

LATVIJAS UNIVERSITĀTE

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RĪGA 2018

UNIVERSITY OF LATVIA
FACULTY OF HUMANITIES
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH STUDIES

**SELF-PRESENTATION OF SPA CENTRES ON THEIR
WEBSITES: GENRE AND MULTIMODAL ANALYSIS**

**SPA CENTRU TĒLS TO TĪMEKĻA VIETNĒS: ŽANRA
UN MULTIMODĀLĀ ANALĪZE**

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Riga 2018

ANOTĀCIJA

Lai klients būtu ieinteresēts turpmākā saziņā ar uzņēmumu, ir svarīgi radīt neaizmirstamu pirmo iespaidu, kas ir viena no mājaslapas funkcijām. Šī pētījuma mērķis bija raksturot sešas SPA centru mājaslapas. Lai sasniegtu šī pētījuma mērķi, tika izvēlēta uz korpusu balstīta pieeja, kas ietvēra Beitmena (*Bateman*) (2008) izstrādāto žanra un multimodālo (GeM) modeli un Suena (*Suen*) (2009) piecu soļu modeli, kas tika izmantots mājaslapas izkārtojuma un retoriskās struktūras analīzei. Turklāt Kresa un van Lēuvena (*Kress and van Leeuwen*) (2006) sociālās semiotikas modelis tika izmantots, lai veiktu attēlu analīzi, kas noteiktu kā vizuālās reprezentācijas metafunkcija palīdz veidot SPA centra tēlu tā tīmekļa vietnē. Rezultāti liecināja, ka mājaslapu izkārtojuma struktūras un retoriskās struktūras palīdzēja četrām no sešām SPA centra mājaslapām realizēt paliekošu un iespaidīgu pirmo iespaidu. Turklāt attēli no SPA centra palīdzēja veidot veiksmīgu SPA centra tēlu. Tādējādi izkārtojuma struktūra, retoriskā struktūra un attēli ir neatņemami mājaslapas elementi SPA centra tēla veidošanai to tīmekļa vietnēs.

Atslēgvārdi: digitālais žanrs, mājaslapas, izkārtojuma struktūra, retoriskā struktūra, reprezentācijas metafunkcija, attēli, SPA centrs

ABSTRACT

For the client to be interested in further communication with the company, it is crucial to be able to make a remarkable first impression, which is one of the functions of the homepage. The aim of the present study was to account for the genre characteristics of six SPA centre homepages. To achieve the aim, the corpus-based approach was selected, which included the use of the Genre and Multimodal (GeM) framework proposed by Bateman (2008), and Suen's (2009) five moves to analyse the layout structure and the rhetorical structure. In addition, Kress and van Leeuwen's (2006) social semiotic framework was applied to conduct the image analysis to determine how the representational metafunction assists in the self-presentation of the SPA centres. The results showed that the layout structure and rhetorical structure helped in forming a successful first impression in four out of six SPA centre homepages, and the use of real images of the SPA centre assists in the self-presentation of the SPA centre. Therefore, the layout structure, rhetorical structure and images are crucial features of the homepage for the self-presentation of SPA centres on their websites.

Key words: digital genre, homepages, layout structure, rhetorical structure, representational metafunction, images, SPA centre

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INTRODUCTION

In today's society, the power of the Internet is expanding tremendously. It affects a person's every day and job-related activities. Moreover, the Internet is developing so rapidly that everyone wants to be a part of it, since it is the primary source of information. Yet, the Internet is also used for socializing, entertainment and much more.

A crucial part of the Internet is the World Wide Web. This digital information system connects documents. People who search the World Wide Web usually have a clear idea of what information to look for, and websites provide largely free accessible information. When entering a particular website, a person becomes a temporary member of that website's discourse community. Therefore, a website can be understood as a form of service aimed at helping to improve information sharing among a particular discourse community (M.D.M. Johari and A.M. Ali, 2015). The World Wide Web (henceforth the Web) has also influenced the business world. Nowadays, it is not enough for a product to speak for itself, and it is not sufficient to rely on business performance. Instead, a company must be proactive, ensure good communication with the customers and make sure to be found. Any modern company cannot afford not having a personal website, as it is like a digital business card.

Web advertising in the hospitality industry has been used extensively as a communicative tool to promote and boost competitiveness. For companies, the Web gives access to a large audience and improves operational efficiency. Belonging to the colony of promotional genres, SPA centre websites apply both text and pictures to attract their clients' attention. The target audience are able to compare service prices, facilities and special offers. Moreover, potential members of the SPA centre community can take virtual tours to explore the design, interior and facilities before making a reservation. All in all, a website represents a company, communicating its culture, values and vision, and a website is becoming a key element of company's survival in the globalized competition.

In recent years, the area of web genre has aroused interest of many scholars. For instance, Askehave and Nielsen (2005) examined the possibility to expand on the Swalesian genre analysis model to identify genre characteristics of non-linear, multimodal and web documents by adding Finnemann's (1999) hypertextual navigating mode of a casino homepage (Suen, 2009:111). Dillon and Gushrowski (2000) investigated personal homepages to determine the existence and the form of a genuine digital genre (ibid.). Suen (2009) conducted a digital genre analysis of hotel

homepages in order to explore the generic characteristics and visual images of five-star hotel homepages in Hong Kong. Kress and van Leeuwen (1996) established the first social semiotic framework for analysing images; it specifies that an image completes three kinds of meta-semiotic tasks to create the meaning – representational, interactive and compositional. Bateman (2008) applied the corpus-based approach to analyse websites and proposed the genre and multimodal (GeM) framework, which provides the five-level analysis of a non-linear corpus such as websites.

In professional communities, genre knowledge is essential, as it includes the conventions and structural patterns that are connected with the communicative purposes of texts. Therefore, the present research **aims** to clarify the genre characteristics of SPA centre homepages. To achieve the aim, the following **research questions** have been formulated:

1. How do the genre characteristics help to fulfill the function of the first impression?
2. How does the representational metafunction assist in the self-presentation of the SPA centres?

To attain the above-mentioned aim, the following **enabling objectives** have been set:

1. to study relevant genre theories, focusing on the digital genre;
2. to examine theories on multimodal discourse;
3. to collect a corpus for the empirical research and identify the layout structure, rhetorical structure and images of the selected SPA centre homepages;
4. to draw conclusions.

Theoretical and empirical research methods are applied in this paper. The literature review presents the theoretical findings of the research. Genre analysis and multimodal analysis are used to determine the layout structure, rhetorical structure and images of SPA centre homepages.

The paper consists of four chapters. Chapter 1 deals with the genre-based view of the digital genre by defining the concept of ‘genre’, investigating the digital genre, and identifying the homepage as a genre. Chapter 2 is dedicated to examining the characteristics of the Web and explaining the difference between the website, webpage and homepage. Chapter 3 explores the multimodal discourse analysis and presents a multimodal framework for analysing images. Chapter 4 reveals the empirical analysis of the selected SPA centre websites by explaining the methodology and materials and by presenting the findings.

1 GENRE-BASED VIEW OF DIGITAL GENRE

This chapter deals with a genre-based view of digital genre, by exploring the theories on genre proposed by Bhatia (1993, 2004), Swales (1990), Askehave and Nielsen (2005) and other scholars. Firstly, the concept of genre is explained, which is followed by the examination of digital genre and, lastly, the study of homepage as a genre is conducted.

1.1 Genre Theory

Genre was originally a literary concept. Derived primarily from the literary studies, genre refers to the type of texts. The study of the concept of genre is a research area that has been explored in linguistics; however, since the concept of genre is relatively new in linguistics, a wider knowledge of this concept should be gathered.

An examination of a genre is essential in order to get a better understanding of the text. Another important reason to study a genre is its practical application. A text illustrates the author's knowledge of the specific idea. The comprehension of the specific genre may develop the person's ability to understand and produce the specific genre he/she might need in the workplace (Gudre, 2018:3).

Genre in linguistics is explored by three genre schools - Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), English for Specific Purposes (ESP) and New Rhetoric (NR).

The SFL school relies on the idea that the structure of the language is the foundation of the social context and function of the text (Hyland, 2004). This approach to genre draws on the theoretical contribution of Michael Halliday, who is interested in the ways of using language as a resource for communication (Hyland, 2004:25). SFL characterises language as 'a system of choices by which writers can communicate certain functions, allowing them to express their experiences of the world, to interact with others, and to create coherent messages' (Hyland, 2004:25). According to Martin (1992), genre in SFL is seen as 'a staged, goal oriented social process' (Martin, 1992:505 quoted in Hyland, 2004:25). Genres are staged and goal oriented because they are determined to accomplish certain communicative goals in particular social situations, involving specific moves and steps, which are used to achieve the goals. Hence, SFL emphasizes the significance of the social purposes of the genre and characterizes rhetorical structures. In this approach, language is observed as a form which helps people to socialise and perform meaningful actions, described by Halliday (1978) as the 'context of situation', which can

be realised using the variables of field, tenor and mode. Following Halliday's study on register, Martin (1984) locates genre in relation to register so that genre and register are related and complement each other in important ways (Fakhruddin and Hassan, 2015:62). Martin (1984) believes that register functions at the level of *context of situation*, whereas genre functions at the level of *context of culture* (ibid.). Register describes the subject matter (field), how participants relate to one another (tenor) and the way language is used (mode).

The New Rhetoric (NR) approach views genre 'as the motivated, functional, relationship between text type and rhetorical situation' (Coe, 2002:195 quoted in Hyland, 2003:21). This approach stresses the importance of the dynamic quality of genres and the rhetorical contexts in which genres are applied. According to Miller (1994), genre is understood as a form of social action that is 'not centred on the form of the discourse but on the action, it is used to accomplish' (quoted in Hyland, 2004:29). All in all, it can be concluded that the NR approach emphasizes the rhetorical contexts rather than the thorough examination of text elements; moreover, this approach is not concerned with any linguistic framework.

In contrast to the NR approach, English for Specific Purposes (ESP) is linguistic in orientation. ESP studies the structures and meanings of texts. According to Swales (1990), 'the ESP approach sees genre as a class of structured communicative events employed by specific discourse communities whose members share broad social purposes' (Swales, 1990:45). Furthermore, Johns (1997) makes a comment that 'these purposes help to shape the ways the genre is structured, the choices of content and style it makes available' (quoted in Hyland, 2003:21). In ESP, genre analysis is carried out using a move analysis. This approach illustrates the rhetorical arrangement of a genre. Each move is a unique communicative act that aims to accomplish one main communicative function, and it can be separated into various steps (Hyland, 2004:47).

Discourse community, a communicative purpose and a genre are the key concepts of ESP; they are interrelated. Discourse community contains six defining characteristics that help to recognise a group of people as a discourse community, and these are a set of common public goals, established mechanisms of intercommunication, information and feedback through a participatory mechanism, one or more genres to further the community's aims, specific lexis and membership that includes both apprentices and experts (Swales, 1990:24-27). Genres, from the ESP perspective, achieve and further discourse communities' goals, as well as assist their new members to acquire and participate in discourse communities' shared goals. Communicative

purposes aim to provide justification for genres and help to shape their internal structure. In addition, the communicative purpose is often the starting point for genre analysis. The typical path of genre examination in ESP includes identifying a genre within a discourse community, defining the communicative purpose of the genre, examining the genre's organisation – characterised by the rhetorical moves it undertakes, and an examination of the textual and linguistic features that help to realise the rhetorical moves (Askehave and Nielsen, 2005). To conclude, ESP takes on a linguistic approach to genre. It involves the analysis of the text that is related to the values and rhetorical purposes of discourse communities.

An extensive amount of literature has been written on the concept genre. Scholars, such as Bhatia (1993, 2004), Swales (1990), Halliday and Hasan (1989), Martin (1992) have studied the concept of genre. Bhatia (1993) and Swales (1990) share the same view that a genre is a communicative event; it has a communicative purpose, and it can be successfully accomplished by a particular discourse community. Bhatia explains that 'genre is a situation of a successful accomplishment of a particular communicative purpose using traditional knowledge of linguistic and discursal resources' (1993:16), and Swales justifies that 'a genre comprises a class of communicative events, the members of which share some set of communicative purposes' (1990:58). In other words, the concept *genre* can be understood as a social informative action, which has a communicative goal shared by a group of people of a particular discourse community. Both scholars focus their attention on the communicative purpose, because it proves to which genre the specific text belongs (Gudre, 2018:3).

Hasan (in Halliday and Hasan, 1989) defines genre as a type of discourse. The author has made a complex investigation of its structure and claims that genre is defined by its mandatory structural components (Gudre, 2018:3)

Martin, who has made innovative research into genre analysis, argues that there are four communicative planes in the comprehension of context: ideology, register, genre and language. Comparing to Hasan's generic structure theory, Martin's model of text structure is referred to as schematic structure. Ren (2010) explains that 'the term schematic simply refers to the staged, step-by-step organization of the genre, or, in Martin's terms, represents the positive contribution genre makes to a text: a way of getting from A to B in the way a given culture accomplishes whatever the genre in question in functioning to do in that culture' (Guowei Ren, 2010:234). Hasan's model and Martin's model are similar in a way that both linguists focus on the interaction between the sequence of the field, mode and tenor variables. The major diversity is

seen in the fact that Hasan's model makes a differentiation between mandatory elements and optional elements, while Martin does not make such claims (ibid.) (Gudre, 2018:4).

Bhatia (2004) has looked at the definition of genre analysis by such scholars as Miller (1984), Bazerman (1994) and Berkenkotter and Huckin (1995), who define it as the *typification of rhetorical action* (2004:23). Christie and Rothery (1987) and Martin (1993) view genre analysis as *regularities of staged, goal-orientated social processes*, and Swales (1990) and Bhatia (1993) emphasize the *consistency of communicative purposes* (ibid.).

Comparing these different views of genre theory, it can be seen that the authors share a similar fundamental understanding of this term. For example, the authors agree that genres are communicative events that are highly structured, mutually understood by the members of a particular professional and academic community, which express not only 'private' but also organizational intentions within the constructs of 'socially recognized communicative purposes' (ibid.). Based on these different genre interpretations, Bhatia proposes his definition:

Genre essentially refers to language use in a conventionalized communicative setting in order to give expression to a specific set of communicative goals of a disciplinary or social institution, which give rise to stable structural forms by imposing constraints on the use of lexico-grammatical as well as discoursal resources (2004:23).

Overall, a genre is a form of communication within a discourse community, and when conducting genre analysis, the structure of a text as well as its lexico-grammatical aspects are examined. Genre is complex in nature, irrespective of whether genre is analysed from the social and/or the linguistic perspective. It is also believed that genre studies will continue to be investigated, and genre analysis approaches will continue to be developed, because the evolution of genre emerges and the progression of genre approaches provide the necessity to reveal genre uses in relation to this social contexts and linguistic functions.

