment or with other human beings. In that way, joy helps guide us towards further good encounters, as well as increasing our self-confidence and energy, enabling us to think and act better” (Baugh, 2022, 63).

These positive encounters in the dialogue on the platform are exemplified by course participants’ feedback (the focus group method was used to get students’ feedback) during the close-out of the project: “[...] she reminded us of grandmother – that is when my brain started to work, and I remembered all the good things that happened in my childhood. I think that personal (subjective) writing is hard because from college to master’s degree – we always had to think and write as objectively as we could – without our opinion, feelings [...]” (Course participant, 2023).

These good memories attach to the creative’s experience during her travel writing and begin to accrete similar positive experiences in the team and in the final literary artefact that the project was aiming to create for tourism development. One of the students provided the following feedback:

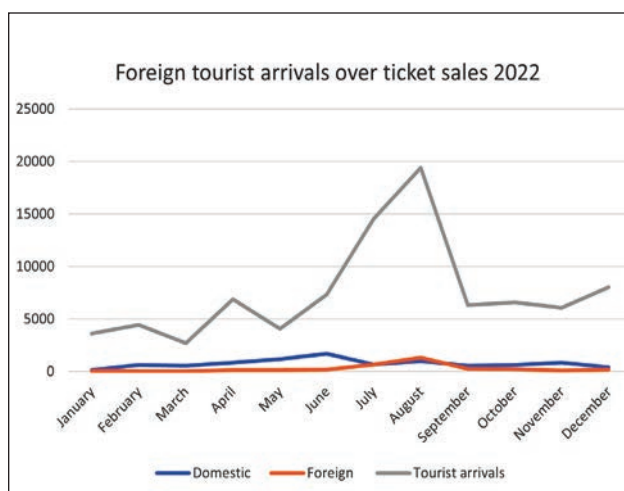


Chart 2: Foreign tourist arrivals over ticket sales 2022 (Source: Potočnik Topler & Mansfield).



Chart 3: Museum Website Visits During Project in 2023 (Source: Potočnik Topler & Mansfield).



*Within the travel writing I just have to say that it helped me to look forward into tourism in the way that I didn't know this side of tourism existed, which gives you the opportunity to be creative and dream with words. It allows you to describe the places where you have been and what the experience was. In fact, the same place for different people will tell so many different stories, which makes the tourism world even more exciting. I really liked to see how I was improving on travel writing from the beginning of this academic year because from 1 thing I didn't even know, now I would like to know more, and when I read something about tourism, I also think if that is travel writing.*

Another student emphasised the significance of travel writing knowledge in tourism:

*This year I learned a lot about travel writing. I think, it is really important in tourism, especially because, with that kind of writing, we can express our feelings and emotions, when we are travelling. For people that read our travel writings is easier to feel how the writer felt in a certain place at a certain landmark or point. Because of that people have a desire to visit certain place. I like that kind of writing, where there is no scientific language. Our classes were interesting for me, because we had to think in a different way. I am proud of our writings, because in it, there is a part of us. And that part are our feelings and emotions that we felt at certain landmark in Brežice.*

### Training professionals in networked heritage writing

A Web 2.0 platform is a centralised repository which effectively maps the network of tourism actors while facilitating relationships through digital interaction and resource-sharing; In the network approach, a tourism destination is composed of nodes (the actors) and links (the relationships) (Pavlovich, 2014; Sainaghi & Baggio, 2021, 172). The Dialogue Journaling Process Model, which is the methodology for this empirical research and also one of the objects under study, maps onto Web 2.0 platforms, for example, the Microsoft OneNote platform for a learning company. This means that the actor networks of stakeholder and creatives of a tourism destination are visible as pages of dialogue in an ever-growing, live archive.

Trainees in heritage tourism thus can visualise and simultaneously make this resource more complex by increasing the number of nodes and links. Tourism stakeholders, who are considered actors in

the network concept, can provide links from their web-pages to the urls of the websites of other tourism providers. This internet network again provides a useful map of the density of mutual support in a tourism destination community. Travel writers and bloggers can also participate in this link-building and hence participate and build trust in destination networks. Internet tools, often called spiders, are available to measure the number of backlinks to a destination or local heritage website. Along with the number and quality of the backlinks, the analyst can also see the geographical reach of the backlinks. This helps to determine if the destination, museum or a certain product is discoverable on the everyday websites in countries from where they hope to attract visitors, for example, the US and UK; and whether those sites are in the language of their target visitor-base, in this example, US or UK English.

