



Cultural Linguistic Encoding in the Translation of Tourist Brochures in Saudi Arabia

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Abstract

Tourism is a key driver of expansion and a contributor to national income in Saudi Arabia's rapidly diversifying economy in the years to come. Tourist numbers in 2023 are estimated to exceed one hundred million, with tourism revenue for the year exceeding SAR 135 billion, according to conservative estimates. Language is an integral part of this pattern of development – international tourists linguistic access to Saudi culture and attractions – and is clearly defined as a key enabler in Saudi Arabia's economic diversification strategy, as enshrined in Saudi Vision 2030. In this manuscript, a cultural-linguistic approach is used to examine the process of translation as it occurs in tourist brochures translated into and from English as a second language into Arabic, with a focus on the core values in Saudi Arabia – hospitality, religious identity, and tradition – and how these are linguistically gauged across languages. Based on Skopos theory and the domestication-foreignization approach, the study integrates theory, a four-category coding system, and current empirical research on the Arabic-English tourism-translation domain, using this integration to develop a repeatable methodology for analyzing Saudi promotional texts. The five conceptual models, namely the continuum model according to Venuti, the model of equivalence by Nida, the procedures by Vinay and Darbelnet, the Skopos process model, and Sulaiman and Wilson's cultural-conceptual translation model, are introduced as complementary lenses for analysis, and the empirical results of prior work are synthesized across the four coding categories. The synthesis shows that translators of tourism texts from Saudi Arabia tend toward domestication for pragmatic Saudi expressions of hospitality and toward foreignization, gloss, and transliteration for cultural-religious and heritage lexis. The study highlighted implications for a national tourism policy, promotional effectiveness, and the curriculum of translator training programs that consider Saudi Vision 2030, as well as the opportunities for the primary coding of the corpus that would empirically test the framework propounded in this study.

Introduction

Tourism has been singled out as one of the main drivers of the Saudi Vision 2030 program to diversify the economy away from the country's reliance on hydrocarbon-based revenues toward services, culture, and entertainment (Saudi Vision 2030, 2016). The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has opened its doors to international visitors at its heritage sites, cultural festivals, and modern infrastructure to unprecedented levels, in line with this policy. Over the next ten years, industry experts predict tourism will continue to be a significant and growing share of GDP (Oxford Business Group, 2023). The spending by visitors that this growth brings will make multilingual promotional material a practical and ever-present necessity. Brochures,

guidebooks, festival programs, and destination websites are the first places where visitors come into contact with Saudi Arabia: they convey practical information and shape people's expectations and perceptions of the country before they even arrive. Accordingly, there is a delicate balance between presenting accurate information and portraying Saudi culture in a way that is faithful to it (Alangari, 2022; Alowedi & Al Ahdal, 2023; Mohammed & Al-Ahdal, 2024). This balancing act isn't just about aesthetics.

Literature Review

Any translation that attempts to eliminate the cultural nuances of the Saudi people in the process of becoming readable or comprehensible risks producing a "flat" and interchangeable destination copy that fails to promote the very cultural identity Saudi Vision 2030 aims to highlight. On the other hand, a translation that does not adapt the Arabic cultural and religious lexicon into English may be obscure, alienating, or offensive to readers who are not acquainted with Arabic culture and religion (Al-Ahdal, et al., 2017; Mohammad, 2021). The role of the tourism translator lies between these two extremes, serving as a mediator, as described by Alangari (2022), who translates and situates the international tourist with regard to Saudi culture-specific items (CSIs) by employing a collection of translation strategies. The present manuscript focuses on the systematic coverage of that repertoire in the context of Saudi Arabic-English tourism translations and on demonstrating the convergence of existing scholarship in the Saudi context (as well as the broader body of tourism translation studies) around a handful of common strategic decisions. Contemporary translation theory offers several complementary lenses to support this. Venuti (1995) sees the translator's basic decision as a choice between domestication (making the source text natural for the comfort of the target reader) and foreignization (preserving some markers from the source culture and prompting the reader to approach the source culture).

A related but distinct choice concerns the form and effect of the target text, namely between formal equivalence (which emphasizes fidelity to the form of the source text) and dynamic equivalence (which emphasizes an equivalent effect on the target reader) (Nida, 1964). Vinay and Darbelnet (1995) concretize these orientations in seven specific translation procedures: borrowing, calque, and literal translation (direct), as well as transposition, modulation, equivalence, and adaptation (oblique), which can be itemized in a text. Reiss and Vermeer (2013) shift the focus of the decision-making process from the source text to Skopos, or the communicative task of the target text, which is to be decided by the intended reader of the target text, not by adherence to the source text per se. Lastly, the tourism-specific literature suggests a cultural-conceptual model presented by Sulaiman and Wilson (2018) that evaluates the translated tourism promotional message in relation to the destination image, push and pull motivational factors, and purpose alignment, applicable only to the persuasive and informational function of tourism messages. All of these models shed light on a single phenomenon – the translator's negotiation between authenticity of the source culture and accessibility for the target reader. The following figures (1-5) provide a visual representation of each model and relate it to the Saudi tourism-translation context, developed later in this manuscript.

