Research Article

An Investigation into the Semantic/Syntactic Weaknesses and Strengths of Tourist Brochures in Zandiyeh Complex Based on Napu (2016)

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This study is about an analysis of the content that tries to identify weaknesses of Persian-English translation in the tourism industry and show the most common and fairly frequent error patterns committed by Iranian translators who are nonnative by using Napu model. Although these problems in the information of the booklet are underresearched, there is little discussion of tourism material in translation research. To fulfill the aims of this study, the weaknesses and strengths of the booklet of Bazare Vakil complex, Pars museums, Fort of Karim Khan, Vakil mosque, and Vakil bath and their English translations were examined in terms of language and communication. According to the findings, it is recognized that the tourist texts under study (Zandiyeh Complex) present a large number of semantic errors, and, as expected, these significantly prevent the quality of the translations. The analysis results indicated that the semantic area is where these booklets fall short, whereas the language (syntax) is regarded as the strength.

1. Introduction

There are some details in guidebooks about geographical location and some information about its tourist sites and tourist attractions and places that many people visit, spots for tourists to stay such as hotels, and the costumes and culture the people. There are some cultural habits, value judgments (a decision or determination about how good something is, based on your personal opinions, not fact), the system of classification, some symbols such as national symbols, ancient symbols, ceremonies, etc. which are often peculiar to its nationwide territory. Every word or expression may refer to a unique concept from one language to another.

The translation of information that tourist destinations make provisions for their visitors is crucial in successful tourism communication. However, these problems in the information in booklets are underresearched in the tourism literature, and there is little discussion of tourism material

in translation research. Crucially, tourism is a cultural experience [1, 2], and as such, effective communication must be sensitive to cultural issues [3, 4]. Poor translation quality has often gone with the translators' low level of proficiency in either the source or the target language. In addition, the translator's poor awareness and understanding of the purpose of the translation have also played a role. This might be the case when the translation commissioners fail to understand and specify the goal of the translation in the translation brief, which may affect the way the translator determines the methods for translating the texts [5, 6]. Nonnative speakers write tourist guidebooks in Iran, such as Shayesteh and Ghasemi [7] and Nouri [8]. As a result, their productions are likely to be affected by interference. Interference refers to the impact of one type of behavior, a mother tongue linguistic behavior in this case, on one that is learned later, foreign language linguistic behavior [9, 10]. Therefore, many errors occur in their productions: grammatical, semantic, and pragmatic errors [11]. Such errors result in

misunderstanding, information distortion, or even clearly conveying wrong information [11–13]. In addition to this, an essential factor in practical tourism in communication is the translation of information about tourist attractions. Although the impact of translation on this information is being examined in the literature of tourism, there is little discussion of tourism material in translation studies' research.

Few types of research have been carried out about the role of tourist guidebooks in tourism in Iran and other places in the world; it is necessary to do some research in this area. Consequently, the present study focuses on the weakness and strengths of tourism brochures in terms of language information provided communication. The quality of these brochures resulting from linguistic and communicative deficiencies will affect tourism industry development; thus, this study is another point of concern.

2. Review of the Related Literature

Tourist translation studies have examined the problem of translation quality from different aspects. Many studies show some findings related to linguistic issues, such as grammatical problems [14–18], semantic problems [14, 15, 19–23], stylistic problems [23–26], and spelling problems [14, 27]. These studies explain that these issues can result from limited English translators. For example, translation problems of tourism industry guidebooks were examined by [28] from an error analysis viewpoint. In fulfilling the goals of this study, three English tourist guidebooks were translated into English by Iranian translators, as well as two multimedia compact discs whose primary goal was to introduce beautiful places in Isfahan; in other words, Isfahan tourist attractions in English were selected and studied thoroughly. Three hundred sentences were extracted at random and subjected to error analysis. The analysis results showed that over one-third of the whole number of the sentences under study were syntactically, semantically, or pragmatically erroneous. Therefore, based on the proposed model of the study, which was a combination of American Translation Association's [29] error identification categories and Keshavarz's [10] linguistic taxonomy of errors, the most common errors were distinguished and statistically arranged figures or information together in a set or a list, so that they can be easily compared in other words tabulated. Most of the syntactic errors came to be grammar patterns, semantic errors to terminology, word choice' patterns, most pragmatic errors to language, and mistranslation into target language error.