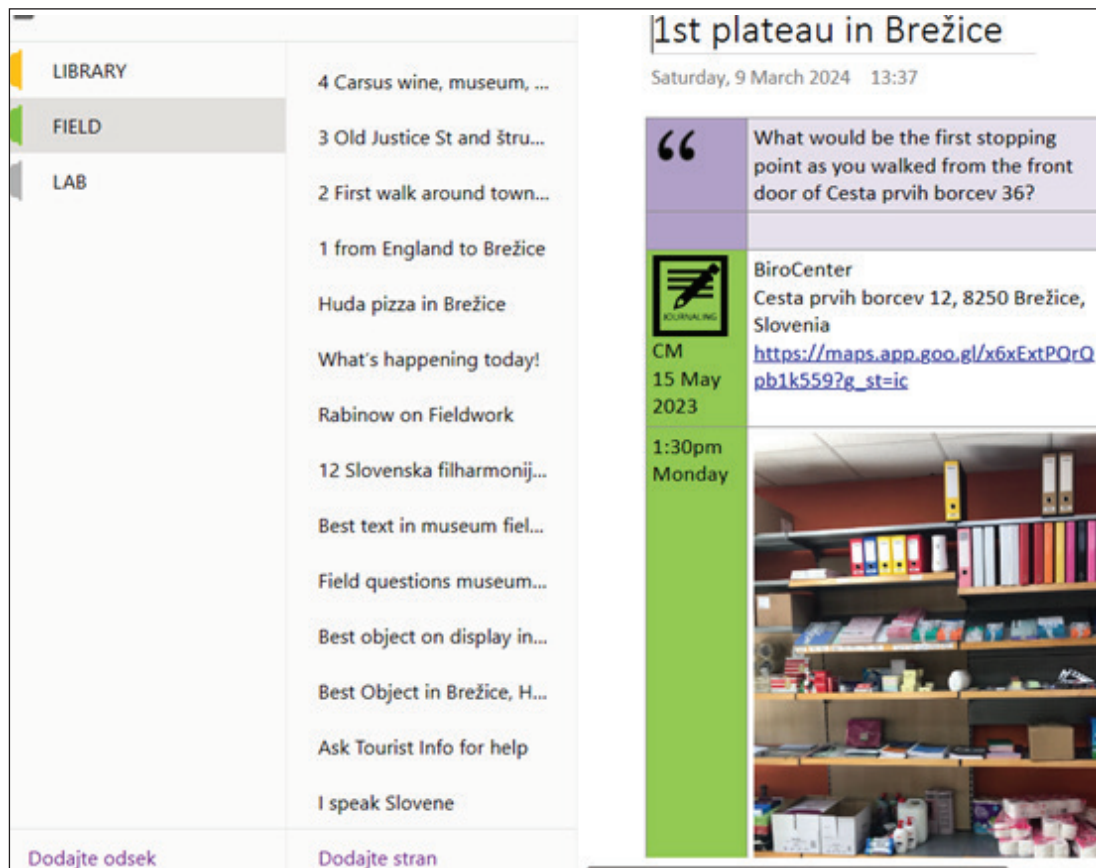
As professionals in the tourism industry, the creatives have to be aware of how network topologies are changed by relevance, by investment and by remaining active through new campaigns supported by the whole stakeholder community: "Only "relevant" DMM [Destination Management and Marketing] processes can reasonably generate turning points or change the system topology (Getz & Page, 2016) and destination investments able to create new product development or to enlarge the local supply" (Sainaghi & Baggio, 2021, 173).

To remain aware of this requirement for relevance, the dialogue with experts, with statistics and with stakeholders offers a live connection to test out the validity of campaign storylines to pursue. On the platform, alongside its templates designed for constructing narrative content, this function was served by the chat option in MS Teams.

### CONCLUSION

Travel writing is a versatile genre with many potential functions. Through the utilization of digital tools, new media, and advanced technologies, the amalgamation of written content with digital platforms has the potential to efficiently enhance the uniqueness of diverse tourism products, services, attractions and destinations. It has clearly become an instrument for fostering consciousness regarding sustainable or unsustainable practices. It serves not only as a mechanism for promoting the branding of attractions, products, places, and destinations, but also functions as a tool for engaging stakeholders, an instrument of self-exploration and identity development, signifying its significance in these domains.

In the conclusion, the initial hypothesis can be confirmed and the research questions can now be answered and lay out lines of research for future studies:



**Figure 3:** Print screen of a platform repository in OneNote created during training (Source: Mansfield & Potočnik Topler).

R1: How can this model for travel writing projects contribute to cultural heritage awareness?

By sharing personal experiences on the dialogue journaling platform, the creatives and industry stakeholders can highlight cultural heritage sites, discuss travel impacts, such as carbon emissions, and present eco-destinations; in this way the cooperative process of travel writing significantly contributes to cultural heritage awareness. The interim outputs, particularly at the end of 'Step 2 Fieldwork Reporting', provide a formal moment in the process to enter in dialogue over draft versions of any content assets.