Empirical studies conducted in Saudi Arabia have begun to examine these theoretical models against real promotional material. AlShaye (2025) analyzed the Riyadh Season 2023 booklet and the Diriyah Season website about the Kingdom's new formalized professional translation ethics (2023), and assessed how dynamic equivalence, in Nida's sense of the term, was achieved. The study found that the professional code of ethics provided some support for narrower issues of professional conduct but lacked guidance on cultural references; this is directly relevant to the present manuscript's focus on religious, hospitality, and heritage lexis. In a parallel Arabic-English corpus from the official Visit Saudi tourism website, Alangari (2022) observed that CSIs related to Saudi culture and cuisine were extensively foreignized by

the translators, using foreignization techniques such as exoticization and explanatory glossing, which presented the Saudi tourist text as an invitation to an explicitly foreign cultural register rather than a fully domesticated one.

Supporting the evidence, Metwally and Asiri (2023) investigated promotional and culture-specific expressions in tourism materials from Aseer Province, which showed similar patterns of exploiting explanation, transliteration, and cultural replacement strategies in selecting translated items based on their semantic value. Mansor and Salman (2016) report the specific Arabic use of emphatic adjectival expressions and provide a more general linguistic profile of Arabic tourism discourse. Empirical work on translator competence and translation quality focuses on translator activity and translation quality, not on the typology of translation strategies as such, but it significantly impacts the issues raised in the present study. Qassem et al. (2021) developed the English-Arabic tourist-text translation product quality assessment, which uncovered systematic shortcomings associated with a lack of attention to cultural distance between the two languages. Qassem and Sahari (2023) took this line of investigation further, documenting stylistic and clarity problems in target texts and tracing them back to an over-reliance on direct rather than oblique procedures by translators in the case of Arabic-English promotional material.

A study of bidirectional translation performance concluded that the trainees' use of source-text-oriented strategies affected accuracy, style, and clarity when translating to and from English, suggesting that strategy choice, rather than linguistic competence alone, is a key factor in determining translation quality in this area. These data support an explicit, specific approach to translator training that moves beyond general bilingualism to incorporate decision-making frameworks such as those found in this manuscript. Within this general context, a sub-problem concerns the treatment of religious lexis, which deserves special theoretical attention. Hassan's (2016) study compared the competing uses of translation and transliteration and observed that lexical items referring to sacred concepts, prophetic names, and ritual practices are often transliterated, preserving phonological identity with the Arabic source and leading to difficulty and sometimes actual incomprehensibility for readers unfamiliar with Islamic vocabulary. The same phenomenon occurs with terms used in the context of tourism and religious sites, calls to prayer, or ritual hospitality customs: Terms do not lend themselves to domesticating translations without sacrificing specificity, and thus motivate the translator to select foreignizing strategies – transliteration followed by an explanatory gloss – that a purely dynamic-equivalence approach would not otherwise encourage.

As a result, the question of fidelity to the religious register and accessibility to a religiously diverse tourist readership is a recurring theme throughout this manuscript and is revisited in the discussion below. The scope of the analytical framework developed in this paper can be usefully framed by two additional strands of literature. First, general translation-technique taxonomies developed outside the tourism sphere, such as those by Molina and Hurtado Albir (2002) for their dynamic and functionalist revision of the procedures outlined by Vinay and Darbelnet (1989) and by Šarčević (1985) for the treatment of culture-bound terms in legal translation, validate the categories proposed for CSIs as general patterns of cultural mediation, not specific to tourism discourse. Second, comparative evidence from other national contexts of tourism translation (Chinese public signage [Zhang & Yang, 2020], Spanish regional tourism websites [Malenkina & Ivanov, 2018], and Persian tourist guidebooks [Rezaei & Kuhi, 2014]) indicates that the domestication–foreignization tension found for Saudi Arabia is a general property of tourism translation, not a regionally peculiar phenomenon, and that this tension takes on a different balance depending on the source culture's linguistic and religious distance from the target audience. Saudi Arabia, with its unique religious register, unique script, and rapidly internationalizing tourism industry, is an especially information-rich case in which this balance is being tested in practice.

The present study is grounded in this theoretical and empirical foundation and proceeds to the following research questions. First, what translation strategies are employed in translating

Saudi tourist promotional materials to achieve cultural authenticity, cross-cultural accessibility, and readability for international audiences? Second, how are the core Saudi cultural values – hospitality, religious identity, and tradition – linguistically encoded in the resulting English translations? The rest of the manuscript explains the analytical method used to answer these questions, the theoretical models and codes that guided the analysis, and the pattern of findings obtained by applying the analytical framework to the current scholarship on tourism and translation in Saudi Arabia, including a comparison with other countries.