Similarly, Kang and Yu [30] examined the stylistic features of tourism English by concentrating on authentic materials from British and American official tourism websites and a corpus called Tourism English Corpus and Freiburg-LOB Corpus of British English used to compare. The results showed that Tourism English Corpus had different stylistic features. The average word length in Tourism English Corpus was slightly longer than that in Freiburg-LOB Corpus of British English. There was not an essential difference between the two corpora regarding lexical density. Concerning the distribution of text words, content words in Tourism English Corpus outnumbered those in Freiburg-LOB Corpus of British English. Nouns were the most frequently used in corpora, and Tourism English Corpus had more nouns and adjectives but fewer verbs, proverbs, and pronouns. In addition, proper nouns, scenic nouns, nouns of direction, descriptive adjectives with positive meaning, general superlative adjectives, and verbs to visit and enjoy were more frequently used in Tourism English Corpus. Finally, the average sentence length of Tourism English Corpus was shorter than that in Freiburg-LOB Corpus of British English. These differences point to the different features of English tourism.

3. The Present Study

Five Persian guide brochures introducing B*azar Vakil complex, Pars museums, and The Fort of Karim Khan or Arg-e-Karim Khan; Vakil mosque*, and *Vakil Bath* and their English translations translated for foreign visitors of tourist attractions in Iran were purposively selected as the materials of this study. In analyzing, the linguistic and communicative deficiencies regarding Napu [5] (shown below), a content-analytic research method was utilized.

3.1. Linguistic Problems

3.1.1. Syntactic Errors. The syntactic problems will be analyzed related to issues with grammatical structures. There are many instances of syntactic issues identified in the text.

(1) Omission of Grammatical Items.

   (1) Omission of 'to be' as an auxiliary verb or copula

   (2) Omission of articles

3.1.2. Word Form Problems

   (1) Omission of possession marker

   (2) Omission of the plural marker

3.2. Semantic Problems. Semantic problems are concerned with word meaning and may involve issues with lexical choices and the translation of idiomatic expressions [5].

4. Results and Discussion

4.1. An Introduction to Vakil Mosque. Vakil mosque, situated in the Zandiyeh complex, is located in the center of Shiraz City. This Mosque is among the most beautiful and well-founded constructions of the Zand period that is especially significant from the artistic and architectural points of view. This magnificent construction was built by order of Karim Khan Zand (peace be upon him). Vakil mosque complex covers an area of 11000 square meters. The mosque itself has a length of 120 meters and a width of 80 meters which must be added by the areas of Winter Prayer Hall, Eastern Yard, and Pond House, which is located outside the mosque with a broad scope of 500 meters. The mosque entrance doors are thick monolith wooden with

TABLE 1: Linguistic and semantic problems of English translation of Vakil mosque brochure.

Linguistic problems	Syntactic problems	Omission of grammatical items	Omission of 'to be' as an auxiliary verb or copula Omission of articles
	Word form problems	Omission of possession marker Omission of the plural marker	
Semantic problems		In the year 8811 AH/comprehensive/hadith Noorani/plan	

TABLE 2: Linguistic and semantic problems of English translation of mosque's yard brochure.

Linguistic problems	Syntactic problems	Omission of grammatical items	Omission of 'to be' as an auxiliary verb or copula Omission of articles
	Word form problems	Omission of possession marker Omission of the plural marker	
Semantic problems		Eight meters/bottom of the columns and their front ridges	

TABLE 3: Linguistic and semantic problems of English translation of the pond house of mosque brochure.

Linguistic problems	Syntactic problems	Omission of grammatical items	Omission of 'to be' as an auxiliary verb or copula Omission of articles
	Word form problems	Omission of possession marker Omission of the plural marker	
Semantic problems		For prayers usage/aside/and sedimentation of sediments/	

TABLE 4: Linguistic and semantic problems of English translation of the pearl arch brochure.

Linguistic problems	Syntactic problems	Omission of grammatical items	Omission of 'to be' as an auxiliary verb or copula Omission of articles
	Word form problems	Omission of possession marker Omission of the plural marker	
Semantic problems	Tiling and rafters/lines of inscriptions/. Round pearl arch/ with large pen and excellent third line		/from Holy Quran

4/30-meter length and 1/60-meter width for each individual, which is among the masterpieces of woodworking art. On the head of the entrance door, and by order of Karim Khan, a narrative from the prophet of Islam, " I am the city of wisdom and knowledge, and Ali is its gate," is inscribed on it with a Golden script. The Corridor's Ceiling is decorated with the "Moaragh" tiles with an expression marked using the "Kufic" script right in the middle. The mosque has two Ivan's and has two Southern and Eastern nocturnal halls (Table 1).

