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PROPER NOUNS IN TOURISM DISCOURSE: TYPES AND FUNCTIONS OF METALINGUISTIC REFLECTION

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A B S T R A C T

In tourism discourse, especially within travel guides, proper nouns carry significant metalinguistic reflections that contribute to constructing a destination's cultural, historical, and political image in the global public consciousness. These names—often linked to historical figures, landmarks, and culturally resonant events—enhance the narrative clarity, symbolizing unique cultural, historical, and geographical identities of destinations. This study aims to explore the functions and types of metalinguistic reflection in the use of proper nouns within tourism discourse. It reviews key scholars, such as Mikhail Bakhtin, Roman Jakobson, Umberto Eco, Julia Kristeva, and Louis Hjelmslev, who have contributed to the understanding of metalinguistic functions and reflections in various contexts.

A R T I C L E I N F O

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INTRODUCTION

1. Introduction. In the tourism sector, especially in travel guides, the use of proper nouns receives special attention. These nouns encompass various types of metalinguistic reflections, which form a significant part of the tourism narrative. Through proper nouns, the tourism narrative shapes the political-geographic and cultural image of a country in the public consciousness. Proper nouns include names associated with historical figures, notable landmarks, or memorable events, which help construct a political, geographic, and cultural image of a country in the minds of travelers. In tourism, these kinds of nouns bring clarity and substance to the narrative, meaning they showcase the destination's unique culture, history, and political significance to tourists. Therefore, the use of proper nouns in travel guides plays an important role in forming the destination's global public image. They convey not only cultural meanings but also emphasize the unique characteristics of the tourism destination.

2. Context and the Study Area: E.E. Menshikova, in her article, highlights the role of the tourism narrative in shaping a country's political and geographic image. She notes that geographical names play a crucial role in this process, as these names are used in a generalized manner to convey the main characteristics of a country to the public consciousness. Additionally, she discusses personal ideologemes, which encompass names associated with the country's renowned political figures, ruling dynasties, and historical and cultural leaders. According to E.E. Menshikova, such names are also activated in the tourism

narrative, playing an essential role in showcasing the country's rich cultural and historical heritage[1]. We aim to examine the reflection of metalinguistic reflection on proper nouns in travel guides in our work. Metalinguistic reflection is one of the complex concepts widely studied across various fields, involving the process of analyzing, reinterpreting, or indicating changes regarding a particular text or phenomenon. Research dedicated to this topic has been carried out by many scholars in fields such as linguistics, literary studies, philosophy, and cultural studies. Below, we provide information on the works of some renowned scholars who have contributed to this topic:

1. Mikhail Bakhtin - A Russian literary theorist and philosopher whose theory of dialogism has significantly influenced metalinguistic reflection. M. Bakhtin emphasized the interaction of multiple layers of language and their social contexts[2].

2. Roman Jakobson - One of the prominent scholars in linguistics, R. Jakobson wrote about metalinguistic reflection through communication functions and language analysis. In works such as "On Linguistic Aspects of Translation," he thoroughly analyzed this topic, particularly focusing on the metalinguistic function of language[3].

3. Umberto Eco - An Italian semiotician, writer, and philosopher, Umberto Eco also wrote extensively on metalinguistic reflection and the system of signs. His book, "Semiotics and the Philosophy of Language," is one of the key sources on this topic[4].

4. Julia Kristeva - A French-Bulgarian psychoanalyst, linguist, and writer, J. Kristeva made significant contributions to the development of intertextuality and semiotics. Her works explore how metalinguistic reflection is used in literary texts.

5. Louis Hjelmslev - A Danish linguist, L. Hjelmslev developed ideas on language structures and the multilayered nature of meaning. His work, *"Prolegomena to a Theory of Language,"* is important for understanding the descriptive structures of language[5].

3. Methodology: Metalinguistic reflection is understood as "a speech or group of speeches that evaluate language or speech-related facts from a metalinguistic perspective"[6]. Our task is to identify objects of reflection, determine their linguistic indicators, and describe their types and functions.

The objects of metalinguistic reflection presented in travel guide texts often include natural features (such as rivers, bays, mountains, and similar landscapes), which are frequently shaped through a mythopoetic approach. This means that these objects, in addition to their natural characteristics, may embody historical, cultural, and legendary meanings:

- rivers and mountains often hold a significant place in folklore and mythological concepts, giving them a more symbolic meaning in travel guides. Moreover, such names reflect the cultural and mythical images created around natural objects, making them more memorable. For example, the name "Silver River" is given to a river in the southern United States due to its waters shimmering in the sunlight.