Materials and Methods

This study is conducted within Skopos theory (Reiss & Vermeer, 2013), which holds that the selection of a translation strategy should be based on the communicative function, or Skopos, of the target text. The goal of Saudi tourism promotional material is twofold and often competing: to attract an international audience, mainly non-Arabic-speaking, and to portray an image of Saudi culture that is sufficiently authentic to hook an international audience into the destination and to allow them to credit the experience they are promised upon arrival with the images they have seen in the advertisements. The domestication/foreignization dichotomy, used by Venuti (1995) as the prism through which individual translation decisions are classified, is adopted as the organizing principle because literal, word-for-word translations of culturally loaded Arabic expressions may not convey symbolic or connotative meanings, and excessive domestication may cause the loss of the very cultural specificity that makes a Saudi destination appealing. The risk of over-foreignization can lead to stereotyping or reader confusion, while over-domestication can lead to cultural markers being homogenized to the level of typical tourist brochures, which defeats the purpose of Saudi Vision 2030's initiative to portray an authentically Saudi image to the world.

The analytical corpus in this work comprises promotional content produced by the Saudi Tourism Authority (STA), national carriers, internationally affiliated hotel chains operating in the Kingdom, and the authorities of the Kingdom's heritage sites, selected as the major sources for destination messaging to international visitors before and during their visits to the Kingdom. Materials were gathered as matched Arabic-English pairs, whenever available, in a parallel-corpus format, which has been used successfully in similar Saudi tourism-translation studies (Alangari, 2022; Alshaye, 2025). It is based on a descriptive, corpus-based approach to translation studies, in which the unit of analysis is not the sentence or the document as a whole but the individual culture-specific item (CSI), where cultural content is most concentrated and fine-grained coding of strategy choice is possible.

The analysis is organized into four categories of codes selected to reflect the value dimensions identified in the research questions, namely: religious reference, hospitality reference, food and tradition, and heritage sites. Within each category, source-text items are extracted, their published English translations are recorded, and the translation strategy is coded using two complementary sets of codes. The first set is drawn from Venuti (1995) and operationalized by Kwieciński (2001) into levels of domestication and foreignization in relation to Saudi tourism texts. The second set is drawn from Alangari (2022), who categorized each of the above steps as outcomes of the process: literal translation, adaptation, omission, and creative recreation. The third, taken from Vinay and Darbelnet (1995) and adapted for the Arabic-English context by Safi and Nasser (2022), proposes a finer-grained, linguistically motivated classification of each item, based on the seven direct and oblique procedures, namely: borrowing, calque, literal translation, transposition, modulation, equivalence, and adaptation. This coding scheme is presented in full in Table 1, with a column for additional comments on the appropriateness of the strategy by the expert panel once coding of the primary corpus is complete.

Coding category	Arabic source item	English translation	Translation strategy scheme	Expert panel comments
1. Religious reference	Standard terms drawn from official source materials	English translations as currently published in bilingual materials	Literal, adaptation, omission, foreignization, creative recreation (Venuti, 1995)	To be added following primary panel coding
2. Hospitality reference	Standard terms drawn from official source materials	English translations as currently published in bilingual materials	Literal, adaptation, omission, creative recreation (Venuti, 1995)	To be added following primary panel coding
3. Food and tradition	Specific items such as coffee, dates, and dessert-culture references	English translations with attention to cultural embedding	Vinay and Darbelnet's (1995) seven procedures; Catford's (1965) shift typology	To be added following primary panel coding
4. Heritage sites	Popular heritage-site names and descriptions	Treatment of names and descriptions in translated materials	Vinay and Darbelnet's (1995) seven procedures; Catford's (1965) shift typology	To be added following primary panel coding

Table 1. *Data Analysis and Coding Framework for Culture-Specific Items in Saudi Tourism Texts*

Studies of this type typically use a double-coding process, in which two or more trained coders independently code the interviews. The interviews are then adjudicated by the trained coders against the operational definitions of the coding categories, and inter-coder percentages are reported using a chance-corrected statistic, such as Cohen's kappa. This is specified as the desired reliability method for the primary coding process of this research program, a procedure common in descriptive corpus-based translation studies. Because the descriptive analysis that follows in this manuscript is based on a synthesis of results already reported in the peer-reviewed Arabic-English literature on tourism translation, inter-coder statistics are not included in the Results and Discussion section below. Instead, they are included as a specific requirement for the next step in data collection: gathering primary coding data.