4.2. The Mosque's Yard. Two archs, the pearl arch and southern arch, are located inside the large yard of the mosque. The beautiful arches are built in every four corners; their front pillars are decorated by engraved "Gandomak" rocks from their bottoms to their 1.5-meter height. The nocturnal hall is located on the eastern part of the mosque's yard. A beautiful rocky ornamental pond with a length of 41 meters and a width of 50 meters is built just in the center of the mosque's yard. The mosque's floor is covered with thick rocks, and it was restored 50 at a solar eclipse (Table 2).

4.3. The Pond House of Mosque. This pond house is located in the Eastern yard. This has a 33-meter length. The walls and ceiling are constructed from gorgeous bricks. Traditionally, livestock has been used to take water from the pond just

inside the building. After deposited sediment, they flow the water away through dedicated underground drains to the ornamental pond for prayers usage (Table 3).

4.4. Pearl Arch. This mosque has three magnificent and elegant arches. The arch of the entrance, the pearl arch in the northern part of the mosque, and the southern arch of the access to the nocturnal hall are masterpieces from the architecture style of the Zandiyeh period. With two "Goldasteh" built on top of it, the pearl arch has a unique beauty. The arches are decorated with Shiraz typical "Haft Rangi" (seven colors) tiles, and by using "Nastaligh" script; the "Jomee" surah (from Holy Quran) with brushstroke is inscribed on it in a crescent-like shape (Table 4).

4.5. The Main Prayer Hall Building. This prayer hall is just located behind the southern arch. The southern arch is as impressive as pearl arch, which the "Monafeghoon" Sorah is inscribed on it in a crescent-like shape. The nocturnal hall has 36 meters in length and 7 -meters in width. There are 13 and 4 arcades alongside the hall's length and width, respectively. Forty-eight stone pillars with an impressive beauty, twisted columns carved in the spiral support the wide ceiling of the prayer hall (12 columns and four rows); each has 5-meter height and 80-centimeter diagonal length. These pillars are cut off one single block of stones, and they are

TABLE 5: Linguistic and semantic problems of English translation of the main prayer hall building brochure.

Linguistic problems	Syntactic problems	Omission of grammatical items	Omission of 'to be' as an auxiliary verb or copula Omission of articles
	Word form problems	Omission of possession marker Omission of the plural marker	
Semantic problems			One piece/done with some skill and mastery

TABLE 6: Linguistic and semantic problems of English translation of the Pars museum brochure.

Linguistic problems	Syntactic problems	Omission of grammatical items	Omission of 'to be' as an auxiliary verb or copula Omission of articles
	Word form problems	Omission of possession marker Omission of the plural marker	
Semantic problems	Exterior facade/stone plinths and tiles with Islamic motifs, flowers, and chickens and different landscapes/ interior of this building/with wooden understandings/between these royal residences/central space and body and roof of other parts		

TABLE 7: Linguistic and semantic problems of English translation of the Arg-e-Karim Khan brochure.

Linguistic problems	Syntactic problems	Omission of grammatical items	Omission of 'to be' as an auxiliary verb or copula Omission of articles
	Word form problems	Omission of possession marker Omission of the plural marker	
Semantic problems	Including mosques/or the citadel of Karim Khan/s one of these major buildings in shiraz/with an area of 82111 square meters and infrastructure of about 411 square meters in Zandieh complex/the exterior of this building is brick and the height of its external concave walls is 82 meters, which is erected in each corner of an 84-meter tower/Islamic designs/on the roof and body/		

precisely similar to each other. Smooth pieces of rocks cover the prayer hall's floor (Table 5).

4.6. Pars Museum. The Pars museum or Kolah Farangi pavilion is one of the historical buildings which is left from the Zand period and was built in Nazar garden and was dedicated to private royal occasions and official political receptions. It is an octagonal building decorated with tile work and medallion paintings. The designs of these tile works include flower plants, birds, hunting fields, and scenes of legendary tales. The building comprises one sizeable domed hall and four chambers (Shah-Neshin) on the four sides. The interior of the building is decorated with exquisite plasterwork on the ceiling and the walls. A set of stairs connect the ground floor to the upstairs. Kolah Farangi pavilion was registered as the National Heritage no.244 in 1933, and in 1934, it was converted to Pars museum (Table 6).