- names of inhabited places: cities, small towns, rural settlements, etc. Their distinctive feature is the ability to be formed based on ethnonyms. For example, Addis Ababa — the capital and largest city of Ethiopia. The characteristics of this city's name and its formation can be interpreted based on an ethnonym. In Amharic, "Addis Ababa" means "new flower," symbolically and spiritually representing the city. This name is deeply connected to Ethiopia's history and culture, signifying the beginning of a new era, growth,

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and renewal. The city's name embodies elements that reflect the historical and cultural heritage of an ethnic group or people. Ethiopia, being a multinational country, considers Addis Ababa as a center where many ethnic groups and cultural influences converge. The city's name also symbolizes the harmony between historical roots and modernity, a common characteristic for cities whose names reflect both history and the future, like in the case of villages. "New flower" depicts the city as a symbol of renewal, growth, and development. Historically, this name also reflects Ethiopia's status as an independent state resisting European colonization, symbolizing its international significance.

- official and common names of city structures, squares, streets, markets, and others, as well as the differences in these names and their etymology (generic group): The name "Beast Market" is found in several European cities, indicating that animal trade once took place in these locations, although now they are often used for various cultural events.

- names of political figures and their family members convey historical events and political ideas and values: Names like "Nelson Mandela" or "Mahatma Gandhi" are referenced as symbols of the struggle for freedom and equality. Names of prominent figures in science and culture are used to highlight their contributions to the development of culture and science, for example, Ibn Sina is recognized as a symbol of genius and innovation in medicine. Names of characters from legends and folk tales convey significant symbolic and cultural meanings: Names like "Robin Hood" or "To'maris" are referenced as symbols of justice, bravery, and strength.

- names of architectural structures, their symbolic meaning, and their etymology (the architect or creator who designed the monument, the reason for its creation, its connection to a historical era, how it has changed over time, technical achievements, aesthetic features, etc.): The statue "The Motherland Calls" in Volgograd, Russia, was erected in memory of World War II participants; the name "Taj Mahal" is widely known for its history and as a symbol of love, revealing the symbolic importance of the structure to travelers.

Reflections found in tourist guide texts can be classified into several types based on their level of focus on language, and this classification depends on how deeply language is used and the level of consideration of thoughts about it:

- using autonym names, where the term itself is used in its original meaning, with italics or quotation marks:

The name "Saint-Germain-des-Prés" translates to "Saint German in the meadows" [7]. Here, autonymy turns the linguistic fact into the central focus of the statement by directly referring to it.

Autonymy refers to a type of metalinguistic reflection where the linguistic fact is the subject of the statement, and its understanding serves as the rheme.

- reflexives related to autonymy are poly-predicative sentences, typically connected by additional constructions. Poly-predicativity here arises from the merging or linking of multiple predicative units. For example, independent sentences using an autonym name can connect with each other and serve the function of providing additional information. In these cases, a word or phrase can be defined as an "autonym," meaning it describes itself using its own name. Thus, reflexives associated with autonymy enable the linkage between sentences and broaden the meaning collectively. *The Tour de France bicycle race ends near it each year, and the annual military parade marking July 14—known both as French National Day and Bastille Day—begins its journey at the arch.*

It stands at the center of the Place Charles de Gaulle (formerly called the Place de l'Étoile), the western terminus of the avenue des Champs-Élysées; just over 1.2 miles (2 km) away, at the eastern terminus, is the Place de la Concorde[8].

[7] URL: https://www.tripadvisor.es/Attraction_Review-g187147-d653106-Reviews-Abbaye_de_Saint_Germain_des_Pres-Paris_Ile_de_France.html

[8] URL: https://www.britannica.com/topic/triumphal-arch

- reflexive additions (in this case, separate words and phrases that describe the linguistic fact and serve as the "background" in a sentence that draws attention to actual reality): ***As you might expect with so many publishing houses and faculties in the area, writers feature large among the statues that watch over visitors and their reading matter.*** *In the green paths of the Luxembourg Gardens, a statue of the famous French poet Rimbaud (often described as the "eternally young rebel") stands quietly observing the passing tourists*[9].

4. Results and Discussion: Reflexives in tourism guide texts perform the following functions:

1. Communicative function

1a. The speaker anticipates that the listener may misinterpret the statement due to a lack of cultural (background) knowledge.*In 2005, a memorial wall for B. Shukenov (an honored artist of Kazakhstan) was installed on Panfilov Street. Since then, this corner has become well-known mainly among the native residents of Almaty, who come here to play the guitar, sing songs, and remember the great artist.*

The author emphasizes that readers may not be aware of the historical significance of the "Shukenov Wall" in Kazakhstan.

1b. The speaker anticipates that the addressee may be misled by the name and make incorrect plans:

In this passage, the author notes that the name of "The Cloisters" museum in New York may be misleading, although it is connected to exhibits of church culture[10].

1c. The speaker anticipates the addressee's frustration over not understanding the principles of naming realities based on the name (or multiple different names): *The "Old New Year" pub is open all year round, except in January, which sometimes surprises guests*[11].

