THE IMPORTANCE OF ACCURATE TERMINOLOGY IN TOURISM TRANSLATION

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Annotation: *Tourism is developing quickly around the world, and people often depend on translated materials to learn about new places, culture, history, and local services. Because many tourists do not know the local language, translation becomes an important tool for helping them understand the information they need. One of the most important parts of tourism translation is the accurate use of terminology. Tourism texts contain many special words related to cultural sites, national traditions, food, historical monuments, and travel services. When these terms are translated incorrectly, tourists may misunderstand the message or develop a wrong idea about the destination. For this reason, it is important to study how accurate terminology influences the quality of tourism translation.*

This research aims to explain why accurate terminology matters in tourism translation and how it supports clear communication between cultures. To achieve this, the study looks at common difficulties translators face when dealing with culture-specific terms and expressions. It also examines how English and Uzbek tourism materials use terminology and what happens when some terms do not have direct equivalents. The research is based on descriptive and comparative methods, where different tourism brochures, websites, and guidebooks were analysed to understand how translators choose terms in real practice.

The results show that using accurate terminology makes tourism texts more understandable, reliable, and attractive to foreign visitors. It also helps avoid confusion and supports the promotional purpose of the text. The research concludes that translators need both good language skills and a strong understanding of cultural meaning to choose the most suitable terms. Accurate terminology improves the overall quality of tourism translation and plays an important role in effective cross-cultural communication.

Keywords: *tourism translation, accurate terminology, culture-specific terms, cross-cultural communication, tourism texts*

INTRODUCTION

Tourism has grown rapidly over the past decades and has become one of the most important industries in the world. People travel to different countries to explore new cultures, historical sites, and natural attractions. However, tourists often rely on translated materials, such as brochures, websites, guidebooks, and advertisements, to understand local information. Because of this, translation plays a key role in tourism, helping people access information and enjoy their experience abroad. One of the most

important aspects of tourism translation is the use of accurate terminology. Tourism texts often contain special words related to cultural objects, traditions, local food, historical monuments, natural landmarks, and travel services. Translating these terms incorrectly can confuse tourists or give them a wrong impression of the destination. For example, words like yurt, chaikhana, or mahalla have specific cultural meanings that cannot be translated literally into English without losing context (Nord, 1997; Baker, 2018).

Many scholars have highlighted the importance of accurate terminology in translation. According to Vermeer's Skopos Theory, the purpose of a translation determines the way terms should be adapted (Vermeer, 1989). In tourism, the goal is often to inform, attract, and persuade the reader. Therefore, translators must not only understand the literal meaning of a term but also its cultural and functional role. Functionalist approaches emphasise that translation should meet the communicative needs of the target audience rather than following word-for-word equivalence (House, 2015; Göpferich, 2004). Despite these guidelines, translating tourism terminology remains challenging. Culture-specific terms, idiomatic expressions, and promotional phrases often have no direct equivalents, especially in Uzbek–English translation. This creates a need for strategies that balance linguistic accuracy and cultural adaptation. For example, terms like pilaf, registan, suzani, a traditional mahalla, or navruz celebration carry cultural meanings that cannot be translated literally without additional explanation. Likewise, English terms such as heritage site, eco-tourism, or sightseeing tour may not have exact Uzbek equivalents. This shows that tourism terminology is not only about vocabulary; it also reflects a nation's identity, cultural values, and history (Newmark, 1988; Nida & Taber, 2003).

Many researchers note that terminology in tourism is closely connected to the concept of "culture-specific items" (CSI), which are words or expressions unique to a particular society (Aixelá, 1996; Katan, 2009). Translators must therefore decide whether to keep the original term, adapt it, explain it, or replace it with a more familiar expression for the target audience. This decision depends on the purpose of the translation. According to Skopos theory, the translator's main task is to produce a text that is suitable for the target readers and fulfils the aim of the communication (Vermeer, 1989; Nord, 1997). In tourism, the aim is often to inform and promote at the same time.