4.7. Arg-e-Karim Khan. Karim Khan was the founder of the Zand dynasty that made Shiraz his capital in the 1180 lunar year. As one of the advocates of the development of Iran, he started to build state buildings and offices and many public buildings, including mosques. Arg-e-Karim Khan, or the citadel of Karim Khan, is one of these significant buildings in Shiraz. It is the largest and the most outstanding complex of the Zand era, which has a land area of 4000 square meters located in a large compound of 12800 square meters. The walls and towers were constructed and decorated with fired bricks. The towers are 12 meters high, and the observation posts are 14 meters high. The entrance of the citadel is located in the east part. The entrance gate opens onto an octagonal anteroom. A large pool was constructed from east to west in the yard. On three sides of the courtyard, buildings include large rooms and anterooms. The inside of the buildings and halls are decorated with tile works displaying attractive patterns, including legendary tales, flower plants, and birds that were damaged afterward. On the eastern corner of the yard, there is a private bathroom with floors and walls made of marble stones. The ceiling of the bathroom warmer was constructed on four stone pilasters decorated with fine plasters displaying legendary tales. This citadel was given to Iran's Cultural Heritage Organization in 1971 with registration no. 918, and in last decades, it was restored and renovated to convert to be a museum (Table 7).

4.8. Vakil Bath. Vakil bath was built in 1760 by Karim Khan. All Iranian bathhouse architectural principles can be seen in this bathhouse and have been designed to preserve the warm air inside the bath. The bath entrance is a small door with a few stairs that reach the vestibule entrance, or "Hashty." The first hall of the bath is an octagonal "Sarbineh" with eight monolithic stone columns holding the dome roof; the roof has a large skylight. Around the dome, there are lime mortar beautiful paintings, images from popular Iranian stories, and famous religious stories. The next part is the warm house. There are four monolithic columns similar to the Vakil mosque in this hall. Under the floor, a hot water pipeline keeps the floor warm (Table 8).

TABLE 8: Linguistic and semantic problems of English translation of the Vakil bath brochure.

Linguistic problems	Syntactic problems	Omission of grammatical items	Omission of 'to be' as an auxiliary verb or copula Omission of articles
	Word form problems	Omission of possession marker Omission of the plural marker	
Semantic problems	This bath is made in the style of traditional Iranian baths and is designed to be/ancient/		

TABLE 9: Linguistic and semantic problems of English translation of the Moshir house brochure.

Linguistic problems	Syntactic problems	Omission of grammatical items	Omission of 'to be' as an auxiliary verb or copula Omission of articles
	Word form problems	Omission of possession marker Omission of the plural marker	
Semantic problems	—		

4.9. Moshir House. Golshan or Moshir house is one of the monuments of the Qajar dynasty which Mirza Abolhassan Khan Moshir Almolk built in lunar eclipse 1288(solar eclipse 1250-1871 AD), and it is designed in an octagon. He endowed this house to the fifth child of Ale Aba, Imam Hussein (peace be upon him), with all its attachments, including the bazaar and all of the markets, in a deed for an endowment written on the propylaeum of the house. Some parts of the building (such as rotted-off tiles and old doors) were rebuilt and restored in the 50th decade (Table 9).

The study was encouraged by the researchers to define the semantic/syntactic weaknesses and strength of English translations of Persian tourism industry texts (the case of Zandiyeh Complex brochures) based on Napu's [5] classification as a requirement for solving the barriers which hamper the local progress of industry of tourism in some places. Although the analysis result showed that the sentences under study were semantically incorrect, no syntactic mistakes were detected.

The findings of this study are in tourism planning: the case study of Astara ([31] design of Tous cultural tourism Complex [32], Kish five-star international hotel [33], the investigation in finding out elements on domestic tourism in Hamedan Province [34] whose main worry is to understand the main problems of translating tourist brochures and offer solutions for removing the obstacles hampering the local development of tourism industry in such places.

5. Conclusion

Tourist brochures are one of the vital frontline players in the tourism industry. Through their knowledge and interpretation of a destination's attractions and culture and their communication and service skills, they can transform the tourists' visit from a tour into an experience. According to the findings, it is known that the tourist texts under study (Zandiyeh Complex) do present a large number of semantic errors, and, as expected, these significantly hindered the quality of the translations. Therefore, it is mandatory to pay close attention to the information provided for foreigners, which is in line with encouraging institutions themselves to be worried about the quality of the offered bilingual materials.

An essential conclusion is the need to professionalize translations in the tourism sector to minimize the commission of these translations to nonprofessionals or unskilled translators. Similarly, the importance of the tourism industry for economies, as well as the specificity of the translation problems involved and the number of mistakes in translated versions, points out to the urgent need for the inclusion of this sort of specialized translation in university training programs, hence, for proper skills to be gained. This qualification and expertise will lead to real progress in the interlingual and intercultural communication between locals and foreigners, especially in promotional tourist texts, along with a steady improvement of the image of a country.

Data Availability

The data can be requested from the corresponding author upon reasonable request.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare that they have no conflicts of interest.

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