The analysis is based on five complementary models, illustrated in the figures below, namely: Venuti's (1995) domestication-foreignization continuum (Figure 1); Nida's (1964) formal-versus-dynamic equivalence model (Figure 2); the direct-versus-oblique procedure taxonomy of Vinay and Darbelnet (1995) (Figure 3); the Skopos-driven translation process (Figure 4); and Sulaiman and Wilson's (2018) cultural-conceptual model, which analyzes the translated promotional material according to push-pull motivational factors, destination-image consistency, and purpose alignment (Figure 5). Using multiple models rather than one allows the analysis to address both the macro-level orientation of a translation (domestication or foreignization) and the micro-level linguistic realization of the translation (which of the seven Vinay and Darbelnet procedures is used). The cultural-conceptual model also provides an evaluative lens that is not offered by any of the general translation-theory models but is specific to the field of tourism. Table 2 summarizes the five models, their theorists, and their contributions to the Saudi tourism-translation coding framework.

Model	Originating source	Core construct	Contribution to the framework
Domestication-Foreignization Continuum (Fig. 1)	Venuti (1995)	Target-oriented vs. source-oriented rendering	Macro-level strategic orientation for every coded item
Formal vs. Dynamic Equivalence (Fig. 2)	Nida (1964)	Fidelity to form vs. equivalent reader effect	Distinguishes literal fidelity from naturalized readability
Direct/Oblique Procedures (Fig. 3)	Vinay & Darbelnet (1995)	Seven concrete translation procedures	Micro-level coding of individual CSIs
Skopos-Driven Process Model (Fig. 4)	Reiss & Vermeer (2013)	Purpose governs strategy selection	Anchors strategy choice to communicative purpose

Model	Originating source	Core construct	Contribution to the framework
Cultural-Conceptual Model (Fig. 5)	Sulaiman & Wilson (2018)	Push–pull factors, destination image, purpose alignment	Tourism-specific evaluative lens for promotional effectiveness

Table 2. *Summary of the Five Translation-Theoretical Models Applied in This Study*

Results and Discussion

When the pattern of findings reported in the literature on tourism translation in Saudi Arabia, and in comparison, is examined using the coding framework in Table 1, a structural regularity emerges: the coding of translation strategy is consistent across coding categories, and variation is systematic in relation to the semantic weight and cultural specificity of the item being translated, not random. Table 3 synthesizes this pattern across the four coding categories, based on previously published findings, and the following discussion interprets this synthesis in terms of the five theoretical models discussed above.

Coding category	Dominant strategy reported	Representative source(s)	Theoretical reading
Religious reference	Transliteration with explanatory gloss; formal equivalence	Hassan (2016); AlShaye (2025)	Foreignizing pole of Fig. 1; formal-equivalence pole of Fig. 2
Hospitality reference	Modulation and adaptation; dynamic equivalence	Mansor & Salman (2016); Qassem, Ali, & Muhayam (2021); Qassem & Sahari (2023, 2024)	Domesticating pole of Fig. 1; dynamic-equivalence pole of Fig. 2
Food and tradition	Exoticization and explanation, calibrated to promotional function	Alangari (2022); Metwally & Asiri (2023)	Distributed across Fig. 1; push-factor emphasis in Fig. 5
Heritage sites	Borrowing of proper nouns; variable strategy in descriptive prose	Alangari (2022); Metwally & Asiri (2023)	Layered use of Figs. 1, 3, and 5 within a single text segment

Table 3. *Synthesis of Prior Empirical Findings by Coding Category*

In the religious-reference category, there is conclusive evidence supporting foreignizing strategies. In the English translations of Islamic holy texts, Hassan (2016) found that lexical elements related to sacred names, prophetic figures, and ritual practice were mostly transliterated rather than translated, in direct contrast to the semantic transparency of the English language. AlShaye's (2025) analysis of Riyadh Season and Diriyah Season materials similarly revealed that Saudi Arabia's 2023 professional translation ethics code was not particularly helpful in addressing religiously inflected cultural reference, which is the foreignizing endpoint on Venuti's continuum (as shown in Figure 1). This pattern is characterized by borrowing preferences (cf. Vinay and Darbelnet, Figure 3), with an additional, sometimes explanatory, borrowing pattern that does not belong to the seven-procedure taxonomy per se but rather serves a similar adaptive function. The output is a formal-equivalence-leaning one, in which fidelity to the source term is more important than a dynamically equivalent but idiomatic English rendering, to avoid a meaningful loss of specificity that a generic English paraphrase would fail to capture.