1.1 Digital genre

It has been established that a genre is a type of text with similar communicative, textual and linguistic features. Different genres exist. For example, the academic genres can be looked at from academic writing perspective, which includes the analysis of journal and conference papers. Press genres involve different types of articles, such as editorials and interview type articles. Digital genre is any kind of genre that has a digital form, for instance, emails, online academic papers, online newspaper articles, blogs and homepages.

The Internet has become the primary medium of business communication. It has taken over all areas that involve human interaction and it changes the very nature of communication. Crystal (2001) understands the Internet as ‘an association of computer networks with common standards, which enable messages to be sent from any central computer (or host) on one network to any host on any other’ (2001:2-3). The digital medium has several components that influence communication. One of its most specific elements is the link system, which involves a high level of intertextuality of web-mediated texts. According to Caballero (2008), ‘hypertextual links have topical, rhetorical and discursive implications’ (2008:23; quoted in Badura, 2015:51). Hypertext assists in connecting textual fragments inside the text and develops the topic of a text by linking it (e.g. using key words) with other texts (Badura, 2015:51). To define and describe genres on the Internet, Caballero (2008) suggests that functionality is the key element, which allows users to do things that would be impossible without hypertext technology (quoted in Badura, 2015:51). The concept of hypertextuality will not be discussed further nor presented in the practical part, as it is not the focus of the present research. However, being as one of the important characteristics of digital genre this concept cannot be ignored, because hypertext assists in changing the way a reader reads texts and the reader is the one who chooses how to read the text.

According to Santini (2014), digital genre is characterized by ‘its name (emails, reviews, blogs), it is recognized within the community, it has textual organization standards, it raises expectations about the document organization and the rhetorical purpose, and it has a linguistic function and a rhetorical purpose’ (Online 1). The general aim of the digital genre is to inform and to promote company’s products and services with the help of its website. Website’s design and organization depends on the user, because the user is the one who explores and selects a preferred website (Johari and Ali, 2015:389). In addition, the content of a website is determined by the discourse community, and it tries to meet the expectations of its external members – the Web users. The internal users are those who design and shape the organization of the website; however, the external users, also have major influence in designing a website, ‘as they help contribute to its structure by providing expectations that are to be met by web designers’ (Johari and Ali, 2015:390).

According to Pascual (2007), digital genres are high in multimodality, because digital documents show information in different forms such as images, print text, videos (2007:6). To gain a better understanding in digital genre, Pascual (2007) suggests analyzing the following aspects:

1. The nature of the discourse community using the genre;
2. The communicative purpose(s) of a particular digital document;
3. Text structure and content;
4. Functionality.

(Pascual, 2007:7)

In terms of the first aspect, genres are used by particular discourse communities. A discourse community is a group of people who communicate about the topic or issue of their common interests. According to Swales (1990), a discourse community is defined by six characteristics:

1. *A discourse community has a broadly agreed set of common public goals.* For instance, a group of SPA clients has common goals – to relax using SPA facilities, to receive inner calm by having a body treatment or to improve skin condition by having a facial/body treatment.
2. *A discourse community has mechanisms of intercommunication among their members.* For example, phone is the mechanism of intercommunication, where people can call and text to arrange a meeting.
3. *A discourse community uses its participatory mechanisms primarily to provide information and feedback.* Examples of participatory mechanisms are mechanisms such as emails, meetings and webpage including frequently asked questions (FAQs).
4. *A discourse community utilizes and possesses one or more genres in the communicative furtherance of its aims.* Discourse communities such as SPA clients are likely to use traditional genres to communicate their goals – websites, blogs, and magazine articles.
5. *In addition to owning genres, a discourse community has acquired some specific lexis.* This refers to the specific jargon used by the discourse community. For example, SPA specialists have a specific lexis to explain massage techniques, describe the condition of the skin etc.
6. *A discourse community has a threshold level of members with a suitable degree of relevant content and discursual expertise.* Members of discourse communities enter and leave, which means that the existence of a discourse community depends on a reasonable ration between novices and experts.

(Swales, 1990:24-27)

The communicative purposes of the digital genre are closely related to the promotional genre, that is, to inform and to promote services/products. Vandergriff (2016) emphasizes that ‘the communicative purpose is instantiated through a move structure, which, in turn, is realized by rhetorical strategies’ (2016:72). Belonging to the promotional genre, homepage serves to accomplish these communicative purposes; however, additionally, before achieving communicative purposes, homepage has to perform a significant function to attract client’s attention – create a first impression. Because, the creation of the first impression will determine further communication with the company and only then communicative purposes can take the role in performing their function.

It is expected for a digital document such as homepage to be colourful. Therefore, in terms of the content, image takes a great role in overall layout structure of the homepage. Equally important are other components, for instance, company's logo and navigation bar. These elements perform an important role in the genre's purpose. As to structure Yamaoka et. al. (2001) believe that the user expectations are responsible for the way how website's structure is designed. Moreover, the design of the Website is not intended to satisfy everyone's interests, only those who are from a selected discourse community (Johari and Ali, 2015:390).

Regarding functionality, Pascual (2007) highlights that 'digital documents are tools for the users to participate in communicative acts and to do things' (2007:7). Referring to the genres as tools, Pascual (2007) adds that 'it is necessary to explore the kind of actions that the users can do with the genre, the capabilities of the medium that enable these actions, how users can interact with the documents belonging to a genre, and how actual users do interact with these documents' (ibid.).

Nowadays, the digital genre can be considered as a member of the promotional genre colony thus, a company website belongs to the promotional genre, because 'despite being produced and delivered through new medium (the Web), its purpose overlaps with the goal of most promotional genres from other media' (Posteguillo, Esteve and Valor, 2007:106). In the 1990's, company websites were not recognized as part of the promotional genre, because 'World Wide Web had not yet settled as a mass medium' (ibid.). However, 'today the Web has become a powerful medium for communication, advertising and commercial transactions' (ibid.). Most companies have their own websites and use them as promotional devices, and the idea that the purpose of a company website is 'primarily persuasive and overlaps with the main communicative purpose of all promotional genres is a sufficient reason to acknowledge the company website as a promotional genre from the digital medium' (ibid.). Digital genres, according to Posteguillo, Esteve and Valor (2007), 'are usually designed to facilitate certain functions and to extend the options and possibilities offered by traditional genres enabling, for instance, much quicker searching, sorting or comparing' (Posteguillo, Esteve and Valor, 2007:58).

The analysis of a digital genre is not different from the analysis of a general genre. Moreover, Akehave and Nielsen (2005) explain that a web-mediated genre is 'the digital version of already existing genres' (2005:120). The digital genre can be examined from different angles. Bhatia (2004) provides an accurate analysis of various promotional genre groups and emphasizes

the role of the concept of *genre colony* presenting a number of functions in the process of genre identification. It allows recognizing genres at various levels of generalization.

Bhatia's multi-dimensional model of genre analysis can be used as a foundation for examining the Web-mediated genre (2004:161). The model provides four aspects of analysis, which are textual, ethnographic, socio-cognitive and socio-critical. Textual aspect is concerned with the surface of the text, which involves the analysis of lexical and grammatical features of the texts. To promote the analysis of genres, textual aspects work together with socio-cognitive aspects. Socio-cognitive perspective 'involves the analysis of genre construction procedures and audience reception procedures and insights' (Bhatia, 2004:161). Bhatia (2004) adds that this perspective might also include the analysis of rhetorical strategies and respond to rhetorical situations (*ibid.*). Ethnographic investigation is concerned with the engagement or interaction between the author and the reader. Bhatia (2004) remarks that this analysis emphasizes the understanding of 'practitioner advice and guidance, social structure, interactions, history, beliefs, goals of the professional community, physical circumstances influencing genre construction and modes available for genre construction and communication' (*ibid.*).

The move-step approach has been largely used for the analysis of rhetorical arrangement in professional genres. Askehave and Nielsen (2005), Bhatia (1993, 2004), Biber et. al. (2007) have adopted this approach. In this type of investigation, moves are examined as 'socio-cognitive patterns that most members of a professional community use to construct and interpret discourses specific to their professional cultures' (Bhatia, 2004:9). The move-step approach includes the identification and description of the move types that can be present in the target genre, which is followed by the distribution of the selected texts into specific moves and the description of the general structure of a text in relation to the order of move types (Biber et al. 2007 quoted in Badura, 2015:45). According to Swales (1990), the analysis is aimed to demonstrate how texts, portraying the same genre, present various patterns of similarity regarding the structure, target audience, style and content.

Askehave and Nielsen (2005) studied the digital genre by adopting Swale's two-dimensional model. The authors investigated corporate homepages and suggested the two-dimensional model as a framework for the genre analysis of online documents. They offer the following summary of Swales' genre model: communicative purpose – realized by move structure – realized by rhetorical strategies. The elements of this model represent the significance of the concept of genre and the connection of its content, structure and communicative purpose

(Badura, 2015:46). Askehave and Nielsen (2005) introduced five moves that are related to the moves of traditional texts and, if using these moves in the particular order, it helps to create a well-structured text (2005:24): attracting attention, detailing content, establishing contact, establishing a community, and promoting an external organization.

Suen (2009), on the other hand, used Bhatia's (2004) critical genre analysis model and Kress and Leeuwen's (1996) framework of visual images to investigate generic characteristics and visual images of five star hotel homepages. Suen (2009) suggested eighteen moves, which researchers should consider when conducting a digital genre analysis. Yet, the focus was drawn only on five most important moves – brand identification, content introduction, the establishment of contact, the establishment of credentials and the introduction of accommodation.

The first move - *identifying the brand* is achieved by the logo of the brand. In accordance with Suen's research, the majority of the companies place the logos in the top right corner of the page. In addition, it was established that hotel homepages which are part of the same hotel chain put their logos in the same area, and they follow the same web design convention to create unity (Suen, 2009:115).

The second move - *introducing the contents list* is accomplished using the navigation bar. The navigation bar consists of the main topics of the company. In other words, it can be described as a table of contents. The navigation bar assists in helping the visitors quickly recognize content channels and it serves as a guide for the visitor (ibid.).

The third move - *establishing contact* is contact information, which includes a company's address, telephone, fax, and email. This information enhances the reliability of the company and, if, the information can be easily found not only the communication between the company and the client increases but also the promotion of services (ibid.).

The fourth move – *establishing credentials* was firstly developed by Bhatia (1993) in the analysis of sales promotion letters. On company homepages, this move helps to promote a positive image of the company and to inform readers of the competitive advantage of the company. Overall, this move provides the company's reputation (ibid.).

The fifth move – introducing accommodation characterizes the accommodation facilities of the hotel. The author specifies that to make the claims more credible for the readers, numerical evidence is sometimes indicated (ibid.).

To conclude, there have been several studies on the digital genre. Askehave and Nielsen's study (2005), which adapted Swales' framework on genre analysis in the study of corporate

homepages, and Suen’s study (2009), which employed Bhatia’s (2004) critical genre analysis model to examine generic characteristics of five star hotel homepages, are the best. Since Bhatia’s model is more suitable for business and legal genres, and Swales’ model is more applicable for academic genres, the present research has adopted the framework provided by Suen (2009).

1.2 Homepage as a genre

Shepherd and Watters (1998) indicate digital genres as *cybergenres* (Shepherd and Watters 1998 quoted in Posteguillo, Esteve and Valor, 2007:56). Cybergenre, as a new class of genre is characterized by the content, form and functionality (Shepherd and Watters, 1999:1). Reflecting on these three aspects, Shepherd and Watters (1999) identify the following six cybergenres: homepage, brochure resource, catalogue, search engine, and game (1999:2). The authors divide cybergenres into two subcybergenres – *extant* and *novel* that ‘illustrate the evolution from traditional to digital genres’ (Shepherd and Watters 1998 quoted in Posteguillo, Esteve and Valor, 2007:56). Figure 1.2 provides classification of cybergenres.

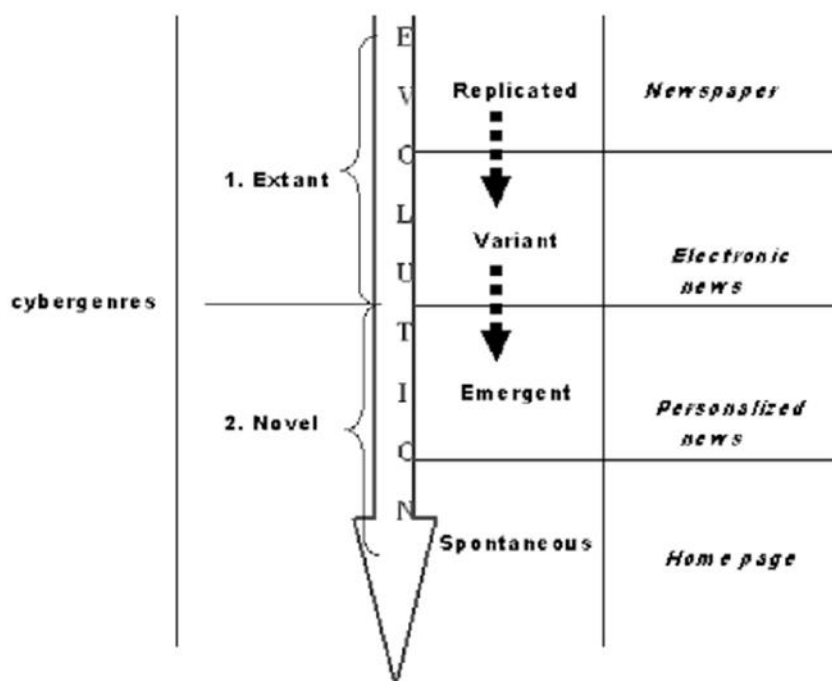


Figure 1.2 Classification of cybergenres (Shepherd and Watters 1998 quoted in Posteguillo, Esteve and Valor, 2007:56)

According to Posteguillo, Esteve and Valor (2007), the main difference between the *extant* and *novel* cybergenres are that ‘*extant* cybergenres are those based on already existing

genres to be found in other media (paper and video), with the particularity of having been cast in digital form’, while ‘*novel* cybergenres are fully dependent on the new medium and are created on the basis of the technical capabilities of digital media (ibid.). Homepage belongs to the *novel spontaneous* cybergenres, which is the last stage of evolution and according to the authors ‘may not have any counterpart in other media’ (ibid.).

Shepherd and Watters (1999) classify homepages into two types: personal and corporate homepages (1999:3). Later Kennedy (2004) adds the third type: organization homepage (2004:1). According to Shepherd and Watters (1999), ‘the contents of personal homepages tend to consist of biographical information about the author whereas corporate homepages consist mostly of information and advertisements about the company’s products or services’ (1999:3). As to organization homepage, Kennedy (2004) defines it as ‘homepage that contains information describing the interests and ambitions of a group (such as a society or religious organization, etc.), where those ambitions do not include making profit selling some product or service’ (2004:15-16).

