'PEDAL TO PARADISE?'THE ANGLO-MALAY ENCOUNTER IN TOURISM TRANSLATION

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ABSTRACT

Tourism is one of the world's fastest growing industries and, therefore, one of the most important sectorsmarketed and promoted globally. Nevertheless, promoting tourism across languages and cultures might not be as straightforward as it may seem. Due to different worldviews and cultural values, tourism is conceptualised differently by different societies. These differing conceptualisations have significant implications on cross-cultural tourism promotion and, therefore, the translation of tourism promotional materials.Adopting the functional approachto translation and the nation of cultural conceptualisation, the paper explores the challenges involved in translating English tourism promotional materials into Malay and investigates the extent to which tourism themes employed to lure Anglophone tourists are compatible with the Malay culture. Three types of textual analysis are carried out: source text analysis, target textanalysis, and parallel text analysis. The textual analyses are complemented by finding derived from focus groups. The findings of the study demonstratehow tourismis conceptualised within the post-sightseeing, anti-tourist frameworkin the Anglo culture, and how it is framed within the traditional sight-seeing framework for the Malay audience. Furthermore, the study also revealsthat while original, non-translated tourism promotional materials,in both English and Malay, capitalise on their respectiveaudience's conceptualisation of tourism, translated tourism promotional materials might tend to overlook this important aspect leading to potential failure.

1.   Introduction

The forces of accelerating globalization and heightened mobility in the 21st century have resulted in the escalation of tourism activities. Through the reduction of barriers such as time, distance and cost, travel is becoming more common, accessible and affordable. The last remaining barrier to overcome, language, has become much more obvious and necessary to remedy. As the world becomes 'smaller'and the tourism industry expands tremendously, demand for translation grows higher. Tourism and translation travel together. Where one goes the other follows. As a result, tourism promotional texts have become one of the most translated materials in the world today. Nevertheless, despite the high demand, translated tourism promotional materials (TPMs)is often met with criticism(Hickey, 2004, p. 77; Snell-Hornby, 1999, p. 95; Sulaiman, 2014, p. 507;Sumberg, 2004, p. 329). The main criticism levelled by scholars is that these translations are not adequate from the point of view of the function that they should fulfil. The reasons behind the inadequacy of TPMtranslations are discussed by Sumberg (2004, pp. 343-350), who suggests that the poor standard of translated TPMs is attributed to the translation approach adopted. According to her, the adoption of a retrospective micro-linguistic approach, (which focuses on the micro-linguistic features of the source text), rather than a prospective macro-linguistic approach(which focuses on the macro-linguistic features of the target text particularly its purposeand function) suggests thattranslators are unwilling or unable to leave Smith and Klein-Braley's 'safe haven of a straighttranslation' (1997, p. 175). This view is supported by Hickey (2004, p. 77), who discusses this topic from

the perspective of pragmatics, claiming that the problem lies in the fact that translators aim at 'semantic equivalence' instead of 'perlocutionary equivalence'.

The ineffectiveness of a micro-retrospective approach can be explained by the fact that in the field of advertising, the concept of 'purpose', or what is also termed as *skopos* by the functional school of translation, is central (Vermeer, 2000, p. 221). In the field of tourism advertising, the ultimate purpose is to turn a potential tourist into an actual tourist. Therefore, what becomes more important than fidelity to the micro-linguistic features of the source text is the requirement that the target text must function optimally in the target culture to achieve the intended purpose. In order to fulfil such a requirement, it is crucial to understand cultural differences and the difficulties these can create.

The production of effective TPMs, whether through creation in original language or translation (transcreation)across languages, cannot depend solely on linguistic techniques without taking into consideration the cross-cultural issues involved. The (trans)creation of TPMs involves a dual-level process in which the macro-linguistic level is the determining factor which shapes and guides the construction of the micro-linguistic level. Thus, it is the task of TPM translators to consider the cultural context as well as the audience profile, needs and expectations so as to insure maximum impact in culturally different settings (Sumberg, 2004, pp. 329-353; Woodward-Smith & Eynullaeva, 2009, pp. 121-136). Failure to deal with the cultural differences adequately may lead to the potential failure of TPMs.

An important cross-cultural aspect which must be dealt with adequately is the notion of cultural conceptualisation (Sharifian, 2011). People from different cultures conceptualise the world differently based on their values, worldview and beliefs. For example, Anglo-Australians might conceptualise the dog as 'man's best friend', while in the Malay culture the dog is generally conceptualised as despicable, weak and evil (Imran Ho-Abdullah, 2011, p. 138).Since different cultures have different values and conceptualisations, different persuasion themes and strategies are required to influence the performance and reception of the target text.