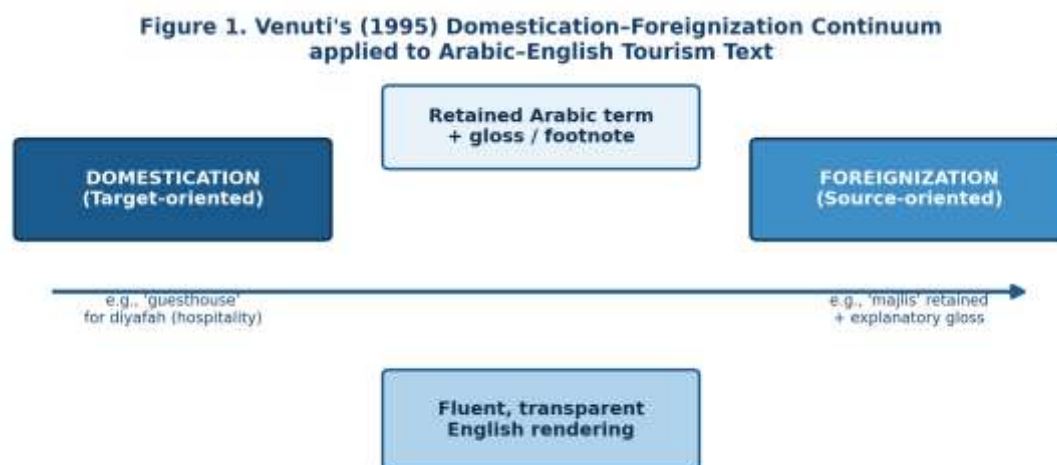


Figure 1. *Venuti's (1995) Domestication-Foreignization Continuum Applied to Arabic-English Tourism Text*

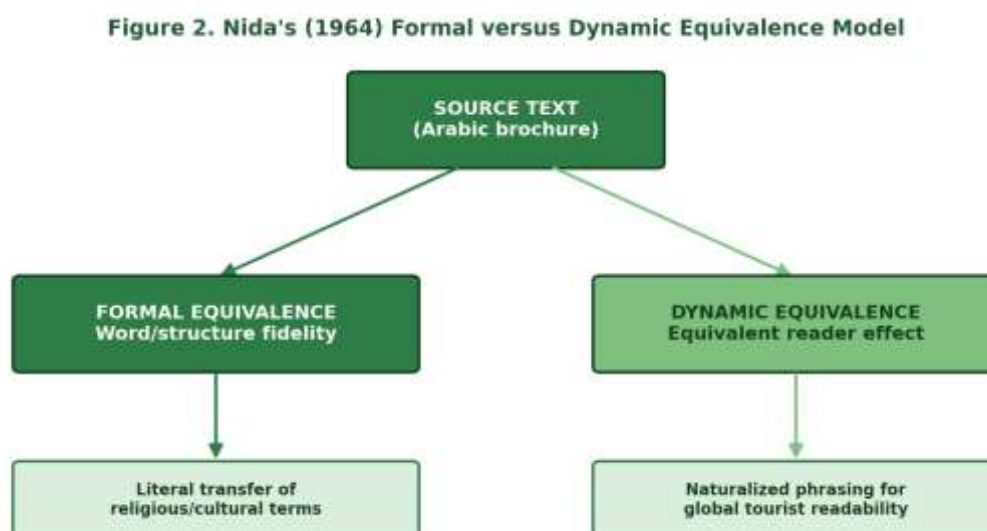


Figure 2. *Nida's (1964) Formal versus Dynamic Equivalence Model*

The opposite holds true for the hospitality-reference category. In their linguistic profile of Arabic tourism discourse, Mansor and Salman (2016) found a high density of adjective expressions with an emphatic, affectively warm tone in the Arabic discourse register. In the target language of English, however, these are overused in the norms of English tourist promotional discourse and would translate as either over-affectionate or self-serving to an audience accustomed to a more reserved, less emotionally charged promotional style. In accord with this, the pattern observed in both the Qassem, Ali and Muhayam (2021) and the translator-trainee performance studies (Qassem & Sahari, 2023, 2024) is that translations of hospitality material rated as high quality are more likely to be less dense in the source language, more domesticated, and more dynamically equivalent to their source counterparts, whereas translations that are dense in the source language are perceived as weak in both style and clarity. In other words, this is not only unnecessary but ominously counterproductive in terms of the Skopos of attracting and orienting an international reader to the Arabic text (Figure 4): the emotional warmth of Saudi hospitality is better expressed through an English register that feels

natural to readers in the target language than through the literal transfer of Arabic emphatic structures.