Askehave and Nielsen (2005) define the homepage as ‘the top-level document of a website’, which has two overall functions: first, ‘it introduces the content of a website to the user’ and, second, ‘it acts as a gateway to the site’ (2005:124). In other words, the reader can navigate himself/herself throughout the Website by using navigational tools or links. In order to attract visitor’s attention, authors mention promotional features that the homepage portrays. For instance, combination of images, sounds, textual content act as promotional features to engage with the visitor (2005:124). Furthermore, authors equate homepages with newspaper front pages indicating that ‘the similarity between the front page and the homepage concerns elements such as content, form and layout’ (ibid.). Authors introduce the homepage as a new genre that shares common features with already existing genres from print media (ibid). However, authors also mention that the homepage reveals some unique aspects, for instance, it has no direct parallel outside the Internet (ibid.).

To conclude, homepages have evolved from newspapers; therefore, sharing similar features. However, homepages are determined by the new medium – the Web.

2 THE WORLD WIDE WEB AS A MEDIUM

The chapter examines the World Wide Web (The Web) as a medium. Authors, such as Askehave and Nielsen (2005) and Finnemann (1999) are the primary sources used to study this phenomenon. Firstly, the characteristics of the Web are defined and described, followed by the identification of the terms website, webpage and homepage.

2.1 Characteristics of World Wide Web

Bhargava and Krishnan (1998) characterises the Web as ‘a multimedia information system implemented on the Internet’ (1998:359). The Web is a virtual device, which is used for a global communication. The Web is known for its useful function and application. In terms of publishing and delivering information, the Web is very convenient. Moreover, the information can be distributed in different ways. For instance, creating texts, images, video, audio, and graphs.

Askehave and Nielsen (2005) highlight three general characteristics of the Web from which the most valuable is *intertextuality* (2005:11). In literacy, *intertextuality* can be observed in the process of text’s development. To support the meaning of the text, authors tend to refer the idea to similar or related works, while *intertextuality* is recognized differently on the Web. It includes several virtual texts, which are connected by links, and those links allow the reader to shift from one text to another easily (Askehave and Nielsen, 2005:11). Meanwhile, in terms of Web intertextuality, Finnemann (1999) uses different term– *hypertextuality*. The *global reach* is another characteristic of the Web (Askehave and Nielsen, 2005). It means that the authors of the web texts can use the medium to communicate globally, and the Internet users have an instant access to information regardless time and distance (2005:12). Global communication is vital in business environment, because nearly all businesses take place at a global level. Communicating globally gives the opportunity to do business with other countries, which leads to the most important benefit – wider market. The third essential feature, according to Askehave and Nielsen (2005), is *immateriality*. In comparison with the printed text, web texts can be adjusted, edited or replaced within hours or days (2005:12), while the printed text, the medium is paper, cannot be changed or improved, is rather stable and reliable (Finnemann, 1999:15). Since the web texts can be generated, printed texts lose their function. Yet, printed texts still are preferred as the reading medium in some cases.

Nowadays, it is impossible to imagine a web text without any additional components, such as, an image, video or any other visual and audio element. Combining these elements, allows the user to put into action the sight and hearing sense. Such a blend of components is

called *multimediality* (Askehave and Nielsen, 2005; Bell, 2005), which is another important feature of the Web. The *multimediality* helps to develop a smooth reading process of a web text.

Returning to *hypertextuality*, the creation of a web text is influenced by the general characteristics of a hypertext. Hypertext is a text system used to provide information on the Web. Hypertexts connect a web text to each other, therefore, allowing indirect communication of information (Online 4). Landow (1997) and Bolter (2001), who are literary hypertext experts, have the receiver-oriented mindset thinking that the hypertext is rather based on how it is accessed by the reader, not on how hypertexts are structured (in Askehave and Nielsen, 2005:14). Landow (1997) and Bolter (2001) explain that readers can choose where to begin to read and where to end it (ibid.). In other words, readers can choose their own reading approach.

Hyper-reading, according to Sosnoski (1999), is ongoing 'screen-based, computer-assisted reading practices' (1999:2). The major tool that the reader engages with is hyper-links that allow readers to move rapidly from texts to other texts. Unlike the linear reading, which is reading from the beginning to the end, *hyper-reading* is a non-linear reading strategy that can take the reader to multiple directions, instead of proceeding smoothly from page to page. Finnemann (1999) recognises *hyper-reading* as a particular reading mode, which can be found in printed and web-mediated texts. In addition, Finnemann (1999) proposes that the reading process of web texts and traditional texts is very similar. Reading techniques such as skimming and scanning can be applied while reading printed texts, thus fulfilling non-linear reading and the reading process in web texts can also be referred as linear. Finnemann (1999) provides his own explanation of this reading process:

In an ordinary text you are supposed to move from chapter 1 to chapter 2 while in a hypertext you are supposed to choose your own serial order at various stages on the journey. But even so, you still have to choose, you have to determine the order in which you will read the text and this order will always have to be sequential. The optional freedom in hypertext systems is not a freedom from sequentialised linearity, since the user cannot make more than one choice at a time (1999:24).

Moreover, Finnemann (1999) emphasizes that a hypertext is regarded as a text system, which activates two modal shifts in the reading process: the *reading mode* and the *navigating/linking mode*. Askehave and Nielsen (2005) and Finnemann (1999) agree that the main difference lays in the position of the reader. In the *reading mode*, the reader takes the position of a traditional reader, while the *navigating mode* is more open in terms of reading.

The percentage of the Internet users is increasing. According to the statistics portal *statista*, 45% of global population were internet users in 2016, and the percentage rose to 54.4%

in 2017 (Online 2 and 3). Now, half of the world's population is using the Internet. Not only the Internet is used for information and communication purposes, but it is also a foundation for tourism, health, education and business. Today, the Web is the main channel used to look up for information, publish and deliver it; therefore, the Web has become the leading medium for communication purposes.

The concepts of intertextuality, hypertextuality and hyper-reading will not be presented in the practical part, as they are irrelevant to the purpose of the study. However, being considered as the main characteristics of the Web, these concepts cannot be ignored, in terms of the comprehension of the Web as a medium.

2.2 Webpage, Website and Homepage

The Web has its own jargon, which might cause confusion, therefore, if the terms are not understood meaning of the terms has to be explained.

According to the Cambridge Dictionary a webpage is 'a page of information on the internet about a particular subject that form (a part of) a website', while a website is 'a set of pages of information on the internet about a particular subject, published by a single person or organisation' (Online 5). Thus, the website may contain various webpages for the reader to explore, and the first page the user lands to is called the homepage – 'the first page of a website, which usually gives an introduction to the business or organization it belongs to and links to more detailed information on other pages' (ibid.).

Rarely, the visitors leave the company's website with a vague impression. The visitors are either impressed of the company and its performance or they are not. Making first impression is significant in this case, because, only making a good and remarkable first impression will develop further communication, and there is not a second chance given to make a first impression. Every website has a specific page, which is aimed to impress the visitors. This page is called homepage. As soon as the visitor goes on the company's website, the homepage is the page he/she sees first. Askehave and Nielsen (2005) characterise a homepage as being 'a condensation of the most important information on the site' that acts as an introduction to the website (2005:19). The authors indicate that it is not obligatory for the homepage to provide a full overview of the website. The homepage is rather meant for presenting a relevant selection of topics to direct the readers further to the information they are searching for (Askehave and Nielsen, 2005:19). The authors do make a good point; however, the content, especially for a new

visitor, is not the first factor that draws the attention. Assuming that the visitor is a new member of the website, then the first details which are noticed are visual aspects – colours and pictures. The next aspect which is observed by the visitor is the overall structural layout of the homepage, and only then the content is examined. A different process would be with an existing member. The search for the information would be much faster, as the layout is familiar and visual elements are ignored. The only possible way to renew an existing member's attention is to add something new to the homepage. To reflect the needs, problems, and questions of the visitors, homepage design must be updated from time to time. According to Kolowich (2017), a well-designed page is important to building trust, communicating values, and guiding visitors to the next step and elements, such as, the overall layout, colours, fonts and visual components are crucial in constructing an outstanding homepage (Online 6). The homepage should answer the following questions: *who I am, what I do, and /or what can you (the visitor) do here* (ibid.). A well-known brand or company may omit the description of themselves and what they do. Yet, most businesses still need to answer these questions to assure the visitors that they are the right place. The company's homepage plays a vital role in the overall success of the brand, and its main function is to enforce the users to stay and explore the company's website. Ramona Sukhraj (2017) provides a statement that summarizes the main idea regarding homepage: 'Every time a new person lands on your website homepage, your business goes through a 'job interview'' of sorts. People are critiquing what they see in detail, establishing an opinion of you, and determining if you're worth getting to know further, and doing business with' (Online 7).

There have been different studies done regarding the importance of the first impression of the website. Laja (2017) summarized these studies and concluded that the overall structural representation of the webpage determines the outcome of the first impression (Online 8). One research was aimed to discover how much time it takes for a person to establish an opinion about webpage visual appearance (ibid.). The research showed that it takes 0.05 seconds to form an opinion about the webpage (ibid.). According to Laja (2017), in terms of the website 'first impression depends on factors, such as structure, colors, spacing, symmetry, amount of text, fonts, and more' (ibid.). Furthermore, Laja (2017) highlights a valuable study, where 'the researchers monitored students' eye movements as they scanned the webpages' (ibid.). The eye-tracking data was analysed to find out how much time was necessary for students 'to focus on specific sections of a page – such as, the navigation menu, the logo, images and social media icons' (ibid.). The following website sections where students spent the most time are: the logo

(6.48 seconds), the navigation bar (6.44 seconds), the search box (just over 6 seconds), the main image (5.94 seconds), the written content (5.59 seconds and the bottom of the webpage (5.25 seconds) (ibid.). The next research that Laja (2017) emphasizes is the study done by British researchers, who concluded that ‘first impressions are 94% design related’ (Online 8). The corpus of the study was online health sites, and the focus of the analysis was to find out ‘how different design and information content influence trust of online health sites’ (ibid.). The study revealed that ‘the visual appeal and website navigation appeared had by far the biggest influence on peoples first impressions of the site’ (ibid.). Taking into account all the studies done by different researchers, Laja (2017) concludes that ‘the first second on your website might matter more than all other seconds that follow. Make sure that second makes a great first impression’ (ibid.).

To conclude, it is expected for businesses to have their own websites, because, if a person is aimed to find out some information about a certain company, a straightforward action would be visiting the company’s official website. Companies create websites for various purposes. Some use it for marketing purposes, some to boost brand recognition and some to interact with the target audience. Largely, websites contain all these aspects. Once a person is on the website, communication has started. Generally, the person already knows what to look for. For instance, if it is information about the company, then the instant action would be firstly to find the navigation bar and then look for the section, which in most cases is named as *about us* or *who we are*. Indeed, some companies may provide this information directly in the homepage, which can be considered as one of brand recognition strategies. It is up to the company how to design the website and arrange the content. In terms of content, it is important to consider the optimal level of information. Clearly, in both ways, when there is too much or too little information, the reader might get annoyed and feel frustrated. Therefore, the company should be attentive and make sure to include the basic information of themselves and the services/products they provide. The company’s website helps to establish credibility of the business.

3 MULTIMODAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

This chapter is dedicated to the Multimodal Discourse Analysis (MDA). Firstly, it explores the concept of multimodality and multimodal analysis approaches relevant for this study. Secondly, the multimodal framework for analyzing images is presented. Such authors as Jewitt, Bezemer and O'Halloran (2016), Kress and van Leeuwen (1996), and Harrison (2003) are the main experts who are referred to in order to explore this phenomenon. MDA is a developing study in discourse studies, which expands the study of language in combination with other components, such as, images, gestures, music and sound.

3.1 Concept of multimodality and approaches to multimodal analysis

According to Adami (2015), the concept of multimodality is introduced to explain 'different resources used in communication to express the meaning' (2015:1). The author continues that 'the term is used to describe a phenomenon of human communication and as a phenomenon of human communication, multimodality defines the combination of different semiotic resources, or modes, in texts and communicative events, such as still and moving image, speech, writing, layout, gesture, and/or proxemics' (ibid.).

Language is only a part of the whole communication frame, and it is one of the modes of multimodality. According to van Leeuwen (2005), multimodality is 'the combination of different semiotic modes' (2005:281), and it rather explores communication beyond language means. Semiotic resources consist of modes and immaterial conceptual resources, which are achieved through modes, for example coherence (Jewitt, Bezemer and O'Halloran, 2016:69). A mode is a semiotic channel, which is used to compose the text such as images, layout, writing and speech (ibid.). The use of various semiotic resources in everyday communication has demonstrated that the message is realized through both language and the integrated use of different semiotic resources. For example, during verbal communication, the speaker complements the speech with gestures, posture or any other body movements. This is an integrated use of different semiotic resources.

In comparison with other modes, language seems to be used more widely. Jewitt, Bezemer and O'Halloran (2016) highlight three main reasons why this should not be so. Firstly, the meaning of language differs among different communities. Secondly, this belief regarding language is a prematurely made conclusion and; thirdly, like any other mode, language has unique possibilities and unique limitations (2016:15-21).

Jewitt, Bezemer and O'Halloran (2016) explain three major approaches used to analyze multimodality: Systemic Functional Multimodal Discourse Analysis (SF-MDA), Social Semiotics and Conversation Analysis (CA). In addition, five additional approaches have been developed, which are based on the concepts and methods drawn from the approaches mentioned above. One of them is the corpus-based multimodal analysis, which is used to study the overall layout of the SPA centre homepages.

SF-MDA approach is developed from Michael Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistic (SFL) theory. It is concerned with the use of language and visual elements. In terms of language, the aim of SFL is to develop functional grammar to strengthen the meaning of language; therefore, SF-MDA is concerned with 'the 'grammatics' of semiotic resources' (Jewitt, Bezemer and O'Halloran, 2016:30). In order to determine the meaning of language and visual forms, intersemiotic mechanisms, which are named as metafunctions, are developed. Metafunctional mechanisms assist in the process of SF-MDA, because, as O'Halloran and Lim (2014) explain 'it provides a common set of fundamental principles to compare semiotic resources and the meanings which arise when semiotic choices integrate in multimodal texts' (O'Halloran and Lim, 2014:140 quoted in Jewitt, Bezemer and O'Halloran, 2016:33). Metafunctions differ in terms of language and visual analysis. Language has four metafunctions: experiential, logical, interpersonal and textual. Images, on the other hand, are not organized in the same way as language is (ibid.). Adapting Halliday's theoretical concept of metafunctions, Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) describe three visual systems for images:

- ideational/representational – represents objects in an image and how they interact with each other;
- interpersonal/orientational – represents the relationship among the producer, the receiver and the image;
- textual/organizational/compositional – represents the composition of the image.