Despite the existing theories, many practical problems still remain. Tourism translators frequently face difficulties when dealing with words that carry cultural values or have no direct equivalents in another language. Moreover, tourism texts contain not only neutral information but also persuasive language intended to attract tourists. This makes the task of choosing accurate terminology even more challenging (Guidère, 2008; Ming, 2016).

Therefore, the present research focuses on analysing why accurate terminology is important in tourism translation, what challenges translators face, and how accurate terms can improve communication. By studying examples from English and Uzbek tourism materials, this research aims to show how proper terminology helps make tourism texts clearer, more trustworthy, and more attractive for international readers. Additionally, the study discusses practical strategies that can help translators choose suitable terms and avoid common mistakes.

The present study aims to explore the importance of accurate terminology in tourism translation, analyse the challenges translators face, and suggest ways to improve translation quality. By examining examples from English and Uzbek tourism texts, the research seeks to show how correct use of terminology affects both the clarity and the promotional effectiveness of tourism materials.

METHODOLOGY

This research uses a combination of descriptive, comparative, and qualitative text-analysis methods to study the importance of accurate terminology in tourism translation. Tourism translation is closely related to cultural meaning, therefore the methodology of this research is based on translation studies theories that pay special attention to context, purpose, and audience (Nida, 1964; Newmark, 1988; Vermeer, 1989; Nord, 1997; Baker, 1992; Hatim & Mason, 1997). The aim of the methodology is to examine how English and Uzbek tourism terms are used in real texts and to identify the strategies translators apply when dealing with culture-specific items.

Research Approach.

This study follows a qualitative research approach, which is widely used in translation studies because it allows deeper analysis of meaning and function (Creswell, 2014; Given, 2008). Qualitative analysis is useful for tourism terminology because many terms cannot be evaluated only through dictionaries; they require cultural interpretation (Katan, 2009; Aixelá, 1996). A descriptive approach was chosen because the purpose of the study is to describe how terminology appears and how it is translated in authentic tourism texts. This approach is often used in Descriptive Translation Studies (Toury, 1995; Hermans, 1999), which focus on real examples rather than ideal models.

Data Selection (Materials)

The materials used in this study include 15 English and Uzbek tourism texts, such as brochures, official tourism websites, travel blogs, museum descriptions, hotel websites, and promotional booklets. Texts were chosen because they contain a rich amount of terminology related to cultural heritage, national food, traditions, natural landscapes, and travel services (Dann, 1996; Smith & Robinson, 2006).

Example:

English: "Visit the Registan, one of the most famous historical squares in Samarkand."

Uzbek: "Samarqanddagi eng mashhur tarixiy maydon – Registonni ziyorat qiling."

Here, the term Registan is a culture-specific item (CSI), and its translation must preserve the cultural and historical meaning.

Procedure

The study followed several steps:

1. Collecting English and Uzbek tourism texts

2. Extracting key terms and categorising them (cultural heritage, food, traditions, services, natural attractions)

3. Comparing English and Uzbek terms to check accuracy and functional equivalence

4. Identifying translation strategies used (Newmark, 1988; Baker, 2018)

5. Evaluating clarity, accuracy, and promotional effectiveness

Example:

Term: navruz celebration

English: "Navruz Festival"

Uzbek literal: "Navruz bayrami"

Analysis: The translator must decide whether to keep the term as a proper noun or add a descriptive note for foreign tourists. The analysis of tourism texts shows that accurate terminology plays a crucial role in clear communication, cultural understanding, and promotion of tourist destinations. A total of 150 key tourism terms were analysed across 15 English and Uzbek texts, including brochures, official websites, guidebooks, and promotional leaflets. The terms were divided into five main categories: cultural heritage, food and cuisine, traditional customs and festivals, natural attractions and landscapes, and travel services and facilities.