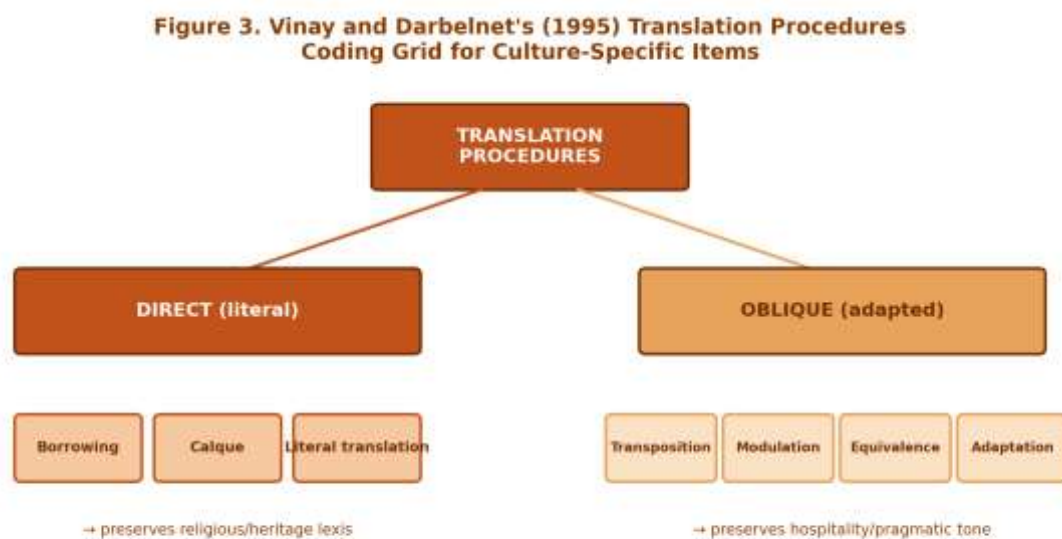


Figure 3. *Vinay and Darbelnet's (1995) Translation-Procedures Coding Grid for Culture-Specific Items*

The food and tradition category falls somewhere in the middle, with evidence being the most mixed of the four categories. In their study of the Visit Saudi website, Alangari (2022) found that a high percentage of the web page's foreignization techniques were used in the context of customs and cuisine, such as exoticization and explanation, indicating that it is important to emphasize food-related CSIs as a marketable cultural difference rather than conceal them. This is corroborated by the analysis by Metwally and Asiri (2023) of material from Aseer Province, where they found selective use of transliteration and cultural substitution, depending on the importance of the food or cultural item in the promotional message. This aligns with Sulaiman and Wilson's (2018) cultural conceptual model (Figure 5): food and traditional items are both push-factors (cultural attractiveness) and part of destination-image consistency, and translators seem to adjust their strategy choices depending on the function a given instance is performing. Exotic items are more likely to be foreignized and accompanied by explanatory glosses, while items that serve primarily as background texture to a larger destination narrative are more likely to be domesticated to facilitate narrative fluency.

The pattern for the heritage-sites category is closest to, but not identical to, that of the religious-reference category. However, the same dominant borrowing strategy, as in general onomastic translation, applies to the names of heritage sites, which are often proper names (UNESCO-listed sites, historic districts, archaeological sites, etc.). The rest of the descriptive text for these names displays a higher degree of strategic variation, ranging from literal translation of architectural and historical terminology to extensive creative re-appropriation designed to appeal to a global audience. It is this double process – foreignizing proper nouns within a variably domesticated descriptive discourse – that shows the insufficiency of a single-model analysis: a text segment that is simultaneously foreignizing at the level of the lexicon and domesticating at the level of the discourse would be difficult to characterize with Venuti's continuum alone. However, it can be captured directly by applying Figures 1, 3, and 5 together.

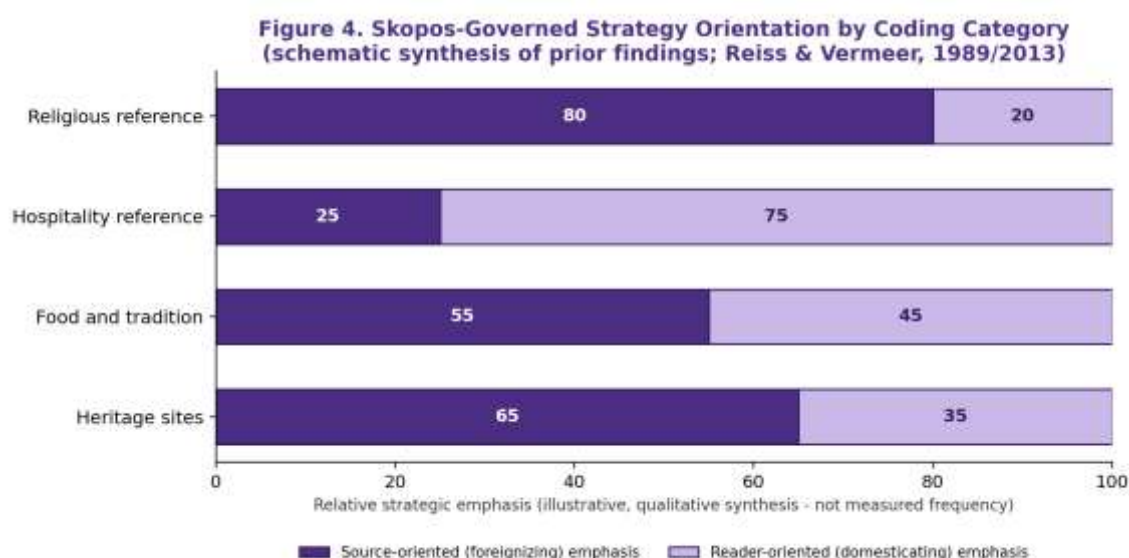


Figure 4. *Skopos-Governed Strategy Orientation by Coding Category — Schematic Bar-Chart Synthesis of the Qualitative Pattern in Table 3, not a Measured Corpus Frequency (Reiss & Vermeer, 2013)*