(Kress and van Leeuwen, 2006:42-43)

O'Halloran (2009) in *Visual Communication* contributed SF-MDA approach for constructing ideational meaning using language and visual imagery. The analysis reveals the involvement of semiotic metaphors across linguistic and visual elements in print advertisements. Gao (2017) also applied this approach to study an intersemiotic complementarity between the verbal text and visual image in an illustrated article presented in *The Economist*.

In multimodal studies, SF-MDA draws more attention towards the text without reference to the context and this approach is rather complex and time consuming, especially for web mediated texts (Jewitt, Bezemer and O'Halloran, 2016:54).

The second main approach is Social Semiotics. This approach focuses on meaning making involving all modes. Halliday (1978) was first who applied the term language as social semiotic (Jewitt, Bezemer and O'Halloran, 2016:58). Social Semiotics aims to understand how people communicate in terms of the language sign system (ibid.). Kress and van Leeuwen expanded on Halliday's approach concerning semiotic choices and other sign systems such as images. Their goal was to study different modes of communication and how these modes blend together in the text.

Semiotics, according to Kress and van Leeuwen, is the study of signs (2006:6). Signs exist within semiotic systems. For instance, words are signs in the semiotic system of language; gestures are signs in the semiotic system of the nonverbal communication. In the process of sign making, both the person who makes a sign (producer) and the person who interprets a sign (interpreter) are involved (ibid.). According to Jewitt, Bezemer and O'Halloran (2016), the observation of sign making is a curious process, as it makes the person wonder what encourages choosing one semiotic resource over another (2016:67). Usually, it is the interest or preference towards a certain semiotic resource. The choice of semiotic resources is made individually. The person may select one, two or perhaps more semiotic resources to establish a clear meaning. Obviously, it seems that using various semiotic resources at the same time may speed-up the comprehension of the meaning. It might be so, but in this case, these resources must be in relation to one another, otherwise, the meaning can be easily lost. Therefore, using multiple semiotic resources at the same time can complicate things or vice versa.

CA is another multimodal analysis approach. Fundamentally, this approach is focused on the study of spoken interaction. However, through the development of CA, this approach is used to analyze non-verbal or body language elements, such as, gaze, posture and gesture. In the connection with multimodal studies, CA focuses on close observations of people who are engaged in an activity (Online 9). Researchers Goodwin and Heath expanded on the original scope of CA. Their corpus of the analysis involved videos, and they studied the role of gaze and gesture in conversations (ibid.). Regarding the present study, this approach is irrelevant. However, as it is considered as one of the three main multimodal approaches, a general understanding should be taken into account.

In terms of this study, the most suitable approach is the corpus-based multimodal analysis. Therefore, to examine the structural layout of the SPA centre homepages, the corpus-based approach has been selected.

The corpus-based approach includes the concepts of SFL and Social Semiotic approaches. Bateman (2008) has used this approach to analyze websites. Due to technological development, the corpus-based approach has developed alongside with it. The corpus-based multimodal analysis investigates the multimodal structure of artefacts. In other words, this approach looks at the patterns that can be observed in the multimodal structure (Jewitt, Bezemer and O'Halloran, 2016:123).

Bateman organized a Genre and Multimodality (The GeM) research project, which was aimed to expand on the concept of genre to describe the structure of multimodal documents (Hiippala, 2017, 2013).

Bateman separates multimodal corpora that consist of linear and non-linear data: linear data can be observed in written text or in the recording of spoken language. Non-linear data, on the other hand, looks at spatially distributed information and visual representations, for instance, printed advertisements, pages of documents and websites (Bateman, 2014c:243-246 in Jewitt, Bezemer and O'Halloran, 2016:121). The corpus of the present research includes homepages, which is a non-linear data and for the analysis of this type of data, Bateman (2008) proposes to apply the GeM framework. The GeM model provides five level analysis of a non-linear corpus:

1. Content structure – the 'raw' data out of which documents are constructed;
2. Rhetorical structure – the rhetorical relationships between content elements; how the content is 'argued';
3. Layout structure – the nature, appearance and position of communicative elements on the page;
4. Navigation structure – the ways in which the intended mode(s) of consumption of the document is/are supported;
5. Linguistic structure – the structure of language used to realize the layout elements.

(Jewitt, Bezemer and O'Halloran, 2016:123; Delin, Bateman and Allen, n.d.)

To conclude, in terms of verbal communication, language is a fundamental aspect. Within the interaction process, not only spoken or written language is used but also other modes, such as gestures, sounds, gaze and images. The combination of these elements forms language. As to this study, the layout structure and rhetorical structure are aimed to be investigated. Moreover, rhetorical structure is analyzed applying Suen's (2009) five most important moves that should be presented on the homepage. It is a well-known fact that a layout plays a vital role in the printed/digital message; however, it is only one aspect of the multimodal structure. Thus, layout

without the support of any other semiotic resource is not enough to express a concise idea about the multimodal structure (Hiippala, 2013:8). For example, layout works well with images. Furthermore, Kress and van Leeuwen's (2006) framework has been chosen to perform the analysis of images on the selected SPA centre homepages.

3.2 Multimodal framework for analyzing images

Referring to Kress and van Leeuwen (2006), social semiotics is 'an attempt to describe and understand how people produce and communicate the meaning in specific social settings' (2006:266). Visual social semiotics is one of the theoretical frameworks that can be used in the analysis of images. This framework is unique in emphasizing that an image itself is a social process.

Kress and van Leeuwen (1996, 2006), have adopted Halliday's framework to the analysis of multimodal texts. The authors see the image as a resource for representation. Therefore, in the analysis of visual communication, they suggest applying three metafunctions (in Kress and van Leeuwen terms: representational, interactive and compositional). As to this research, not all metafunctions are analyzed. The focus is drawn to the representational metafunction, which refers to the people, places, and objects within an image – defined as represented participants and answers the question *what is the picture about* (Harrison, 2003:50).

Taking into account different characteristics of an image, Kress and van Leeuwen have divided images into two types: narrative and conceptual. Narrative images show participants that are connected to one another through lines called vectors. Vectors can be bodies, tools, courses or directions that connect participants and reveal actions (Torres, 2015:243; Harrison, 2003:51). In addition, narrative images tell a story where the participants act as actors who carry out processes. Narrative images include two main processes – action and reactional processes. In the action process, the actor, who is the object in the image, must either have a vector coming out of it or must form a vector itself (Online 10). The passive participant in the action process is called the goal, that is, the participant to whom the vector is addressed (ibid.). The reactional process can be observed through the gaze of the objects in the image. Therefore, the participant who does the looking is referred as the reactor, and the passive participant is named as the phenomenon (Online 10). Conceptual images do not include vectors. According to Kress and van Leeuwen (1996), conceptual images symbolize 'participants in terms of their more generalized and more/less stable and timeless essence, in terms of class, or structure, or meaning' (1996:79). In

other words, the image is categorized into class, structure or meaning. Conceptual images involve three processes: classificatory, analytical and symbolic (Harrison, 2003:51). The classificatory process sees the represented participants as members of the same class; in the analytical process, the represented participants are demonstrated in terms of *part-whole* structure, where the *whole* is a carrier that obtains *parts* called attributes, and the symbolic process highlights that the represented participants are important for their meaning (ibid.).

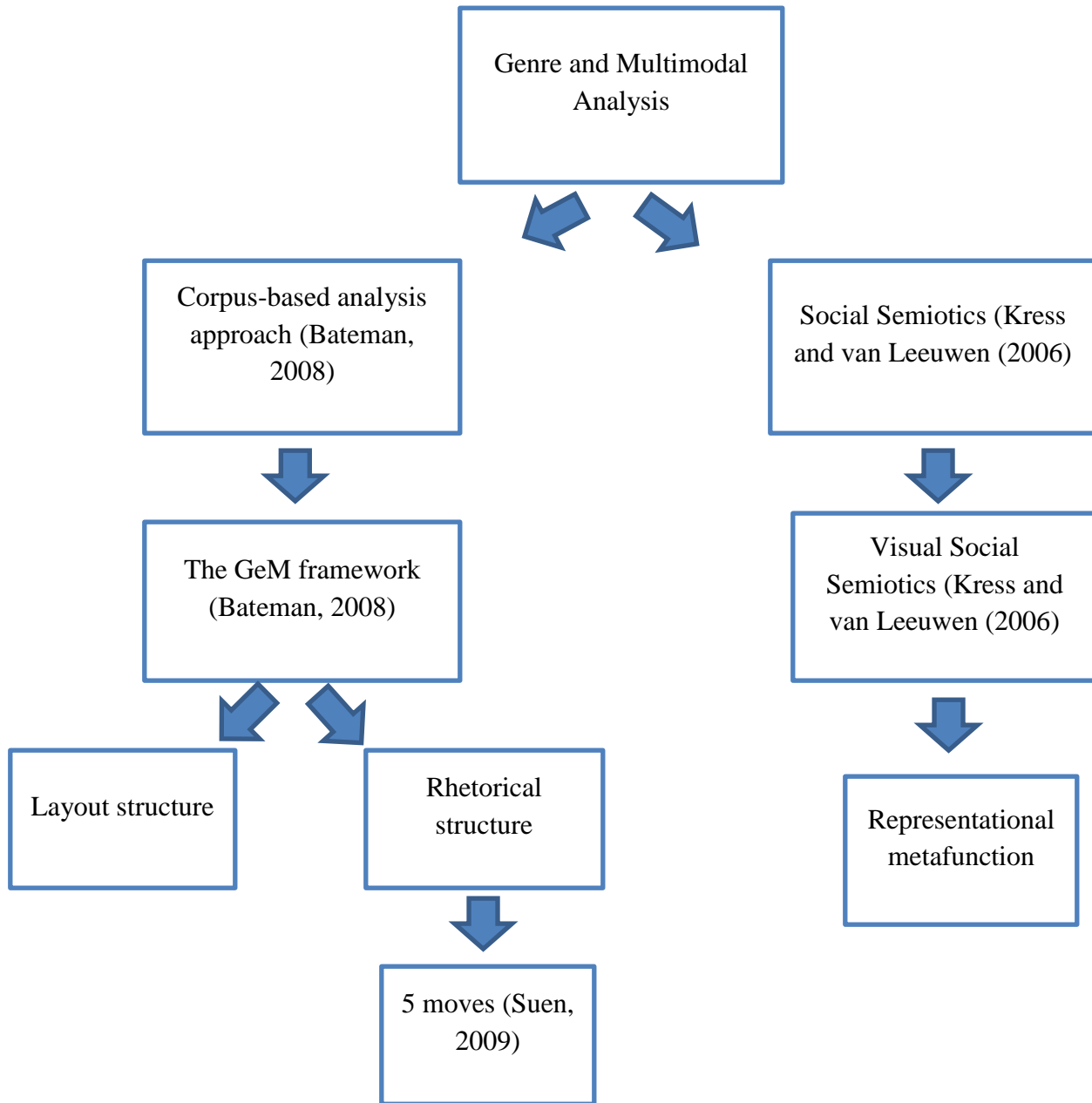
For the analysis of the representational metafunction, Harrison (2003) provides useful questions:

1. Who are the representational participants in the image? Include both human and non-human objects?
2. Are there any vectors in the image that indicate action? If so, what does this action tell?
3. Are the human representatives looking at each other, creating eyeline vectors? If so, what does this tell me about the history of these people?
4. If there are no vectors, what is the image trying to tell in terms of social/cultural concepts? What types of conventional thinking do different objects evoke in me?
5. Is the image complex one with more than one process imbedded within it? If so, how do these embedded processes add to my overall understanding of the image?
6. In terms of overall document/website, does the choice of image representative participant's best enhance its intent and that of the text?

(Harrison, 2003:52)

As these questions are considered valuable for the representational metafunction analysis, they will provide a great support concerning the present research.

The following graphical scheme provides the approaches and frameworks used in the process of the empirical analysis:



To conclude, the analysis of the present study is based on the frameworks provided by Bateman (2008), that is, the GeM framework, which involves the examination of the layout structure and rhetorical structure. Furthermore, rhetorical structure is analyzed applying Suen's five most important moves that the homepage must include. Lastly, Kress and van Leeuwen's visual social semiotic framework is used to investigate the representational metafunction of the image.

4 EMPIRICAL STUDY OF SPA CENTRE HOMEPAGES

Chapter 2 presents the empirical part of the research paper. It comprises information about the research methods, materials, and followed by the findings, which include the genre and multimodal analysis of the selected SPA centre homepages.

4.1 Methods and materials

The present corpus-based analysis of the selected SPA centre homepages examined the layout structure, the rhetorical structure and the representational metafunction of the image. Genre analysis was selected as the most suitable research method for this paper in order to; firstly, identify the structural features that characterize the SPA centre homepages and, secondly, to recognize the representational metafunction elements within the overall structure of the SPA centre homepages.

Genre analysis studies written and spoken texts in terms of their purpose, macrostructure and language choice. Bhatia (1993) suggests that in order to analyse the genre, it is necessary to consider seven steps:

1. Placing the given genre-text in a situational context. This step can be achieved by relying on previous experience, the internal clues in the text and the encyclopaedic knowledge. In the present study, the background and previous knowledge of the SPA industry and homepages provided the situational context for the genre gathered and analysed.
2. Surveying existing literature. This step involves exploring theoretical literature of the particular genre or similar genres, which might be relevant to the situation to be analysed. For the purpose of this study, the literature review included studies by Bhatia (1993, 2004) and Swales (1990) conducted on the concept of genre and genre analysis, by Askehave and Nielsen (2005) who have analysed digital genre and by Kress and van Leeuwen (1996) who have designed the first social semiotic framework for analysing images.
3. Refining the situational/contextual analysis. This step refines the analysis further by defining the speaker/writer of the text and audience – their relationship and goals. For the purpose of this analysis, the owner of the text is a particular organisation, and the audience are potential and existing clients.
4. Selecting corpus. In order to make a decision about the exact type of corpus, genre should be clearly defined to distinguish it from closely related genres. The genre that is applied in

the research should be defined according to its communicative purpose within the situational context. For this study, texts were selected based on the specific purpose of the study, which was to examine the structural pattern and to perform the visual analysis of the SPA centre homepages, exploring how the structural and visual features characterize the homepage.

