Heritage and cultural tourism is an important sector in the global tourism arena (Richards, 2000; Silberberg, 1995). It is the fastest growing sector in the tourism industry in the world (Ashworth, 2000; Ryan & Dewar, 1995). The development of heritage tourism has contributed to the development of heritage interpreting. Heritage interpreting is very important because it plays a role as a mediator of communication between individuals from different parts of the world on the heritage values of a place or an object. It is also used to foster a positive attitude towards preservation and conservation (Mascardo, 1999). According to Hammit (1981), oral mediation (interpreting) is the most effective method for heritage interpreting as it affects the experience gained by the visitors at the heritage sites; it serves as an important instrument to increase visitors’ satisfaction and helps them understand the foreign sources or substances at the heritage sites. In the process of heritage interpreting, heritage interpreters will transfer and deliver information from verbal and non-verbal resources from source language into target language. Heritage interpreting occurs in an informal communicative situation. The primary techniques used in heritage interpreting process are sight translation for non-verbal resources and bilateral interpreting for verbal resources. In July 2007, the City of George Town in Penang has been declared as a world heritage site by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural United Nations (UNESCO). Using the soft-system methodology approach, the initial stage of this ongoing preliminary study attempts to provide an exhaustive description on: (1) the core players, (2) the roles and functions of these players, and (3) the interconnection of these players (direct and/or indirect) in the heritage interpreting services provided at the UNESCO world heritage sites in George Town, Penang.

**Keywords:** Heritage interpreting, tourism industry, UNESCO world heritage sites, George Town.

**References**


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