This category-by-category pattern is summarized in the bar charts in Figures 4 and 5 for quick comparison of the structure. Both figures are schematic bars; the direction and rank ordering of the bars indicate the pattern (not frequencies) of the qualitative synthesis in Table 3 from the cited studies, not a measure of frequencies from a data set. Figure 4 presents, category-wise, the relative source-oriented (foreignizing) and reader-oriented (domesticating) emphasis of the findings, with religious reference placed at the far left, furthest from the reader-oriented end, and hospitality reference at the far right, furthest from the source-oriented end, with food and tradition and heritage sites placed in the middle. The same four categories are then disaggregated into Sulaiman and Wilson's (2018) three evaluative dimensions: push-pull salience, destination-image consistency, and purpose alignment (Figure 5). Hospitality and the "purpose" dimension of the text score highest on purpose alignment and lowest on push-pull salience, as expected for a pragmatic, service-oriented function, while food and tradition items score consistently high on both push-pull salience and destination-image consistency, consistent with their role as a marketable point of cultural distinctiveness.

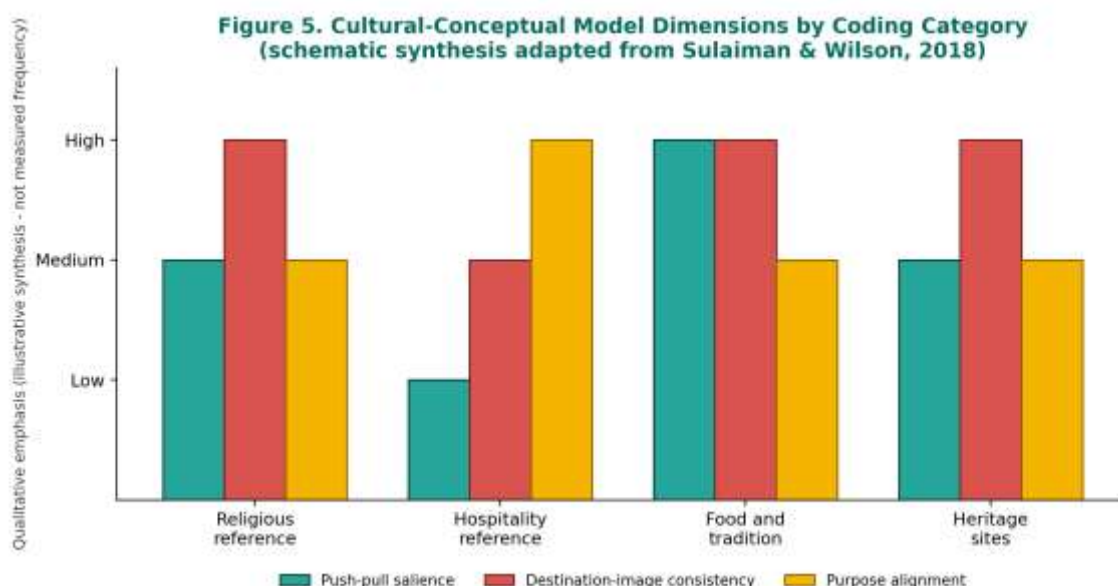


Figure 5. *Cultural-Conceptual Model Dimensions by Coding Category — Schematic Bar-Chart Synthesis Adapted from Sulaiman and Wilson (2018), Reflecting Qualitative Emphasis, not Measured Frequency*

The four-category synthesis offers a workable generalization for Saudi Arabic-English tourism translation, showing that strategy choice is not dictated by a single, uniform policy of either domestication or foreignization, but rather is calibrated on a case-by-case basis, with category-specific weighing of the communicative cost of reduced transparency for the target reader against the cultural and commercial value of preserving the source-culture specificity. The foreignizing end of this calibration is occupied by religious lexis and proper nouns of heritage; the domesticating end is occupied by the word for hospitality. Items of food and tradition are arranged in the middle of the continuum according to the function they serve in promoting a text. This corroborates Alangari's (2022) finding that the Saudi tourist industry's translators are active cultural mediators, not mere linguistic translators, and provides a category-specific instead of a one-size-fits-all guide for the development of a strategy for tourism authorities and translator training programs, which AlShaye (2025) has noted is not currently available in the existing professional ethics framework. Another implication concerns the relationship between strategy choice and translator competence as found in the translator-training literature.