Although a number of studies have analysed translated TPMs and highlighted some of the differences between texts written in different languages, a more in-depth research which links the failure of translated TPMs to cultural differences particularly those related to cultural conceptualisation is lacking. By adopting the functional approach to translation and the notion of cultural conceptualisation, this study investigates how tourism is promoted in an English TPM to lure Anglophone readers and how it is translated into Malay to potentially woo Malay tourists. The aim of the paper is ultimately to investigate whether the translationis functionally adequate, and to explore the translational challenges and potential strategies and solutions.

2.   Corpus and methodology

The corpus selected for this study is Tourism Australia's flagship website www.australia.com.[1] Tourism Australia is the Australian federal government agency responsible of promoting Australia as a tourist destination to the world. The 360-page website has 17 language variants with the English version being the primary platform (Tourism Australia, 2013). This study focuses on both the English version of the website, i.e. the source text (hereafter termedST), which is addressed to Anglophone audiences, and its Malay translation, i.e. the target text (hereafter termed TT), which is addressed to potential Malay tourists. For the purpose of this paper, representative excerpts from the analysed corpus have been selected for discussion and illustration.

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[1] Retrieved 28 March 2011.

Emphasising the notion of cultural conceptualisation(Sharifian, 2011) within the framework of the functional approach to translation(Nord, 1997), a profound translation-oriented analysiswas carried out on the ST to investigate how tourism is represented and how culturally-designed themes and perspectives are used to lure the English reader. The ST analysis is followed by an analysis of the TT in terms of its functionality in the target-cultural situation. In this regard, the way the culturally-designed themes and perspectives of the ST were translated into Malay was examined. The effectiveness of the TT in creating an appealing image for potential Malay tourists was tested on five focus groups each comprising eight native Malay speakers. The focus groups were shown the TT and their responses were examined so as to deduce the effects of the TT on them. The causes of such effects were then examined in the light of the cultural traits of the Malay society.The ST and TT analyses were followed by a parallel text (PT) analysis(Schaffner, 1998). In this study PTs referto authentic non-translated Malay texts of equal genre to the ST, that is, Malay texts promoting tourism. Analysing the textual practices of the PTs and comparing them with the ST and TT is instrumental in determining the differences that exist in how tourism is represented for the ST audience and how it is represented for and perceived by the TT audience.

Based on the findings derived from the ST, TT and PT analyses, I propose potential strategies for the production of functionally adequate translations, which takes into consideration the cultural conceptualisation of the target culture. These translationshave the potential to create the intended effects on the reader.

3. Findings and Discussion: Tourists vs. anti-tourists

Thestudyreveals that tourism is conceptualised differently in different societies. The ST and PT analyses show that while tourism is framed for Anglophone tourists within the post-sightseeing, anti-tourist framework(Francesconi, 2007, p. 103), it is framed within the traditional sight-seeing framework for Malay tourists. The analysis further suggests that Anglophone tourists in general are considered individualist, active post-sightseeing tourists who value action, adventure and experience and want to perform at the destination. On the other hand, Malay tourists are collectivistic, passive sightseeing tourists who value comfort and relaxation and want the destination to perform for them. These differences are the key factors which determine how each audience is to be persuaded.

For example, in complying with the needs and motivations of tourists from Anglophone societies, the 'action' theme is used predominantly in English TPMs. This theme concerns the tourist-in-action rather than staged events and displays. It is about tourists engaging with the tourist destination and actively performing and 'doing things' rather than passively gazing at and observing what lies before them(O'Dell, 2005, p. 27). The use of this theme in tourism discourse is consistent with the current trend popular among Anglophone tourists from Western societies: experiential tourism. These tourists prefer active and dynamic holidays involving challenging activities. They are no longer satisfied with the ordinary sightseeing form of tourism which simply involves the tourist 'being there'. They have evolved from sightseeing tourists to post-sightseeing travellers (also known as anti-tourists): consumers who do not want to be associated with passive tourism and tourists but prefer to be seen as active and adventurous explorers. The fact thesetourists prefer active holidays is widely recognised by the travel industry which asserts that 'Western consumers are straying away from destination-based travel to experience-based travel' (Oxford Economics & Amadeus, 2010, p. 29).