2. Characterization function:

2a. Providing a detailed explanation of a general concept.*The Statue of Liberty is one of the largest symbols of the United States. Made of copper, the Statue of Liberty was a gift from France to commemorate the centenary of the United States' construction. The statue was constructed by Frederic Bartholdi between 1884 and 1886. The steel framework of the statue was built by Gustave Eiffel, while Richard Morris constructed the pedestal.*

The statue holds a torch in its right hand and a tablet in its left. The tablet is inscribed with the date July 4, 1776, which represents the date of independence. The torch features seven spikes representing the seven seas. The statue itself is 46 meters tall, with a total height of 93 meters including the pedestal. Tourists can climb up a staircase of 168 steps inside the statue to reach the torch[12].

2b. Clearly or subtly indicating the author's attitude toward the object: *In front of the library stands the statue of a "Girl Reading a Book," facing an ancient university. This monument may seem simple in form and content, but it actually provokes deep thought about the importance of education in the modern world*[13].

3. Informative function:

The following text provides information about the origin of street names: *Friedrichstraße is named after Elector Friedrich III, who ruled here from 1688 to 1713. In his day, the road was surrounded only by fields, pastures and farmland – until the royal estates were sold and work started on building Berlin's suburbs with paved roads.The street was named in honor of Frederick III, the Elector of Brandenburg, who later became King Frederick I of Prussia. This name was given to emphasize his significance in German history*[14].

4. Ontological function:

[9] URL: https://jardin.senat.fr/en/history-heritage

[10] Lyon J. USA. – Australia.: Lonely planet, 1999. – 1185 p.

[11] Richmond S. Russia. – Australia.: Lonely planet, 2009. – 796 p.

[12] Lyon J. USA. – Australia.: Lonely planet, 1999. – 1185 p.

[13] URL: https://www.kayak.co.uk/Baile-Felix.41080.guide

[14] URL: https://www.berlin.de

The author suggests that a name is defined not only by the reality and characteristics of the object (aligning with realism philosophy) but also determines the object's fate itself (reflecting nominalism): *Steve Jobs chose the name "Apple" for his company, aiming to make it simple, memorable, and distinct from traditional technological names. "Apple" is associated with simplicity and accessibility, which have become key characteristics of the company's products*[15].

The author may note the contradictions between the name of the object and its fate:

The name of this ship "Titanic", derived from the Titans of Greek mythology, symbolized its grandeur and unsinkability. However, the tragic sinking of the "Titanic" prompts reflection on the possible irony of fate associated with such a powerful name[16].

Finally, reflexives serve another important function — they engage the reader in language matters, fostering an awareness and sensitivity toward their own and other languages.

5. Conclusion: In tourism discourse, particularly within the context of travel guides, the use of proper nouns and the concept of metalinguistic reflection are fundamental for constructing a vivid and culturally resonant narrative. Proper nouns, beyond merely naming places or individuals, serve as conduits for historical, cultural, and symbolic meanings that deeply enrich the tourism experience. By employing various types of metalinguistic reflection, these texts can transform seemingly simple names into evocative symbols that capture the essence of a location's political, geographic, and cultural identity. This intricate layering of meaning highlights the capacity of tourism discourse to not only inform but also shape the perceptions of travelers by immersing them in the cultural narratives of the destinations they visit.

The use of metalinguistic reflection provides depth to travel guides, as it allows authors to anticipate and address potential gaps in readers' cultural understanding. Communicative reflexives play a vital role here, anticipating areas where readers might misunderstand or misinterpret the significance of certain names due to a lack of background knowledge. By acknowledging these potential misinterpretations, authors can enrich the reader's comprehension and foster an appreciation for the intricate cultural contexts in which these names exist. Similarly, characterization reflexives add further layers by illustrating an author's stance toward particular objects or places, thereby shaping the reader's perception through subtle or overt value judgments.

The informative function of metalinguistic reflection offers readers essential context, especially in regard to the etymology and historical significance of place names, monuments, or individuals. This serves not only as a means of educating readers but also as a method for grounding the tourism narrative in authenticity and historical depth. The ontological function, which considers the influence of names on the identity and fate of the places they designate, adds a philosophical dimension to the narrative. By drawing attention to the ways in which names can shape or reflect the destinies of these places, travel guides deepen the reader's engagement, encouraging reflection on how language and reality intersect.

Metalinguistic reflection in tourism discourse, then, is far more than a linguistic tool; it is a method for crafting meaning, instilling respect for cultural diversity, and bridging linguistic divides. Through the skillful use of reflexives, tourism texts engage readers not only in learning about new places but also in exploring the complex relationship between language, identity, and perception. This awareness fosters an appreciation for both one's own language and others, as well as the subtleties of cultural narratives embedded within proper nouns. Ultimately, the use of proper nouns in tourism discourse, enhanced by metalinguistic reflection, transforms travel guides into cultural artifacts that invite readers to participate in the shared human endeavor of understanding and respecting diverse cultural realities.

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