R2: How can responsible behaviour be encouraged by employing dialogue journaling as a process in travel writing?

Composing texts in a collaborative environment elicits ethical tacit knowledge (McQueen & Janson, 2016) to create travel writing to inspire and encourage responsible behaviour. When the writers are providing insights into the local culture, artefacts and customs the travel writers are aware that local stakeholders are reading their initial

journaling before it becomes a published output; this encourages the locals to take time to educate the writers about the nuances of their cultures and emphasise the expected behaviours, and explain why particular artefacts and customs are preserved. By describing efforts in conserving resources, reducing waste, and respecting wishes and goals of the local community, travel writers can present sustainable accommodation, businesses and tour operators. Further on, travel writers may acknowledge the significance of local economies, suggest local products and promote voluntary work.

R3: How can employment of processual and literary travel writing further encourage sustainable destination branding?

By raising awareness, promoting responsible travel, and providing valuable information to travellers, employment of travel writing can play a significant role in encouraging sustainable destination branding by offering responsible travelling tips, pointing out sustainable destinations and eco-friendly or low carbon activities, by cooperation with the local community, local organisations,

museums, galleries, restaurants, schools, transportation companies etc. Through demonstrating what is important, special, and worth doing in chosen communities, travel writers can contribute to a shift in the travel industry towards more sustainable and responsible practices. Trustworthy travel writers' texts have the power to impact travellers' choices and behaviours, ultimately helping to protect the environment, preserve cultures, and benefit local communities in a more sustainable manner.

R4: How to monitor the process of collaborative co-creation in exploring heritage?

Effectively monitoring the collaborative co-creation process within the context of the travel writing 3-step model (1. Deep-mapping and Route Design, 2. Fieldwork, 3. Recounting the travel story)

necessitates specific steps and measures. Initial steps involve clearly defining objectives and assessing parameters such as the number of participating stakeholders, the quality of generated ideas, and shifts in public awareness. To facilitate successful stakeholder collaboration, pre-scheduled meetings for interviews, data gathering, feedback, and analysis prove beneficial. Leveraging online tools, such as MS Teams, aids in organizing and monitoring the travel writing processes. Monitoring the collaborative co-creation process in exploring cultural heritage (and other) issues and raising awareness about them is an ongoing and iterative effort. This ongoing effort ensures that collaboration remains aligned with its objectives, attains its goals, and delivers positive outcomes for everyone involved.

## POTOPIŠNO PRIPOVEDNIŠTVO KOT SREDSTVO ZA PROMOCIJO KULTURNE DEDIŠČINE

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### POVZETEK

Članek opisuje študijo, ki prispeva k opolnomočenju raziskovalcev in kreativnih ustvarjalcev s področja turizma, še posebej tistih, ki vstopajo v poklice, povezane z upravljanjem destinacij, vključevanjem deležnikov, ohranjanjem dediščine in s komuniciranjem podobe destinacije. Metoda zapisovanja dialoga kot del procesa potopisnega pripovedništva se sklada s Tribovim konceptom izobraževanja filozofskega praktika in omogoča vključevanje deležnikov na destinaciji, vodenje sodelovanja z različnimi deležniki, so-ustvarjanje različnih vsebin, načrtov in turističnih proizvodov ter sooblikovanje trajnostnih skupnosti in posledično trajnostnega razvoja. Za potopisce in ustvarjalce vsebin na družbenih omrežjih v turizmu so večine ustvarjanja vsebin ključne pri so-ustvarjanju trajnostnih turističnih izkušenj, saj so interaktivne in participativne. Povezovanje deležnikov pa je ključno pri upravljanju turističnih destinacij. Cilja študije sta implementiranje in izboljšanje postopka zapisovanja dialoga kot ponovljive metodologije v turizmu in destinacijskem menedžmentu. Gre za 3-stopenjsko procesno raziskovalno metodologijo, ki je pojasnjena prek študije primera v Brežicah (Slovenija) z deležniki in vodji projekta. Članek torej na praktičnem primeru ovrednoti tovrstno pripravo za turistično industrijo in prikazuje, kako ta nova metodologija naslavlja dogovorjeni cilj UNWTO 2030 za vključevanje in izobraževanje deležnikov v turizmu. Z analizo praktičnega primera v realnem svetu, ki ponuja ponovljivo rešitev za Agendo 2030 za doseg trajnosti v upravljanju in razvoju turizma tako članek med drugim pomembno prispeva k naslavljanju praktičnih vprašanj in k praksi upravljanja turizma z vključevanjem deležnikov.

**Ključne besede:** razvoj turizma, vključevanje deležnikov, metoda zapisovanja dialoga, sodelovanje in soustvarjanje, promocija kulturne dediščine, potopisno pripovedništvo



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