1. Cultural Heritage Terms

Cultural heritage terms are often culture-specific items (CSIs) that require careful translation. Translators usually use borrowing or functional equivalents to preserve authenticity while ensuring comprehension.

Examples: Registan → "Registan" (kept as proper noun)

Khiva old town → "Khiva Historic Town"

Bibi-Khanym Mosque → retained as is for historical reference

The analysis showed that borrowing is common for proper nouns and historically significant sites, while functional equivalents or brief explanations are applied when the term is unfamiliar to foreign tourists. For instance, Lyabi-Hauz complex in Bukhara is often translated with a brief note: "Lyabi-Hauz, a historical square with a pond and old buildings," helping tourists understand its cultural significance (Newmark, 1988; Aixelá, 1996; Baker, 1992).

2. Food & Cuisine Terms

Food terms are essential because they represent cultural identity and local traditions. Translators must balance authenticity and clarity.

Examples: Plov → "plov" (borrowing) or "rice pilaf" (functional equivalent)

Somsa → "samosa" (adapted borrowing)

Shurpa → "traditional soup"

Incorrect translation of food terms can mislead tourists or reduce interest in local cuisine. Therefore, descriptive equivalents or adapted borrowings are commonly used to ensure tourists understand the meaning while preserving cultural authenticity (Nord, 1997; Hatim & Mason, 1997; Pierini, 2007).

3. Traditional Customs & Festivals

Terms related to festivals and customs often require explanatory notes alongside borrowed terms.

Examples: Navruz bayrami → "Navruz Festival" or "Persian New Year Celebration"

Eid al-Fitr → "end of Ramadan festival" (with explanation)

Chust knives → "traditional Chust knives"

The study found that explanations are particularly useful when the festival or custom is unique to the local culture. Translators often add short descriptive phrases to help foreign tourists understand the term without losing cultural meaning (Vermeer, 1989; Reiss & Vermeer, 2014).

4. Natural Attractions & Landscapes

Terms describing natural attractions are usually kept as proper nouns or translated using functional equivalents.

Examples: Kyzylkum Desert → kept as proper noun

Chimgan Mountains → kept as proper noun

Aydar Lake → "Aydar Lake"

Natural attraction terms are easier to translate literally than cultural or culinary terms. However, when additional context is required, translators add short explanations. For example, Chimgan Mountains are sometimes described as "popular mountains for hiking and skiing near Tashkent," which helps tourists understand the relevance and purpose of the location (Dann, 1996; Smith & Robinson, 2006).

5. Travel Services & Facilities

Terms related to services and accommodations are translated to maintain clarity while preserving industry-standard terminology.

Examples: Tour operator → translated literally

Eco-tourism → "environmentally friendly tourism activities"

Guesthouse → "guesthouse"

This ensures that tourists can access practical information while understanding the nature of services offered (House, 2015; Baker, 2018).

Translation Challenges

The study identified several key challenges:

1. Culture-specific items (CSIs) without direct equivalents, requiring borrowing, adaptation, or descriptive explanations (Aixelá, 1996; Katan, 2009).

2. Terms with multiple meanings, where context determines the correct translation (Newmark, 1988; Baker, 2018).

3. Promotional expressions, which often exaggerate or use persuasive language, making literal translation ineffective (Nord, 1997; Hatim & Mason, 1997).

Example: Uzbek brochure: "Discover the magic of Samarkand and its ancient streets!"

Literal translation would sound unnatural. Translators often use functional adaptation: "Experience the beauty and history of Samarkand's old streets!" to maintain the promotional intent while ensuring clarity.

DISCUSSION

The findings of this research clearly show that translating tourism terminology is not just about finding words in another language, but about understanding cultural meaning, context, and the purpose of the text. When I compared the 150 tourism terms with their English translations, I realised that tourism translation is closely connected to culture, history, and communication. This explains why many translators prefer strategies like borrowing, adding explanations, or using functional equivalents.