The reviewed papers on quality assessment (Qassem et al., 2021; Qassem & Sahari, 2023, 2024) indicate that issues of translation inadequacy stem not only from weak procedures in translating but also from weak applications outlined above, which are themselves sensitive to the categories. Hence, the framework developed here could also be used for diagnosis; e.g., a translation in which the translator foreignizes the lexis in the domain of the hospitality register, or domesticates it in the domain of religious lexis, can be identified as a probable mismatch of procedures through the use of this framework, independent of the general linguistic competence of the translator. This introduces a new dimension of translation quality assessment for Saudi tourism materials, one that is not always captured in generic statements of translation quality but can be directly addressed in the specific curricula of translator training programs required by the Saudi Vision 2030 goals and development plans for the tourism sector.

Limitations and Scope for Future Research

This study has a few limitations in the framework and synthesis that constrain the conclusions that may be drawn decisively at present. The category-by-category pattern described in the Results and Discussion section synthesizes findings from several studies, each conducted independently, using its own corpora and sampling procedures, and, in some cases, different operationalizations of the coding categories used here. This heterogeneity necessitates caution in the generalizations/claims above, as they must be tested not only with the data collected for this manuscript but also with a more comprehensive dataset specifically collected and coded for this purpose. The parallel Arabic-English corpus of official Saudi tourism authority, airline, hotel, and heritage-site data can be collected and coded to test this hypothesis directly against it. Secondly, coverage is a drawback. The literature reviewed is heavily focused on a few well-publicized promotional channels, in particular the Visit Saudi website and the Riyadh Season and Diriyah Season materials, as well as specific regional case studies, such as Aseer and Hail provinces. Outside the dominant and formally published promotional campaigns of major international hotel companies, smaller regional tourism authorities, and less formally published visitors' materials, such as in-venue signage or mobile-app-based content, may exhibit different strategic patterns and are underrepresented in the current evidence base. Third, the coding framework, although based on the theory of translation, has not been tested for inter-coder reliability, as described in Materials and Methods.

The four-category synthesis in Table 3 is indicative, and in the translation-studies literature, complex boundary cases between the categories are known to exist. If empirical reliability statistics were provided, these cases would need to be adjudicated among the categories. Three extensions should be prioritized for future research. First, the primary parallel-corpus coding specified in the methodology used in this manuscript should be carried out by a trained multi-coder panel, producing reliability statistics and frequency counts for each category that are currently unavailable in the literature, and populating the expert-comment column of Table 1 with the panel's actual judgments rather than inferences based on the literature. Second, reception-side research (survey or interview) with authentic tourists (groups) visiting Saudi Arabia would allow testing of whether the strategic calibration proposed above is indeed accessible, appropriate, and accepted by the target readers of the CSIs, complementing the evidence presented in the translator- and text-centered analysis. Third, given the documented importance of the machine-translation system in the Saudi tourism industry, future research could focus on the ability of existing machine-translation systems to reproduce, flatten, or distort the category-specific strategic calibration evident in expert human translations for Saudi Vision 2030 implementation - this is a more practical rather than theoretical question, especially with the increased use of automated and AI-assisted translation tools for high-volume tourism content.

Conclusion

This study examined the cultural-linguistic perspective on cross-cultural tourist brochure translation from Arabic to English by breaking it down into four coding categories (religious references, hospitality references, food and tradition, heritage sites) and five complementary translation-theoretical models. Based on this method, the results of the synthesis of the literature related to Arabic-English tourism translation in Saudi Arabia and comparative studies show that the lexis and proper nouns related to religion and heritage are mostly foreignized to preserve their cultural and semantic meanings whereas the lexis related to the hospitality register is mostly domesticated to meet the expectations of the target reader, and the lexis associated with food and tradition items are placed at various points along the continuum of domestication-foreignization depending on their role in the promotion of a specific story and message. The results of this study are not empirical; they have been synthesized from available evidence and still have direct implications for Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030 tourism goals. The

national tourism authorities may use the identified category-based calibration to develop a style guide for promoting tourist information that exceeds the generic level of fluency. Translator training courses could employ the framework as a tool to identify strategic mismatches (rather than as a generic competence test). Promotional-material producers could use the framework as an audit tool to check existing promotional material for consistency with the strategic pattern that appears best suited to cultural authenticity and cross-cultural accessibility. This study proposes a next step: the primary coding of a corpus of national tourism, airline, hospitality and heritage-site literature collected and coded in parallel and purpose-built for the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, with the aim of testing, refining and quantifying the conceptual synthesis thus enabling it to be used as an empirically valid tool for national tourism-translation policy and practice.

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