5. Studying the institutional context. This step involves studying the rules and conventions, such as linguistic, social, cultural, academic and professional, controlling the use of language. In terms of this study, a certain control over the layout structure and rhetorical structure was determined.
6. Levels on linguistic analysis. This step depends on the purpose of the study being conducted, and Bhatia suggests three levels of linguistic realisation. The first one looks at the lexico-grammatical features, which is a corpus based quantitative analysis. The second level of linguistic analysis of a genre is the text-patterning (textualization). The third level is structural interpretation of the text-genre, which deals with cognitive aspects of language organisation. The present research is not concerned with linguistic analysis.
7. Specialist information in genre analysis. This step adds validity of the findings in genre analysis, which can be achieved by using specialist's information provided by a practicing member of the disciplinary culture where the genre is being used. In the present research, specialist information has not been used.

The qualitative research perspective was applied in the research process. This research may be considered as subjective in the approach, as it was used to gain an understanding of the above described phenomenon (Online 4). However, the qualitative research perspective seemed to be appropriate for the set goals because it was used to determine the layout and rhetorical structure of the selected SPA centre homepages, where the rhetorical structure analysis was based on the five moves proposed by Suen (2009). In addition to the genre analysis, Kress and van Leeuwen's (2006) social semiotic framework was applied to analyse images within the overall structural layout of the homepage.

Additionally, validity and reliability are important concepts in the research. Validity is concerned with the correctness of the comprehension of the data (Paltridge, 2006:217), whereas reliability focuses on the regularity of the gained results (ibid.:216). It is assumed that reliability has been ensured by the consistency of the data collection, while validity has been ensured by

accurately describing the findings, which in this research has been done by employing the corpus-based approach in the analysis of the SPA centre homepages.

The corpus of the research was based on six SPA centre homepages. Instead of performing a random selection of a specific SPA centre, the author chose top five SPA centres in Latvia based on the ranking provided in Tripadvisor. In the list of the top five best SPA centres in Latvia are No.1 the ESPA Riga, No.2 the Park SPA, No.3 Body Therapy by Titov, No.4 the Riga Wellness and No.5 the NOVA SPA. The sixth SPA centre is not included in the list of the top best SPA's. It has been freely chosen by the author and the name of this SPA centre is the La Daile SPA. All these SPAs are located in Riga and have their own philosophy regarding the services they provide. The SPAs compete among each other; therefore, they do have their own way to present themselves. Rarely, the client visits the SPA centre without checking out the homepage beforehand. Opening the website, which immediately shows the homepage, is going to give the first impression of the SPA.

4.2 Findings

The present research is focused on the aspect of genre and multimodal analysis. The analysis of each SPA centre homepage is performed separately. At first, the layout structure and rhetorical structure of the homepage are analysed by employing Bateman's (2008) GeM framework with Suen's (2009) five most important moves that should be taken into the consideration when conducting a digital genre analysis. Those moves are *brand identification*, *content introduction*, *the establishment of contact*, *the establishment of credentials* and *the introduction of accommodation*. Secondly, applying Kress and van Leeuwen's (2006) social semiotic framework, the image analysis was conducted to determine how the representational metafunction is used to complement with the layout structure and rhetorical structure of the homepage.

The first and rated as No.1 SPA centre in Latvia is the ESPA Riga. Opening the website, it instantly shows the homepage and its layout (Appendix 1). The layout structure of the homepage can be divided into two blocks – A and B. Block A represents the visual element – image, and block B shows where the content of information is located. Proportionally and visually, block A completes the whole homepage, because, originally, block B is transparent. In other words, the image can be still seen through block B. Breaking down the layout structure into blocks (see Figure 4.2.1), it sets a clear hierarchical organization of the homepage. Therefore, the dominant element in this homepage is image.

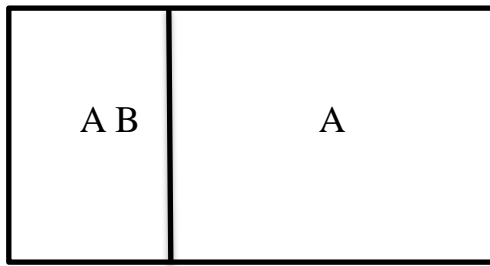


Figure 4.2.1 **Layout structure of ESPA Riga homepage**

Next is the rhetorical structure of the homepage’s content. The rhetorical structure analysis is supported with Suen’s (2009) move model, where in terms of homepage analysis, five moves were highlighted as the most important. Regarding move 1 – brand identification, the ESPA Riga identifies itself by placing the logo on top left corner. Move 2 – content introduction is represented by the navigation bar, which can be identified as a table of contents. The ESPA Riga presents it in a vertical alignment in the left side. Move 3 – the establishment of contact includes the company’s address, telephone, fax, and email, and this information can be found in the bottom left corner of the ESPA Riga homepage. Move 4 – the establishment of credentials is about company’s reputation. This move is achieved by presenting the company’s achievements, and the ESPA Riga provides this information in the bottom left corner. Move 5 – the introduction of accommodation for the SPA websites is the introduction of the SPA services, mainly treatments. On the ESPA Riga homepage, this information can be found going to the navigation bar in the section *treatments*. The following graphical scheme (see Figure 4.2.2) illustrates the rhetorical structure of the homepage.

Move 1	
Move 2 (5)	
Move 3	
Move 4	

Figure 4.2.2 **Rhetorical structure of ESPA Riga homepage**

The ESPA Riga homepage contains four images that change every five seconds. The first image shows a spiral staircase, tiled with a mosaic of black crystal and gold lighting. The second image shows a treatment room with all its attributes. The third image presents the view of one of the SPA facilities – Active leisure area. The fourth image gives an insight into one of the Active leisure area’s water facilities – the experience shower labyrinth. All images include objects. As the images do not include vectors, then those can be categorized as conceptual images. The

images either represent a symbolic process or analytical. For example, the spiral staircase symbolizes the opposing elements – fire and water, which is illustrated using dark colours, and the combination of black mosaic and gold lightening, represents luxury. The analytical process can be seen in the image where the treatment room is shown. The room is seen as a *whole* and attributes such as, the spa bed, footbath, product trolley, client chair and cabinets are seen as *parts*. The image with the active leisure area represents both symbolic and analytical processes. The area is a whole and saunas, the steam room, the experience shower labyrinth, pool and Jacuzzi are *parts*. At the same time, the active leisure area symbolizes relaxation, peace and harmony.

To conclude, the overall structural layout of the ESPA Riga homepage is can be seen in the full view. In terms of the layout, the image is a domineering feature, while the layout structure and the rhetorical structure show accuracy. All content-based information can be found in one place, which makes the search convenient for the user. The choice of images for the ESPA Riga homepage highlights its nature. In addition, the image selection informs the user about the most popular services, which are treatments and the visit to the Active leisure area. Moreover, the homepage welcomes the visitor showing real images of the SPA centre.

The Park SPA is the second and rated as No.2 SPA centre in Latvia. Its homepage is simple, monochromatic, yet giving an impression of entering into the fairy-tale (Appendix 2). As to the layout structure, it is rather unusual. Dividing homepage into blocks A and B (see Figure 4.2.3), block B represents the content, and block A shows the visual element. At the bottom of the homepage, the visual element acts as a foundation and supports the content, which is distributed above it.

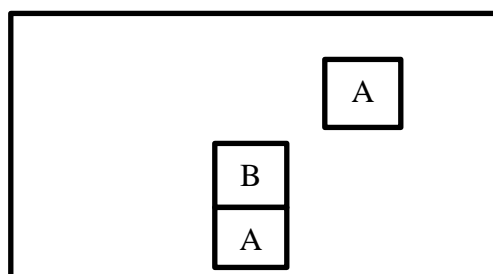


Figure 4.2.3 Layout structure of Park SPA homepage

Next, the rhetorical structure is discussed. Move 1 – the Park SPA identifies its brand by placing the logo in the left side, yet it is not located in the very corner of the homepage. Move 2 – the navigation bar is in a horizontal alignment at the bottom of the homepage; however, the

contents are not distributed evenly. Move 3 - the company's address, telephone, fax, and email are not directly available in the layout of the homepage. To access this information, the user must click on the contact information, which is one of the sections of the navigation bar. Move 4 – the SPA's reputation is not supported by any achievements or awards in the homepage. Move 5 – the introduction of the services is one of the sections of the navigation bar, and it is under the name treatments. The following graphical scheme (see Figure 4.2.4) illustrates the rhetorical structure of the homepage.

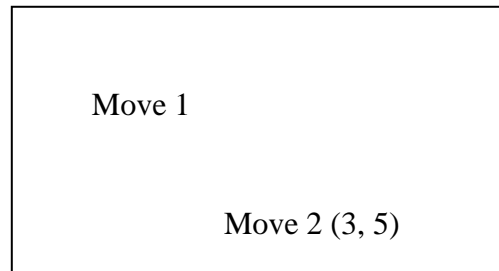


Figure 4.2.4 Rhetorical structure of Park SPA homepage

The Park SPA homepage has no images, except for a brown background colour with graphical trees. The background font with the trees represents the conceptual image type that provides a symbolic process. The name of the SPA centre is the Park SPA, and the trees that support the navigation bar, are the symbol of the park. The background colour is brown, which symbolizes the ground. Combining these elements together the background visual illustration represents nature, oxygen, fresh air and perhaps a refreshing breeze.

To conclude, the layout structure and rhetorical structure do not say much. Perhaps it is intended to be like that or the homepage's aim is to be mysterious; therefore, reinforcing the reader's curiosity to explore further. Presumptions can be different, yet it leaves the reader wondering. The homepage of the Park SPA is more imaginative than realistic. In other words, the homepage does not communicate the real world of the SPA, only if the user decides to explore it by going to one of the sections of the navigation bar, where some images are provided. The overall appearance looks rather naked.

Body Therapy by Titov is the third and rated as No.3 SPA centre in Latvia (Appendix 3). The homepage can be fully viewed only if the user scrolls down the page. Regarding the layout structure, the homepage largely consists of images and written text. The graphical scheme is divided into the following blocks (see Figure 4.2.5): block A – image; block B – content; block C – written information.

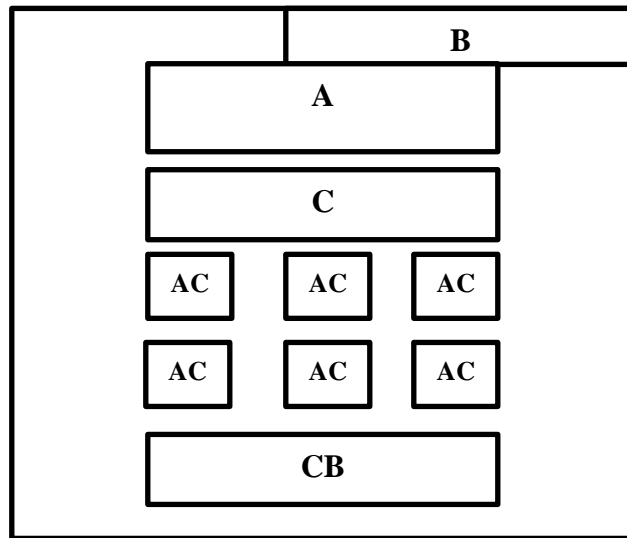


Figure 4.2.5 Layout structure of Body Therapy by Titov homepage

The layout evidently consists of different textual and visual elements and the interrelation of these elements. Proportionally, written information takes more space among the other elements and it is followed by the image, and less space is given to the content.

Rhetorical structure is achieved as follows: Move 1 – the brand is identified by the logo, and its placement does not differ from the previous SPA centre homepages. It is located in the top left corner. Move 2 – the navigation bar is in a horizontal alignment at the top of the homepage, and it moves along when the user scrolls down the page. Move 3 - the SPA centre’s telephone and email are indicated at the very top of the homepage and also at the very bottom. Move 4 – the SPA’s reputation is supported by the reviews given from clients, and they are offered to be seen in the homepage. Move 5 – a full range of services can be seen in the navigation bar, and also they are listed at the bottom of the homepage. In addition, introductory information of some services can be found in the middle of the homepage. For better understanding, the following graphical scheme (see Figure 4.2.6) illustrates the rhetorical structure of the homepage.

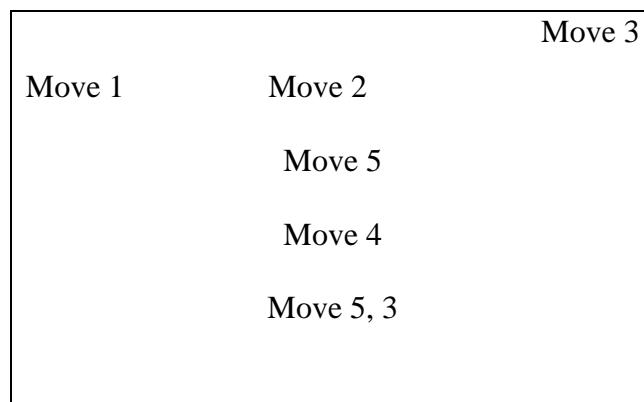


Figure 4.2.6 Rhetorical structure of Body Therapy by Titov homepage

The two main images of the homepage are narrative images, which perform the action process. Both images include two participants. The actor in this process is the therapist whose goal is the woman – the client. The process of the body massage is represented by the vector, which is the therapist’s arms, and arms form a visible line, which connects both participants. It can be observed that the represented participants are acting on and interacting with each other.

To conclude, the homepage portrays a realistic representation of the SPA centre. Comparing this to the previous homepage analysis, the layout structure is diverse. As to the rhetorical structure, the moves are not arranged in order, yet this signifies the importance of each move. For each web designer, the importance of the information that is represented in each move is different.

The Riga Wellness SPA is the fourth and rated as No.4 SPA centre in Latvia (Appendix 4). Opening the SPA centre’s website, it directly navigates the viewer to the price and service section on the navigation bar. Therefore, the layout structure largely consists of written information. The information presents the list of the beauty services offered. The following graphical scheme (see Figure 4.2.7) demonstrates the layout of the homepage, where block B represents the content and block C – written information.

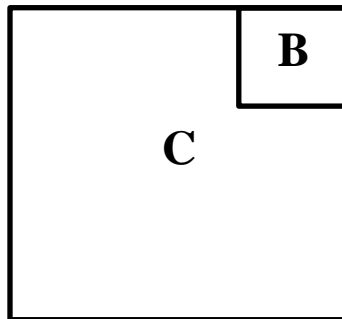


Figure 4.2.7 Layout structure of Riga Wellness SPA homepage

The homepage looks plain, and it shows no intention to attract the attention of the visitor.