Framed this way, the main focus of the STis thetourists, particularly their physical actions and activities which constitute the key ingredient for active holiday experiences. The ST in Example 1 is an example of the use of such a theme. The ST is designed to make the readers

sense that an action-packed, adventure-filled and engaging experiences await them should they chose Australia as a holiday destination. In the ST, topics evolve around specific types of physical action to be performed by the tourist. These physical actions or activities are described using key action verbs, mostly in the imperative form, so as to enhance the effect of action and dynamism.

Example 1[2]

Source Text (ST)	Target Text (TT)	Back Translation
Explore the Australian Alps Straddling New South Wales, Victoria and the Australian Capital Territory, the Alps has uniquely Australian alpine vistas and year round opportunities for outdoor adventure. Hit Australia's highest ski fields or hike to the top of Mount Kosciuszko, our highest peak. Immerse yourself in Aboriginal history in Namagdi National Park. Drive the Great Alpine Road past historic villages, wildflower-coated plains, trout-filled streams and rugged gorges. Or go cycling, caving, rafting, kayaking, four wheel driving and horse riding.	**TerokaiBanjaran Alp Australia** Banjaran Alp yang menawarkanpemandangan alpine yang unikdanpeluangaktivitipengembaraanlasak di luar, mencelapaki New South Wales, Victoria dan Wilayah Ibu Negara Australia. Kunjungilapangan ski tertinggi di Australia ataukembaraberjalan kaki kepuncakGunung Kosciuszko, puncaktertinggi kami. Hayatisejarah Orang Asli di Taman Negara Namagdi. Lewatiperkampunganbersejarah, dataran yang diliputibunga-bunga liar, anak-anaksungai yang dipenuhiikan trout dangaung yang berceranggahapabilaandamemandu di atas Great Alpine Road. Atautunggangbasikal, terokagua, berakit, berkayak, naikikenderaanpacuanempatrodadanmenunggangkuda.	**Explore the Australian Alps** The Alps which offers uniquely Australian alpine vistas and opportunities for outdoor adventure activities straddles New South Wales, Victoria and the Australian Capital Territory. Visit Australia's highest ski fields or hike to the top of Mount Kosciuszko, our highest peak. Immerse yourself in Aboriginal history in Namagdi National Park. Go past historic villages, wildflower-coated plains, trout-filled streams and rugged gorges when you drive on the Great Alpine Road. Or ride a bicycle, explore caves, raft, kayak, ride a four wheel drive vehicle and ride a horse.

However, in the TT (Example 1), there are hardly any attempts to meet the needs, requirements and preferences of Malay tourists with respect to the activity vs. passivity dimension. Due to the micro-linguistic approach adopted, very limited changes were made with regard to the action theme employed. In other words, the concept of tourism used to entice Anglophone tourists was 'recycled' and presented 'as is' to Malay tourists albeit in a different linguistic sign system. The intensity of action is reproduced in the TT through the replication of imperative action verbs and the re-presentation of these imperatives in a successive manner. Thus, the TT creates a 'high-level activity' atmosphere which is too overwhelming or even intimidating for Malay tourists. When the TT in was tested on the focus groups, some of the responses were that it is 'too strong and adventurous' and that it is 'not family-friendly'.

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[2]All emphasises in the examples in the paper taken from the ST, TT and PTs are mine.

Example 2

Source Text (ST)	Target Text (TT)	Back Translation
Pedal to paradise in the Blue Mountains	**Mengayuh**menujukesyurgadi Blue Mountains[3]	**Pedal** heading to paradise in the Blue Mountains

In another particular instance, a headline which reads 'Pedal to Paradise in the Blue Mountains', was tested on the focus groups. Participants of the focus groups found the TT unappealing. They claimed that the TT sounds 'too energy consuming and physically exhausting', making Blue Mountains seem inaccessible and visiting it a 'difficult task to achieve'. They further explained that when they travel abroad as tourists, they want a relaxed holiday, not an adventurous or challenging one. The image evoked by the TT, according to them, is an exhausted tourist covered in sweat. They also highlighted the fact that cycling is time consuming and that they have limited time which they would prefer to spend by visiting as many iconic places as possible. Some focus group participants even expressed their dislike of the idea of pedalling, relating it to the past, underdevelopment, inconvenience and hardship. To them, the idea of pedalling, particularly up and down a mountain, contradicts their vision and conceptualisation of a relaxing and comfortable holiday for which they have paid a lot of money. Another reason for their dislike of the idea of pedalling is that it contradicts modernity. They pointed out that they have just left the paddling era behind them – referring to the recent 'less advanced times' of their childhood in which the bicycle was one of the main modes of transportation for Malays, particularly in the countryside. This, statement reinforces the hypothesis that one of the main attractions sought after by Malay tourists abroad is modernity and advancement: the sophisticated future. This is somehow in contrast with what Anglophone tourists seek: the simple past. Furthermore, the focus groups expressed that they are more interested in the destination rather than the activities. Hence, they suggested that the beauty of Blue Mountains should be highlighted instead of the sport activities which could be considered a secondary attraction.

