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Translation as a Cultural Transfer: Rendering of Tourist Texts Promoting
Podkarpacie Province

Summary

One of the most commonly translated text types in the contemporary world are tourist promotional materials (Sulaiman 2016: 53). Nevertheless, it has been evidenced that the renderings of tourist texts demonstrate low quality (Snell-Hornby 1999: 95; Durán Muñoz 2012: 336; Maci 2019: 142). In turn, it should be made clear that successful translations of tourist texts contribute to better promotion of the region in the world as well as encourage people to travel and visit the discussed places.

Tourist texts are filled with a great number of culture-specific elements due to the fact that such publications describe different destinations, buildings, local people and their habits. The problem of rendering culture-specific elements has been thoroughly discussed within Translation Studies while the subject of translating culture-specific elements in tourist texts is rarely researched. Only a few scholars, including Terestyényi (2011) as well as Rezaei and Kuhi (2014) have focused on the issue of rendering culture-specific elements in tourist texts. Nevertheless, it must be emphasised that the above-mentioned research is limited in terms of its size as well as the fact that the study concerns Hungarian-English and Persian-English translations while the examination of culture-specific elements needs to be conducted separately for each language pair.

In view of the foregoing, the present dissertation attempts at filling a lacuna in the research on the rendering of culture-specific elements in tourist texts. The primary objective of the dissertation is to evaluate the translations of culture-specific elements in tourist texts promoting the Podkarpacie Province. The examination of culture-specific elements in tourist publications does not merely concern the issue of whether the equivalents for the elements in question are satisfactory translations, but the study also investigates the consistency of the equivalents for the particular terms. The study is of an interdisciplinary character since it integrates the frameworks of Translation Studies, Tourism Studies, and Culture Studies.

The dissertation consists of three chapters, two theoretical and one empirical. Chapter I seeks initial answers to questions on the concept of specialist language. Firstly, it presents various stances towards the notion of specialist languages as well as different terms that are used with reference to specialist languages. Secondly, it broadly describes the characteristic properties of specialist languages which are grouped into three categories: lexical, syntactic, and textual features. The detailed discussion on the concept of specialist language makes it possible to include the language of tourism in the notion of specialist languages. Finally, the distinctive properties of the language of tourism are demonstrated.

The objective of Chapter II is to correlate the issues of Tourism, Culture, and Translation Studies that are particularly relevant to the dissertation. Therefore, Chapter II begins with a discussion on tourist texts which, however, cannot be achieved without introducing the concept of text and discourse. Then, the scope of tourist texts is established and their functions are described. Furthermore, Chapter II approaches the concept of translation viewed as intercultural communication and mediation. Therefore, the notion of culture is presented as well as its correlation with language. Moreover, Chapter II proposes the Skopos Theory as the framework that suits the needs of translating tourist texts. The chapter ends with the subject of rendering culture-specific elements. The concept of culture-specific elements, translation strategy and translation procedure are introduced along with different translation strategies and procedures for translating culture-specific elements.

Chapter III, being empirical in its nature, demonstrates the results of the analysis which concerns the renderings of selected culture-specific elements occurring in tourist texts promoting the Podkarpacie Province. The examination of culture-specific elements is based on the classification put forward by Nedergaard-Larsen (1993: 211) who differentiates four categories of culture-specific elements: geography, history, society, and culture. Due to the fact that the dissertation is limited in terms of its size, the class of history has been excluded from the analysis. The group of geography includes a discussion on the equivalents for nine terms, namely, *połonina, Wiar, Jezioro Solińskie, Kotlina Sandomierska, Beskid Niski, Cergowa, Pogórze Przemyskie, Park Krajobrazowy Pogórza Przemyskiego* and *BdPN*. The category of society concerns the translations of eight elements, that is, *województwo, powiat, gmina, województwo podkarpackie, sołectwo, PKP, PKS* and *COP*. Finally, the class of culture incorporates the renderings of eleven terms, which are the following: *proziak, fuczki, hreczanyki, gołąbki, pierogi, bryndza, cerkiew, babiniec, soboty, "Turki"* and *dobranocki*.

The corpus created for the study is a parallel corpus which consists of the texts in Polish and their translations into English. The corpus comprises fifty-five texts, the word count of

Polish texts amounts to 350,407 words while English to 439,053. The texts used in the corpus constitute tourist publications promoting the Podkarpacie Province. Text selection was based on two approaches, that is, the approach based on text availability and the approach based on time (Hu 2016: 50). It was decided to include tourist texts which were published between the years 2011 and 2020. An attempt was also made to take into account tourist texts ordered by different institutions and local authorities. For the creation of the corpus and its analysis, Sketch Engine software was used.