First, the results showed that cultural heritage terms are mostly kept in the original form. This makes sense because historical places such as Registan or Lyabi-Hauz are unique and do not have direct English equivalents. Keeping the original name also helps maintain authenticity, which is important for attracting tourists who want "real cultural experiences." Scholars such as Newmark and Aixelá also mention that borrowing is useful for proper nouns and culturally unique objects, so the findings support their views.

Second, the analysis of food and cuisine terms showed that translators try to balance authenticity and clarity. This is probably because local dishes are one of the strongest cultural symbols. For example, leaving the term "plov" helps preserve culture, but some translators also add "rice pilaf" to make it immediately clear for foreign readers. This approach matches what Nord and Pierini say about translating food names: they argue that translators must help readers understand unfamiliar dishes without losing cultural flavour. The examples in my research support this idea very well.

Third, festival and customs terms often need short explanations. This became very obvious in the case of Navruz or Eid al-Fitr. Without explanations, foreign readers might not understand the cultural importance of these events. Many translation theorists talk about this too. For example, Vermeer's Skopos theory

suggests that translators should consider the purpose of translation. In tourism texts, the purpose is to inform and attract tourists, so adding explanations becomes necessary. The results of my research confirm this theory, because almost all festival terms included some additional context.

Fourth, natural attraction terms turned out to be the easiest to translate, mainly because they are proper names or common geographical terms. But the interesting part is that translators sometimes add short descriptions like "popular for hiking" or "located in Central Asia." This shows that even when translation seems simple, the translator still thinks about the needs of the tourist. These findings match the ideas from authors like Dann and Smith, who explain that tourism language should help the reader imagine the destination clearly.

Finally, travel service terms were the least problematic. Most of them are already part of international tourism vocabulary, so translators usually don't need to search for complicated equivalents. Words such as "guesthouse," "tour operator," or "eco-tourism" are understandable by most English-speaking tourists. This shows that globalization has influenced tourism terminology, and many concepts have become universal. This observation also agrees with studies by House and Baker, who say that some fields have standardised terminology across languages.

Overall, when I compared the results with academic theories, I saw that most of the strategies used by translators match what translation scholars recommend. Borrowing, adaptations, short explanations, and functional equivalents turned out to be the most effective. These methods make the text easier to understand while still keeping the cultural identity of the destination. And since tourism translation is not only about language but also about promoting a place, it makes sense that translators try to make the text attractive, simple, and engaging for foreign readers.

To sum up, the discussion of the findings shows that good translation of tourism terminology requires both linguistic skills and cultural awareness. The translator must think like both a language specialist and a cultural guide. When terminology is translated carefully, tourism texts become clearer, more interesting, and more helpful for international tourists.

CONCLUSION

In this study, I examined how tourism terminology is translated and what role it plays in helping foreign tourists understand local culture. After looking at many examples from brochures, websites and guidebooks, it became clear that terminology is one of the most important parts of tourism translation. Without the right terms, the message of the text becomes confusing, and tourists may misunderstand the information.

One of the main conclusions is that not all tourism terms can be translated directly. Many words are deeply connected to our traditions, dishes, festivals or historical places, so translators need to choose the most suitable strategy for each

term. Sometimes the best option is to keep the original word, sometimes to give a short explanation, and sometimes to use an equivalent that is easier for foreigners to understand. This shows that translation in tourism is flexible and always depends on context.

Another important point is that tourism translation is not only about accuracy. It is also about creating interest and helping tourists imagine the place before they visit it. This means that translators must think about clarity, attractiveness and cultural sensitivity at the same time. If the terminology is used correctly, the tourism text becomes more professional and more effective as a promotional tool.

Finally, the research showed that terminology helps build a cultural bridge between the destination and international visitors. Good terminology makes the text clear, supports positive impressions and helps tourists make informed decisions. Because of this, translators need not only language skills but also strong cultural knowledge. In short, correct handling of terminology greatly improves the quality of tourism translation and plays a key role in successful communication with foreign audiences.

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