As to the rhetorical structure, the homepage managed to include nearly all moves. Move 1 – SPA centre’s logo is placed in the top left corner. Move 2 – the navigation bar consists of four sections: price and services, contact information, information about the staff and the salon. This move can be found in the top right corner. Move 3 – contact details, which include the telephone number and e-mail, can be seen in the top right corner. Move 4 is not presented in the homepage. Move 5, on the other hand, is distributed throughout the whole homepage, which indicates the importance of this particular move. This move includes written content information about the

SPA services. The following graphical scheme (see Figure 4.2.8) shows the rhetorical structure of the homepage

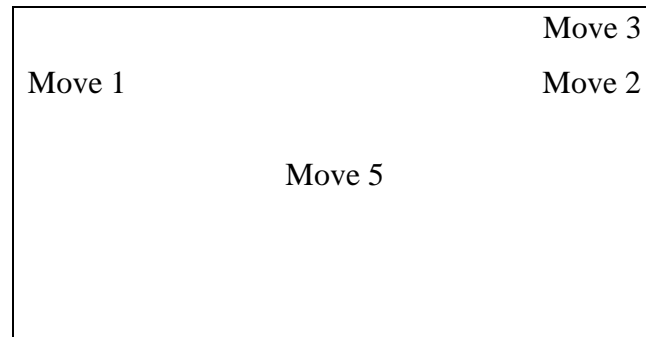


Figure 4.2.8 Rhetorical structure of Riga Wellness SPA homepage

Regarding images, this SPA centre’s homepage does not include any. The homepage has white background with some grey and green colour contrasts. The homepage aims to provide textual information.

The NOVA SPA is the fifth and rated as No. 5 SPA centre in Latvia (Appendix 5). In comparison with the previous SPA centre’s homepage, the layout structure of this homepage looks appealing, and it is organized in a way that all necessary information is accessible in the homepage. Minimum written descriptive information is given. The following graphical scheme (see Figure 4.2.9) presents the layout structure of the homepage. Block A represents the image; block B – the content; block C – the written information; block D – the video and block E – the map.

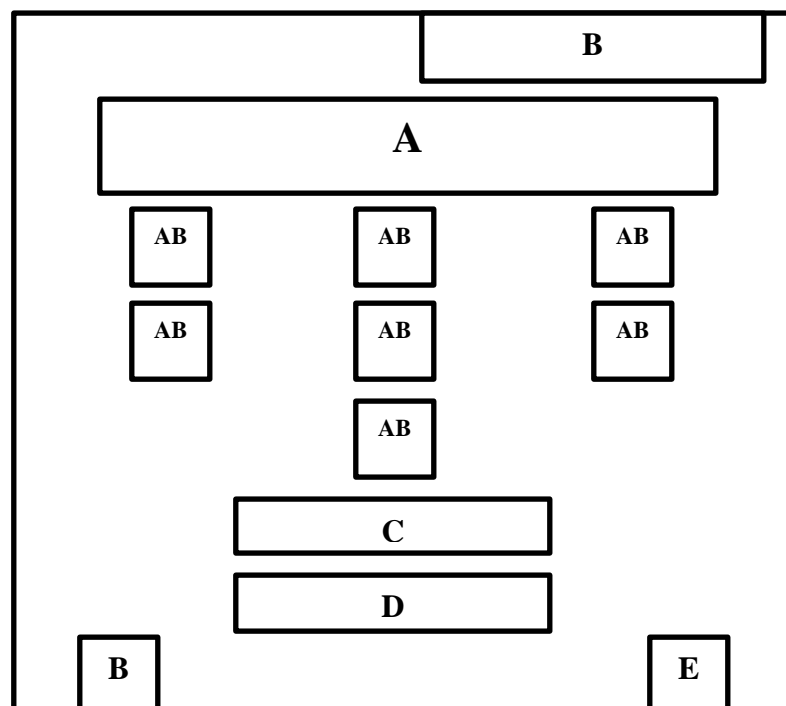


Figure 4.2.9 **Layout structure of NOVA SPA homepage**

Regarding the rhetorical structure, the homepage includes all five moves. Yet, they are not distributed in order. Move 1 – the logo is found in the top left corner. Move 2 – the navigation bar is within the same alignment with move 1. Only move 2 is located in the top right corner. Move 3 – the contact details are placed twice, but in different locations. Contact details can be found in the top right corner, where only phone number is indicated, and in the bottom left corner, where the address, phone number and e-mail are given. Move 4 – the SPA centre’s reputation and recognition are delivered through the presentation of the client reviews. Lastly, move 5 is placed in the middle of the homepage, which provides the overall service list, with the combination of an appropriate image. For example, the SPA provides aromatherapy treatments, and the image, which is attached to the name of the service, shows a bottle of essential oils. For better understanding of the move placement, the following graphical scheme (see Figure 4.2.10) illustrates the rhetorical structure of the homepage.

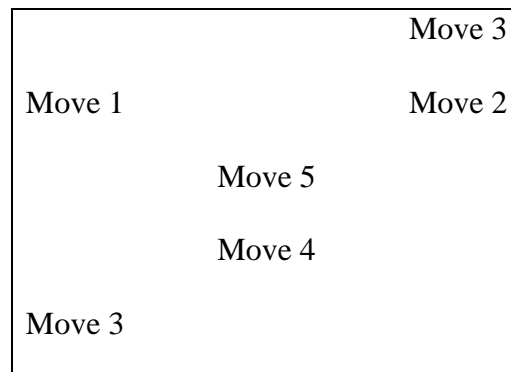


Figure 4.2.10 **Rhetorical structure of NOVA SPA homepage**

The NOVA SPA homepage contains five introductory images, which change every few seconds. All images are conceptual images, because vectors are not present, and none of the images illustrates an action process. The images rather represent the analytical process, where the reception and reception’s lounge area are shown. The carriers in the image are the reception area and the lounge area, representing the whole. Its possessive attributes (the parts) are objects such as armchairs, tea table, room plants, candles, reception desk and product shelves. The images illustrated in the homepage demonstrate the real conditions of the SPA centre. Overall, the NOVA SPA homepage perfectly achieved its goal of presenting a good first impression. The homepage is easy to focus on, foreseeable and motivates the user to explore it further. The

homepage includes all main information that the user would look for in the first place, and the layout and rhetorical structure are appropriately harmonized with images.

Lastly, the sixth, purposefully chosen SPA centre is the La Daile SPA (Appendix 6). The layout structure and the rhetorical structure of the homepage give an impression of the saying *the less is more* or *the less is better*. However, this saying cannot be achieved successfully in all cases. Yet, this is not the case. Regarding the layout of the homepage, it is largely focused on the background image, and the other components are only considered as additional. The following graphical scheme (see Figure 4.2.11) presents the layout of the homepage. Block A represents the image; block B – the content and block C – the written information.

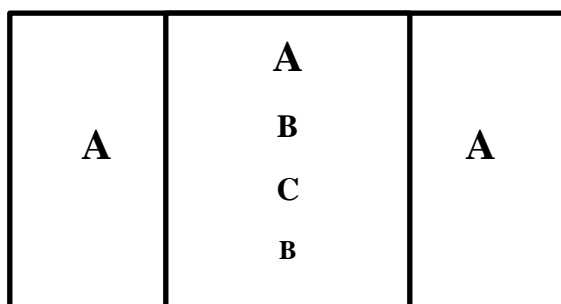


Figure 4.2.11 **Layout structure of La Daile SPA homepage**

Block A, which shows the position of the image, covers all homepage and the middle area, which consists of the content and the written information is translucent. The layout is similar to the ESPA Riga homepage.

As to the rhetorical structure, only two moves have been used – move 1 and move 2. Move 1 (brand identification) is achieved by showing the logo and placing it at the top in the middle of the homepage. Move 2 (content introduction) is placed twice. At first, it is placed below the logo, containing the sections - *about us, special offers, SPA, for future mothers, pool, saunas, membership and contacts*. Below this content, written information is provided, which consists of a short poem, and then again, the same content structure is offered, in a smaller print. For better understanding of the move placement, the following graphical scheme (see Figure 4.2.12) illustrates rhetorical structure layout of the homepage. In relation to Moves 3, 4 and 5, move 3 and 5 can be found, if the user navigates himself/herself to the contents list and selects one of the service options or contact information. Move 4 is not available.

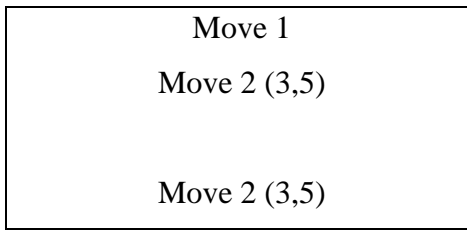


Figure 4.2.12 Rhetorical structure of La Daile SPA homepage

Not being able to see the visual content, the homepage looks rather plain and similar to the rhetorical structure of the ESPA Riga and the Park SPA homepages. Therefore, in this case, the background image plays a significant role in the overall layout of the homepage.

The image shows the daffodil – a yellow spring flower, which draws all the attention. It is a conceptual image, and it performs a symbolic process. It represents the current weather season, which is spring. The yellow colour symbolized the sun, which represents warmth. Having explored this website before, it can be said that the background image changes occasionally, which indicates that the SPA web designers put a lot of attention in updating the homepage’s visual appearance.

Having analyzed six SPA centre homepages, it can be concluded that each SPA centre’s homepage has its own design. Yet, a few similarities were found regarding the rhetorical structure. For instance, five out of six homepages placed their logo in the top left corner, which indicates the common brand identification concept. Also, the navigation bar is provided in a horizontal alignment in five out of six SPA centre homepages. In terms of the layout structure, all homepages were structured differently. Only the ESPA Riga and the La Daile SPA homepage layout structures were rather similar in terms of content background, namely both homepages had translucent content background. In addition, both of these SPA centres covered the background of the homepage with an image. The NOVA SPA and Body Therapy by Titov provide a convenient layout and rhetorical structure. Both SPA centres have tried to include all possible elements and rhetorical structure moves in the homepage. Trying to make the search convenient for the user, the NOVA SPA’s homepage layout and rhetorical structure are more organized, modest and more foreseeable than the homepage of Body Therapy by Titov. As to the Park SPA and the Riga Wellness SPA homepage layout and rhetorical structure, they do not provoke any memorable reaction. The homepages are plain with no image use. However, the Park SPA has some graphic illustration of trees and coloured background, while the Riga Wellness SPA’s homepage has white background, and it largely consists of written information.

Considering the homepage layout and rhetorical structure and image involvement, the author of this research has created a subjective homepage rating. Holding a subjective view that the homepage should be seen in full view and contain only the main information, which is the logo, the navigation bar (including obligatory information: about the company – the SPA; services and prices – treatments and contact information (telephone number, email, address and the location shown in the map – optional)) and an image. The SPA centre, which corresponds to the above mentioned layout and rhetorical structure components the most, is the La Daile SPA and the ESPA Riga SPA. The NOVA SPA and Body Therapy by Titov are next and the last are the Park SPA and the Riga Wellness SPA.

CONCLUSIONS

Nowadays it is expected that companies have their own websites. They are created for different reasons; however, the main purposes are to inform and to promote the services/products of the company. To achieve the goals, the company has to leave a memorable impression. Entering the website, the visitor sees the webpage or the homepage, which should affect the visitor positively. Only making a remarkable first impression will develop further communication and success in achieving the informative and promotional goals. The first impression is created by observing the overall layout of the homepage. Aspects, as layout structure, rhetorical structure and image placement form the overall layout of the homepage. Therefore, the aim of the research was to account for the genre characteristics of the selected SPA centre homepages.

To achieve the aim, relevant theories on genre, digital genre and multimodal discourse were studied. The literature review was mainly based on the studies proposed by Bhatia (1993, 2004), Askehave and Nielsen (2005), Kress and van Leeuwen (1996, 2006), Suen (2009) and Jewitt, Bezemer and O'Halloran (2016). The genre analysis and the multimodal analysis were applied to identify the layout structure and the rhetorical structure of the selected SPA centre homepages and to recognize the elements of the representational metafunction within the overall layout of the homepage.

As a result of the literature review, the following conclusions can be made:

- Cybergenre is a new class of genre, which is subdivided into extant and novel genres. Extant cybergenres are based on the existing genres, and novel cybergenres are based on the new medium.
- Homepages belong to the novel cybergenres, and they are classified into three types: personal homepages (created by one person), corporate homepages (created by the company) and organization homepages (created by a group of people).
- The Web is the digital medium used to reach global audience. Not only the Web is the main channel used to look for information, but also to publish it.
- A website is a collection of one or more webpages. A webpage is a digital document providing information about a specific topic. A homepage is the first page or the front page of any website. The company's homepage performs a crucial role in the overall success of the brand, and its main function is to encourage the visitors to stay and explore the company's website.

- Multimodal Discourse Analysis develops the study of language in combination with such elements as images, gestures and sounds.
- In multimodal texts, the image is a resource for representation, and to analyze the image three metafunctions can be used: representational function (about the people, places and objects within the image), interactive function (about the actions between the participants in the image) and compositional function (how the representational and interactive metafunctions relate to each other).

The empirical analysis employed the GeM framework (Bateman, 2008) to explore the layout structure and the rhetorical structure, Suen's (2009) five move model to conduct the digital rhetorical structure analysis of the homepage, and Kress and van Leeuwen's (1996, 2006) visual social semiotic framework to investigate the representational metafunction of the image. As a result of the analysis of six SPA centre homepages, it can be concluded that:

- The Park SPA and the Riga Wellness SPA homepage layout structure failed in fulfilling the function of the first impression since the homepages were plain and did not include images.
- Body Therapy by Titiov and the NOVA SPA homepages included all the necessary information, which is quite useful; however, in order to see all information, the visitor has to scroll up and down the page, which might not be convenient for the visitor who is in a rush to find the necessary information.
- The ESPA Riga and the La Daile SPA homepage genre characteristics succeeded in fulfilling the function of the first impression. The homepages were structured applying the minimalistic approach, that is, simplicity in the layout structure and the rhetorical structure, complementing these with well-suited images. This results in a memorable first impression. Moreover, the search for information is convenient for both - the users who are in a rush and those who have time to explore the website. In addition, scrolling up and down the page is either minimal or not necessary at all.

From the author's point of view, the use of visual elements, the company's logo and the navigation bar, which consists of the information about the company, services and prices and contact information, is enough for a homepage to attract the visitor's attention. Some additional sections can be added, such as, special offers and a gallery. At the same time, it might seem that it would be more useful to present some of the information directly on the homepage. For example, in this research, it was observed that some SPA centres provide contact details on the homepage,

and it can be also found as one of the sections of the navigation bar – for double safety. However, modern humanity is so digitally intelligent that they are able to navigate themselves throughout the homepage; therefore, it is enough that contact information is provided on the navigation bar, where the user will find all the necessary contact information. In some cases, it was observed that the overuse of information covers up the navigation bar, which should be seen in the first place.

This research was also aimed to find out how the representational metafunction assists in the self-presentation of the SPA centres. Concerning all six SPA centre homepages, it can be concluded that the conceptual images appeared more than narrative images, performing a symbolic process aimed to establish the meaning of the image. The SPA images which showed the facilities, interior and the real picture of the SPA promote the user's trust in the SPA centre. However, those SPAs which did not display real images on their homepages made visitors navigate themselves throughout the homepage, which also turned out to be sufficient for a good first impression.