Example 3 (Parallel Texts)

Tiomanmenawarkanpelbagaitarikanuntukpenyelamdarisemuaperingkattahap. (Tourism Malaysia, 2008)
[Tioman offers various attractions for divers of all levels.]

Terumbu-terumbukaranginimendapattumpuan para penyelam yang berpengalamankeranaarusairnyamenarikpelbagai sepsis pelagikdenganbanyaksekali. (Tourism Malaysia, 2008)
[These coral reefs attract experienced divers due to their sea current which attracts various pelagic species.]

Turutmenanti para pelancongialahaktivitimenyelamdanmengujiketahanan mental menaikikeretakabel yang menghubungkanTelukBuraudenganGunung Mat Chinchangsepanjang 2.2 kilometer. (Nurul Husna Mat Rus, 2011, p. 3)
[Also awaiting tourists are diving activities and the mental challenging activity of riding a 2.2 kilometre line cable car which connects TelukBurau and Gunung Mat Chinchang.]

The analysis conducted on PTs reveals that the way the action theme is presented to Malay readers is different from how it is presented in the ST. In order to create the ideal image of tourist experiences for the Malay audience, the PTs adopt a different degree of activeness. It is observed that relaxation rather than action is emphasised. The discourse is designed in such a

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[3]The notions of 'paradise' and 'syurga'are also problematic in translating TPMs but these will be dealt with separately in a different paper.

manner that even adventure tourism becomes a 'comfortable' activity rather than a challenging one consistent with the requirements, expectations and preferences of Malay tourists. This is achieved primarily by focusing on the destination rather than the reader, i.e. the potential tourist (see Example 3). Instead of constructing an image of the reader 'you' performing the activities, what is constructed is an image of the destination which performs its role of fulfilling the requirements of a satisfactory vacation. The 'destination' is the leading actor and main performer. 'Destinations' offer activities to tourists; get the attention of tourists; and 'tourist activities', as part of the destination attraction, await the arrival of tourists. Hence, the focus is on what the destination has to offer and not on what the tourist should do. In other words, the reader plays the role of a less active, more passive tourist who 'expect everything to be done to him and for him' (Boorstin, 1987/1992, p. 85).

Example 4

Source Text (ST)	Functionally Adequate Translation	Back Translation
Explore the Australian Alps Straddling New South Wales, Victoria and the Australian Capital Territory, the Alps has uniquely Australian alpine vistas and year round opportunities for outdoor adventure. Hit Australia's highest ski fields or hike to the top of Mount Kosciuszko, our highest peak. Immerse yourself in Aboriginal history in Namagdi National Park. Drive the Great Alpine Road past historic villages, wildflower-coated plains, trout-filled	**JelajahiBanjaran Alps Australia** Banjaran Alps yang merentangiwilayah New South Wales, Victoria dan Australian Capital Territory menawarkanpemandangan alpine Australia yang uniksertaaktivitirekreasi yang menariksepanjangtahun. Di sini, pelancongberpeluangmengunjungilapangan ski tertinggi di Australia danmendakipuncak Mount Kosciuszko, puncaktertinggi di Australia. Pelancong juga bolehmelawat Taman Negara Namagdiuntukmenghayatisejarah Orang Asli Australia. Perjalanan di sepanjang Great Alpine Road pula akanmembawapelancongmelaluipekan-pekanbersejarah, dataran yang dilitupibunga-bunga liar, sungai-sungai yang dipenuhiikan trout danpemandangan yang mengasyikkan. Destinasiini juga merupakantempat yang ideal bagipelbagaiaktivitimenariksepertiberbasikal, menerokaigua, berakit, berkayak, menunggangkudadanmenaikikenderaanpacuanempatroda.	**Explore the Australian Alps Ranges** The Alps ranges which straddles the states of New South Wales, Victoria and the Australian Capital Territory offers a uniquely Australian alpine vistas and exciting recreational activities all year round. Here tourists have the opportunity to visit the highest ski fields in Australia and hike to the top of Mount Kosciuszko, the highest peak in Australia. Tourists can also visit Namagdi National Park to experience the history of Aboriginal people of

streams and rugged gorges. Or go cycling, caving, rafting, kayaking, four wheel driving and horse riding.		Australia. Meanwhile, the journey along the Great Alpine Road will take tourists past historic villages, wildflower-coated plains, trout-filled streams and fascinating landscapes. This destination also is an ideal place for various interesting activities such as cycling, exploring caves, rafting, kayaking, horse riding and riding four wheel drive vehicles.