The study adopts a corpus-driven approach, and it is inductive in character. Therefore, merely three research questions were set initially, which are formulated as follows:

1. Could the equivalents for the selected culture-specific elements be considered satisfactory translations?
2. Are the translations of particular culture-specific elements consistent within one text?
3. Is the consistency dependent on the institution ordering the publication?

The examination of the equivalents for selected culture-specific elements enables us to offer some general conclusions. With reference to the first research question, it might be concluded that the unsatisfactory translations (66.29%) prevail over satisfactory and acceptable renderings (33.71%). Out of 2622 translations evaluated in the study, there are 859 renderings treated as satisfactory, 25 – perceived as acceptable and 1738 – regarded as unsatisfactory. The evaluation of the equivalents for particular culture-specific elements took into account several factors including: searching for the appropriate equivalents in bilingual and monolingual lexicons, establishing the meaning and function of the ST element both in the ST and the TT, examining the context of given examples as well as recognising the general function of tourist texts. Unsatisfactory translations relate to those examples in which any errors can be observed concerning the spelling, grammar or punctuation as well as neglecting the function of tourist texts in general or the function and meaning of particular culture-specific elements in the STs and TTs. The renderings are also considered unsatisfactory when they are not sufficiently comprehensible and informative to the TT reader. Acceptable translations concern the cases where the translation is not evaluated as unsatisfactory but there also exists a more promising solution. A considerable number of sources has been employed for the needs of the analysis including both books and online resources. The examination of the equivalents for each term was based on five bilingual dictionaries and four monolingual lexicons.

With regard to the second research question, the consistency was assessed in the case of the existence of two or more equivalents for a given term within one text. It should also be noted that the total number of terms taken into consideration while examining consistency amounts to 42 terms, which is in contrast to the figure for the terms listed in Chapter III. The higher number of elements results from the fact that the analysis demonstrated additional circumstances that had to be taken into account. For example, the study revealed that the term *Cergowa* may refer not only to the name of the peak, but also to the name of the hamlet and village. Therefore, each of these meanings needed to be treated as a separate term. The examination on the consistency of the particular equivalents demonstrated that there exist 6 elements that are always consistent within texts and 7 terms that are usually consistent. There are 9 elements in which the number of texts where the translations are consistent and inconsistent is the same. In the case of 11 terms, the equivalents are usually inconsistent, while with regard to 9 elements, their renderings are always inconsistent. The highest level of consistency of equivalents is maintained in the category of culture whereas the lowest concerns the class of geography.

As far as the final research question is concerned, it has been evidenced that consistency is not dependent on the institution ordering the publication. It was revealed that the equivalents for the culture-specific elements, that is, *województwo, powiat* and *gmina*, are not consistent in the texts issued by *UMWP* (Urząd Marszałkowski Województwa Podkarpackiego) and *PROT* (Podkarpacka Regionalna Organizacja Turystyczna).

In the course of the analysis, the following hypothesis was developed:

1. The success of the translation of culture-specific elements in tourist texts promoting the Podkarpacie Province is not solely dependent on the translator's knowledge about the source and target cultures.

The detailed examination of the equivalents for selected culture-specific elements demonstrated that there are, in fact, various factors that have an influence on the success of translating culture-specific elements in tourist texts promoting the Podkarpacie Province. Apart from the lack of translator's knowledge about the source and target cultures, the reasons behind the unsatisfactory renderings may also be detected in spelling and punctuation mistakes, the inappropriate use of capitalisation and the presence or absence of a hyphen in particular words. There are also errors concerning word order and grammar or ignorance of the conventions of

the target language. Finally, in some cases the translators failed to use information contained in the ST which probably stemmed from careless reading of the ST.

Another difficulty concerning the translation of culture-specific elements in tourist texts promoting the Podkarpacie Province is the lack of consistency in selecting the equivalent for a given term. This inconsistency relates not only to one text, but it also concerns texts published by the same institution. On the other hand, it should also be made clear that the dictionaries and online sources that are available to the translators do not bring straightforward solutions. What is even worse is the fact that the resources sometimes offer contradictory information.

In view of the foregoing, the dissertation shows that it is particularly important to renew the debate on the notion of translation competence understood as an extensive enumeration of different sub-competencies that the translators should possess. Similarly, it is indispensable to pay attention to the considerable function of the commissioner and the translation brief. The study also demonstrated that examining merely tourist texts is not sufficient in approaching the subject of translating tourist texts. The concept of specialist language, a category into which the language of tourism falls, is of considerable assistance. The three-dimensional model of specialist language which assumes 'specialist knowledge', 'professional practices' and 'modes of linguistic expression' (Grygiel 2017: 3) enables us to perceive tourist texts in a broader context. In other words, knowledge of the concept of specialist language and the language of tourism itself greatly facilitates the understanding of the rendering of tourist texts.

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