The following limitations of the study can be acknowledged. The analysis focused on the observation of the structural pattern of the homepage; therefore, linguistic elements were not taken into consideration. Moreover, the GeM framework provided by Bateman (2008) involved the five-level analysis, from which only two were applicable for the present research. In terms of visual analysis, out of the three Kress and van Leeuwen's (1996, 2006) metafunctions only one was taken. Further research can be developed by including the concept of hypertextuality.

THESES

1. Digital genre is a genre that is in a digital form, such as emails, blogs, websites and homepages. Being a member of the promotional genre colony, the digital genre performs the functions of the promotional genre. Thus, the general aim of the digital genre is to inform and promote company's products and services using its own website.
2. The Internet has become the primary medium of business communication. Most companies have their own websites, which they use for communication purposes with the members of the respective community, and the website is also used as a promotional tool.
3. Entering the particular company's website, the visitor becomes a temporary member of that community. To make the visitor a permanent member, a memorable impression must be made so that the visitor is willing to engage in further communication.
4. Homepage is part of a website, and it is aimed to create the first impression. A well-designed homepage is important for building trust; it plays a vital role in the overall success of the company's brand, and its main function is to convince the users to stay and explore the website.
5. Homepage communicates through visual elements, content and written information, which are known as semiotic modes of multimodality; and multimodality is a combination of semiotic modes.
6. Applying Bateman's (2008) Genre and Multimodal (GeM) framework together with Suen's (2009) five moves, the layout structure and rhetorical structure can establish how the genre characteristics help to fulfill the function of the first impression.
7. Applying Kress and van Leeuwen's (2006) social semiotic framework, the image analysis determined how the representational metafunction assists in the self-presentation of the SPA centres. The ESPA Riga homepage involved images that provided the real representation of the SPA; therefore, boosting credibility and building trust with the client.
8. In terms of the layout structure, rhetorical structure, and image involvement, four out of six SPA centre homepages successfully fulfilled the function of the first impression.
9. The representational metafunction is concerned with the general meaning of the image, and it divides images into two types: narrative and conceptual. Narrative images create the story, while conceptual images present the idea of the image. The SPA centre

homepages were mainly based on the conceptual images and the meaning of the images was achieved through the symbolic process.

10. Through visiting the website, the user communicates with the company, and once entering the website, the user is face-to-face with the homepage. Homepage determines further communication between the company and the user.
11. The applied frameworks can be used to account for the layout structure, rhetorical structure and images of the SPA centre homepages.

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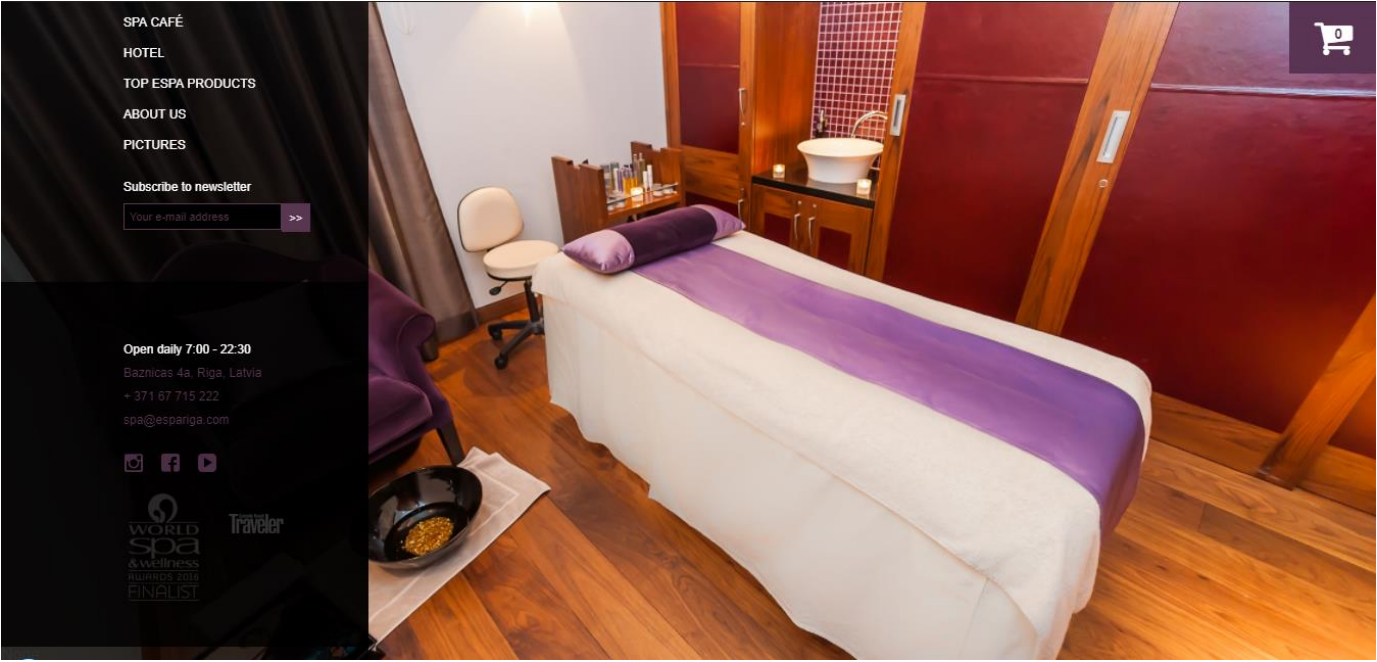
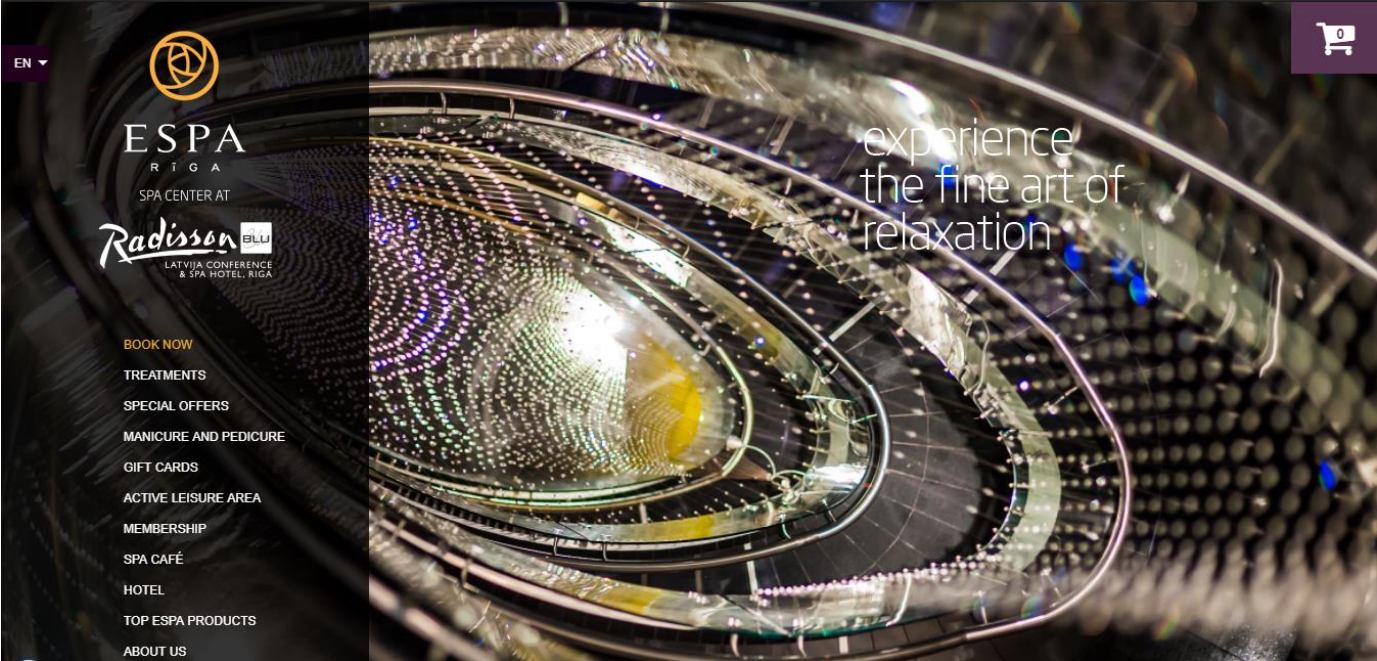
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APPENDIX 1 ESPA Riga homepage

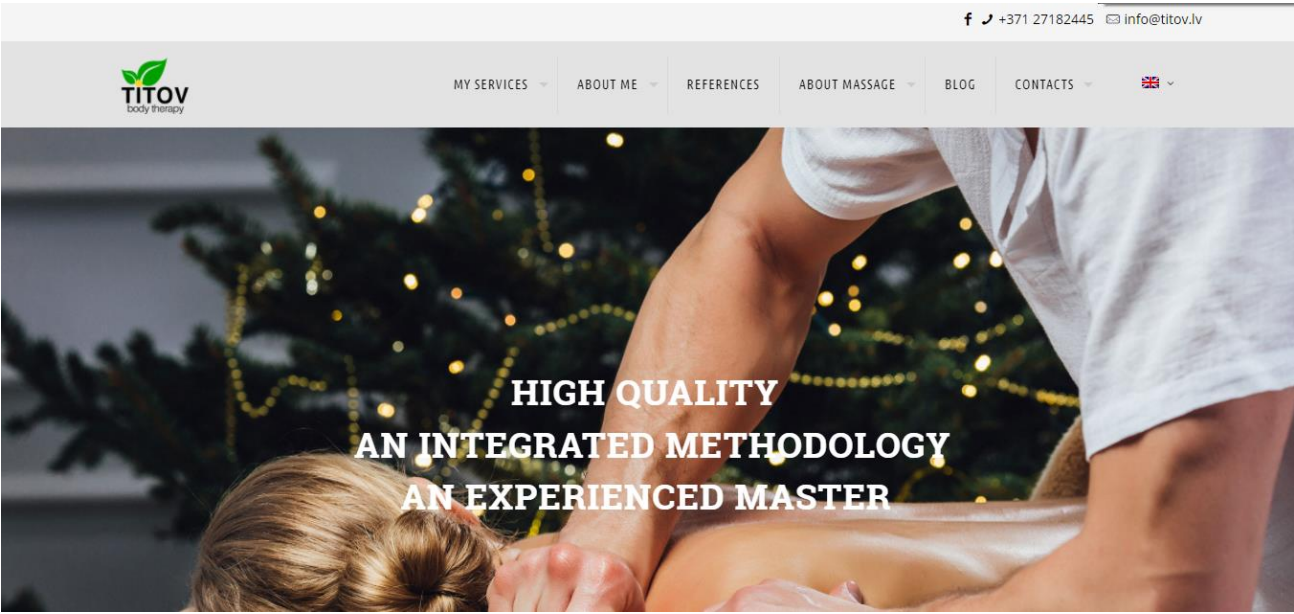
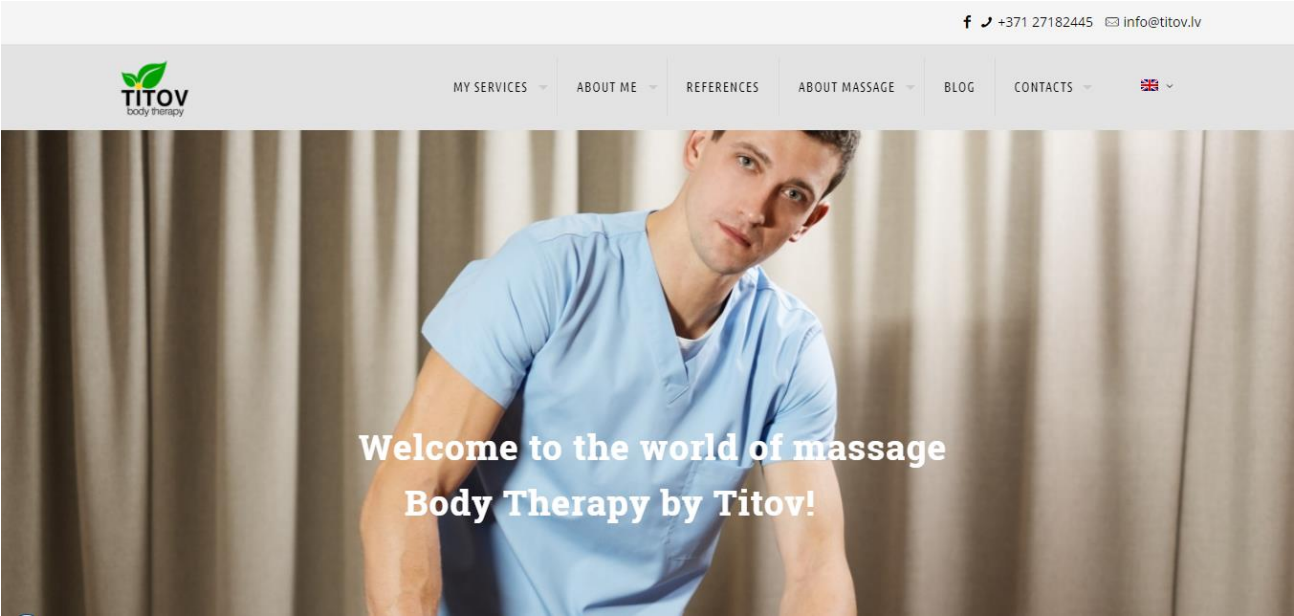




APPENDIX 2 Park SPA homepage



APPENDIX 3 Body Therapy by Titov homepage



WELCOME TO "BODYTHERAPY BY TITOV" MASSAGE SALON IN RIGA

I will offer more than just massage. I will offer a unique feeling of relaxation, transformation of your body and soul, obtaining physical and emotional balance and health. For me, any and every client is important and valuable, so I won't just offer professional services, but primarily will share my knowledge and try to give the delightful feeling of ease and comfort, which will come to you after the massage.

My background is a many-year long way of continuous experience and constant improvement. I have been acquiring knowledge and skills from great masters in more than 10 countries around the world. During this time, I have met hundreds of people as my clients.

If you are looking for a personal masseur who can delicately devise the most suitable massage for you, rejuvenate, cleanse and shape your body, give you joy of relaxation and renewal, I'll be glad to get acquainted with you.



CLASSIC MASSAGE



FITNESS MASSAGE



RELAXING MASSAGE



CLASSIC MASSAGE

Classic massage is a pleasant and universal means of effects on your skin, muscles, joints, central nervous system and your whole body.

[Read more](#)



FITNESS MASSAGE

Fitness massage helps to improve endurance, muscles and gain an excellent physical shape. Fitness massage is a perfect means of prevention and treatment of injuries.