The evolution of Anglophone tourists from sightseeing tourists to post-sightseeing (anti-) tourists means that the discourse used to persuade them has also evolved from traditional tourism discourse to what is known as 'anti-tourism discourse' which addresses the 'anti-tourist' feelings and attitudes that articulate the denigration of tourist superficiality and passivity in Anglophone societies. The Malays on the other hand are still persuaded using the traditional tourism discourse. Hence when translating an English anti-tourism discourse for a Malay audience, the fact that the said discourse is constructed based on the current preferences of Anglophone tourists and their cultural characteristics must be taken into consideration. It is not, however, suggested that the themes used in the ST cannot be used totally in the production of Malay TPMs. Instead, it is suggested that whatever theme is used, it should be manipulated in a way that the end result is something that corresponds to the Malay conceptualisation of the tourist experience so as to attract the interest of the TT audience. In this relation, translating TPMs for a Malay audience would require tourist activities and experiences to be 'repackaged' in a collectivistic, family-friendly, novice-friendly, non-intimidating, relaxing and above all risk-free manner. For example, the level of action, performance and challenge inherent in the ST must be toned down to accommodate for the Malay needs, preferences and expectations. This can be achieved in many ways, including by shifting the focus from the reader to tourists in general. Thus, instead of projecting the reader into the discourse as an active performer, the physical activities can be distanced from the reader by relating them to tourists in general (tourists have the opportunity to visit, tourists can also visit).The notion of 'possibility' and 'opportunity' can also used to tone down the action-filled imperatives. This notion may be reflected through the explicit use of the word 'berpeluang' (have the opportunity) in 'pelancongberpeluang' (tourists have the opportunity) and the word 'boleh' (can/may) in 'pelancongjugaboleh' (tourists can also). Furthermore, instead of 'instructing' the readers to drive (like in the ST), they can be informed that the journey will take tourists through historic villages, etc. (see Example 4).

Along the same line, the shift from action to relaxation could also be implemented by changing the type of imperative verbs used. Imperative verbs denoting physical action and energy consumption (e.g. swim, dive, pedal, climb) could be replaced by imperative verbs that denote mental and emotional actions (e.g., experience, discover, enjoy, explore, relax, escape) as reflected in Example 5.

Example 5

Source Text (ST)	Functionally Adequate Translation	Back Translation
Pedal to paradise in Blue Mountains	**Hayati**keindahanalamsemulajadi di Blue Mountains	Experience the beauty of nature at Blue Mountains

4.   Conclusion

The study reveals that aspects of the macro-linguistic level of tourism promotion such as cultural conceptualisation must be addressed effectively in translating TPMs. This is primarily due to the fact that tourism is conceptualised differently in the Anglo and Malay cultures. In the Anglo culture, tourism is conceptualised within the post-sightseeing, anti-tourist framework, while in the Malay culture it is conceptualised within the traditional sight-seeing framework. This differing conceptualisation of tourism across cultures have significant implications on cross-cultural tourism promotion and therefore the translation of TPMs in general.Thus, in order to promote tourism across cultures using translation as a mediating platform, the TT audience's conceptualisation of tourism must be recognised and built on. In order to achieve this, a dual-level strategy combining the macro and micro linguistic levels must be adopted. At the macro level, the overall tone of action-relaxation, activity-passivity, and performing-gazing must be adjusted to one which fulfils the expectations, needs and motivations of the target audience. At the micro level, linguistic elements which are not consistent with the cultural conceptualisation of the audience must be dealt with in a manner that will serve the intended overall function.

This study also shows that the criticism raised by scholars on the quality of translated TPMs also applies to the English Malay language pair and suggests that while original, non-translated TPMs, in both English and Malay, seem to capitalise on their respective audience's conceptualisation of tourism to create an appealing destination image, translated TPMs in Malay might tend to overlook this important aspect leading to potential failure. This implies that more has to be done to improve the quality of translated Malay TPMs.

On a final note, this study could pave the way for future investigations involving other language pairs. Further investigations could also be done in linking the differing cultural conceptualisations to cultural values.

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