[Read more](#)

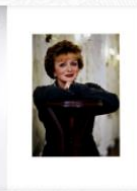


RELAXING MASSAGE

Relaxing massage is one of the most effective ways to relieve fatigue and tension caused by stress and physical exertion.

[Read more](#)

REFERENCES





MY SERVICES ▾

ABOUT ME ▾

REFERENCES

ABOUT MESSAGE ▾

BLOG

CONTACTS ▾



*"Jāpūtānārtiņģis"
"Tāpat kā dabā, arī
mēs esam ar dabu
savienoti, un dabai
mēs esam jāpateicamies.
Tāpēc mēs esam
savienoti ar dabu."
C. Jāpūtānārtis*



*"Mēs esam dabas bērni,
un dabai mēs esam jāpateicamies.
Tāpēc mēs esam
savienoti ar dabu."
C. Jāpūtānārtis*



*"Mēs esam dabas bērni,
un dabai mēs esam jāpateicamies.
Tāpēc mēs esam
savienoti ar dabu."
C. Jāpūtānārtis*



*"Mēs esam dabas bērni,
un dabai mēs esam jāpateicamies.
Tāpēc mēs esam
savienoti ar dabu."
C. Jāpūtānārtis*



[Read other references](#)

BodyTherapy by Titov

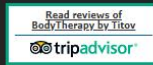
Welcome to the massage world of BodyTherapy by Titov. For almost 10 years I have almost daily been using my talent given to me by the nature and skills and knowledge acquired through studies and practice to give pleasure, relaxation and treatment to my clients.

My Services

- Classic massage
- Relaxing massage
- Fitness massage
- Anti-cellulite massage
- Deep tissue massage
- Reflexology foot massage

Contacts

+371 27182445
info@titov.lv



APPENDIX 4 Riga Wellness SPA homepage

booking@rigawellness.lv | +371 23 00 84 77
lv ru

[Prices and Services](#) [Contact](#) [Staff](#) [Salon](#)

Beauty & Wellness

Hairdressing Salon

Riga Wellness Official L'Oreal Partner In Latvia

- Women's Cut & Form – 24 EUR
- Men's Cut & Form – 19 EUR
- Hairstyle – 19 EUR
- Evening Hairstyle – 29 EUR
- Hair Mask During Hair Washing – 7 EUR

Colour (L'Oreal Inoa) + Cut + Form – From 69 EUR To 110 EUR
Colour (L'Oreal Inoa) + Form – From 45 EUR To 86 EUR

Chat live with an agent now!

Online ^

booking@rigawellness.lv | +371 23 00 84 77
lv ru

[Prices and Services](#) [Contact](#) [Staff](#) [Salon](#)

Massage / Rituals

Up To Two Persons At The Same Time. In Separate Rooms. Depends On Schedule.

- Back Massage – 30 Min > 25 EUR, 45 Min > 35 EUR
- Classic Massage – 60 Min > 45 EUR, 90 Min > 65 EUR
- Legs Massage – 30 Min > 35 EUR
- Aroma Massage – 30 Min > 30 EUR, 45 Min > 40 EUR, 60 Min > 49 EUR
- Honey Massage – 60 Min 51 EUR
- Vanilla-Monoï Relaxing Body Treatment – 39 EUR
- Tribal Orient Oriental Body Ritual – 59,95 EUR
- The Ideal Silhouette Slimming Treatment – 89 EUR

Chat live with an agent now!

Online ^

Manicure

Classical Manicure – 16 EUR

Classical Manicure With Hybrid Lacquer – 30 EUR

Hybrid Lacquer Removing – 7 EUR

Hybrid Lacquer Without Manicure – 19 EUR

Gel Nails Modelling On Forms – 50 EUR

Gel Nails Prophylaxis – 42 EUR

Gel Lacquer On Own Nails – 34 EUR

Gel Nails Removing + Manicure + Nails Fixing Agent – 34 EUR

Chat live with an agent now!

Online ^



Pedicure

Classical Apparatus Pedicure (Dry). (Feet Handling With Disposable Instruments, Nails Handling, Piling, Crème) – 34 EUR

Classical Apparatus Pedicure (Dry) With Hybrid Lacquer – 42 EUR

Express Pedicure With Hybrid Lacquer (Only Nails Handling) – 34 EUR

Express Pedicure (Only Feet Or Nails Handling) – 16 EUR

French Technique – 6 EUR

Chat live with an agent now!

Online ^



Cosmetology

Manual Face Deep Cleaning – 50 EUR

Relaxing Face Treatment 30 Min – 34 EUR

Relaxing Face Treatment 60 Min – 56 EUR

Ultrasonic Face Peeling – 43 EUR

Chemical Face Deep Peeling – 59 EUR

Deep Manual Cleaning + Chemical Peeling – 59 EUR

Face Treatment With Light Natura Bisse Peeling – 43 EUR

Deep Manual Face Treatment + Ultrasonic Peeling – 70 EUR

Face Medical Deep Cleaning With Fruit Acid Pilling – 59

Chemical Pilling Depends On Skin Type And Status – 59

Chat live with an agent now!

Online ^



Waxing

Half Legs – 17 EUR

Full Legs – 22 EUR

Upper Lip (Sugaring) – 7 EUR

Half Arms (Sugaring) – 15 EUR

Arms (Sugaring) – 22 EUR

Under Arms (Sugaring) – 15 EUR

For Men (No Bikini Wax For Men) – From 16 EUR

Bikini Classical (Sugaring) – 22 EUR

Bikini Brazillian (Sugaring) – 32 EUR

Chat live with an agent now!

Online ^



Eyebrow / Eyelashes

Eyebrow Correction And Coloring – 13 EUR

Eyebrow Correction – 8 EUR

Eyebrow Colouring – 8 EUR

Eyelashes Extension – 1/1, 2d, 3d, 4d, 5d – 39, 47, 55, 63, 71 EUR

Keratin Eyelashes Lamination BIO – 58 EUR

Keratin Eyelashes Lamination – 66 EUR

Chat live with an agent now!

Online ^



Make Up

Day Make Up – 25 EUR

Evening Make Up – 34 EUR

Wedding Make Up – 50 EUR

Child "Aqua" Make Up (Per Kid) – 8.5 EUR

Out-Call Make Up. Only In Riga Borders Or Jurmala. Plus 10 EUR

Chat live with an agent now!

Online ^



Child "Aqua" Make Up (Per Kid) – 8,5 EUR



booking@rigawellness.lv | +371 23 00 84 77

Out-Call Make Up. Only In Riga Borders Or Jurmala. Plus 10 EUR

lv ru

[Prices and Services](#) [Contact](#) [Staff](#) [Salon](#)

Gift Cards From Twenty-Five Euros.

Volume Discounts. Buy Three Services And More And Receive Five Percent Discount.

Chat live with an agent now!

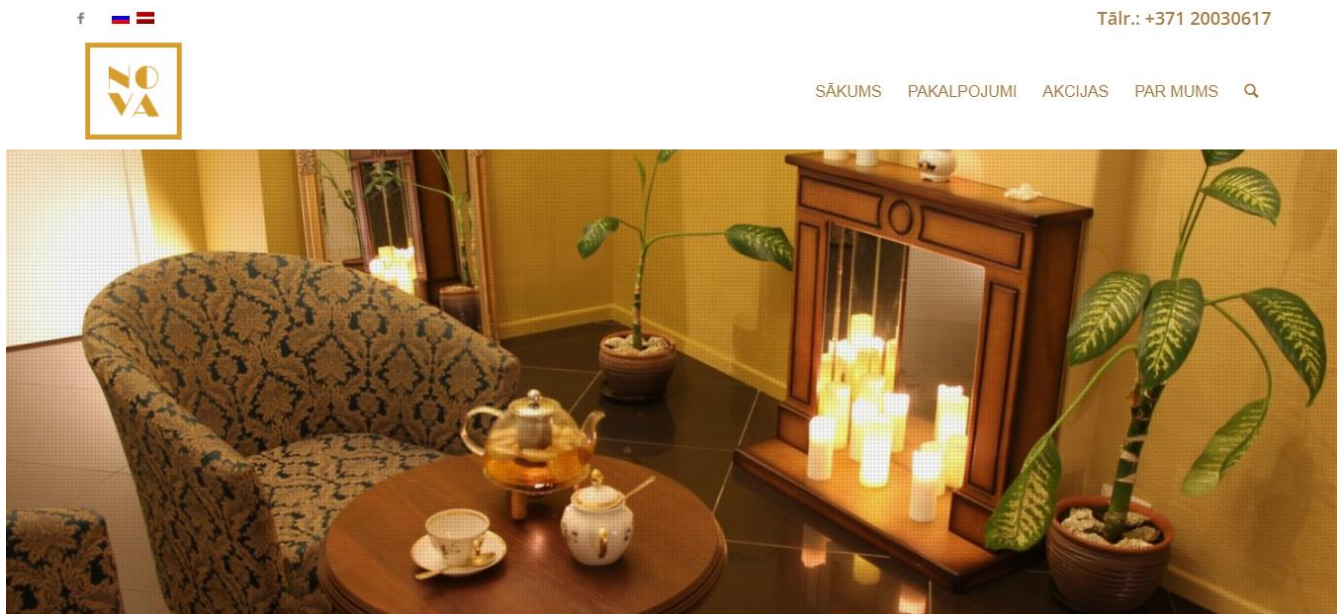
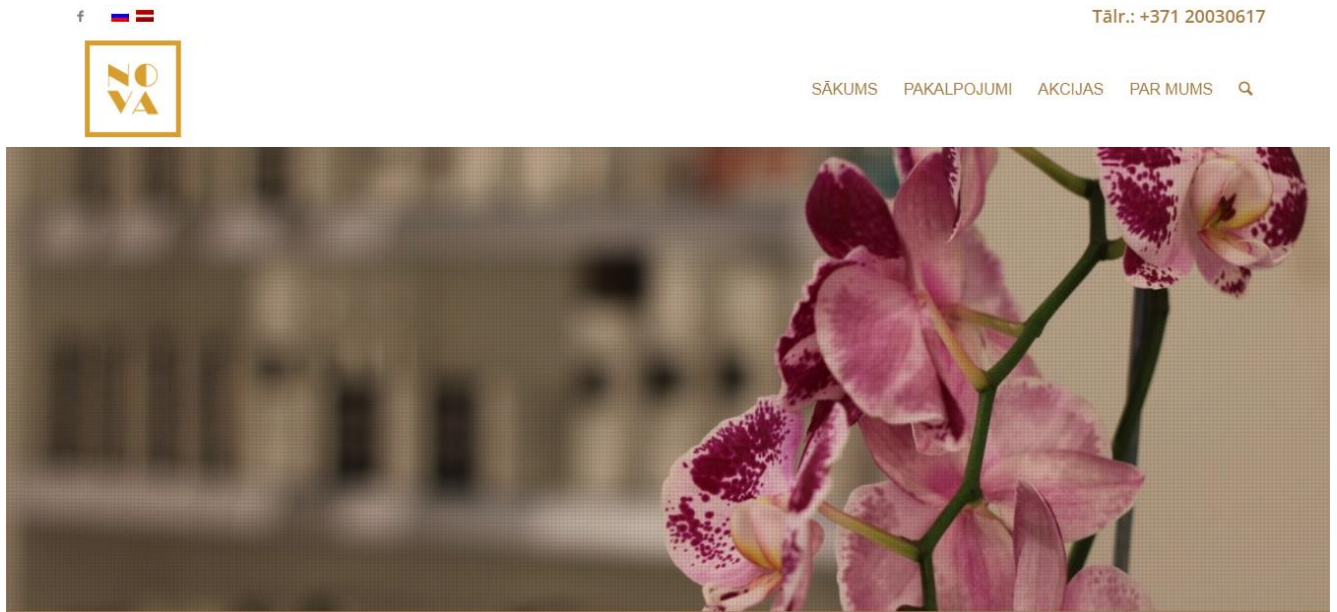
Online

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APPENDIX 5 NOVA SPA homepage







MŪSU PAKALPOJUMI



Kosmetoloģija



Masāža



SPA procedūras





Serviss ar izbraukšanu



Fitobārs



Pirts procedūras



Aroma



ATSAUKSMES



Probably the best massage of my life, and the owners are unique. I'll come back



Valdi Valdivielso





Kontakti



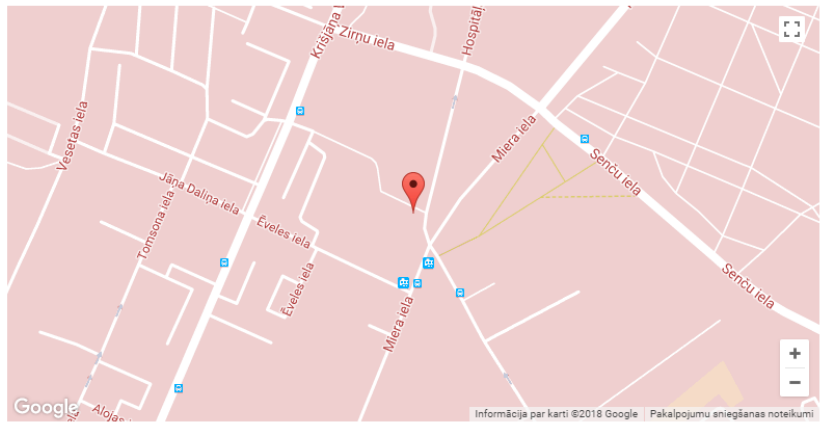
Adrese:
Hospitāļu 5, Rīga



Tālrunis:
+ 371 20 030 617



E-mail:
info@novasalon.lv



APPENDIX 6 La Daile SPA homepage



Dokumentārā lapa

Bakalaura darbs „Self-presentation of SPA Centres on their Websites” (SPA centru tēls to tīmekļa vietnēs) izstrādāts LU Humanitāro zinātņu fakultātē.

Ar savu parakstu apliecinu, ka pētījums veikts patstāvīgi, izmantoti tikai tajā norādītie informācijas avoti un iesniegtā darba elektroniskā kopija atbilst izdrukai.

Autors: Agnese Gudre

24. 05. 2018.

Rekomendēju/nerekomendēju darbu aizstāvēšanai

Vadītāja: profesore Dr. Philol. Indra Karapetjana

24. 05. 2018.

Recenzents: lektore Ilze Ruža

Studiju metodiķe: Samanta Matecka

24. 05. 2018.

Darbs iesniegts Anglistikas nodaļā 24. 05. 2018.

Darbu pieņēma: Tatjana Bicjutko

Darbs aizstāvēts bakalaura gala pārbaudījuma komisijas sēdē

2018. gada..... jūnijā, prot. Nr., vērtējums

Komisijas sekretāre: