

ARABIC-ORIGIN TERMS IN UZBEK AND TAJIK TOURISM DISCOURSE: SEMANTIC REFUNCTIONALIZATION AND ENGLISH TRANSLATION STRATEGIES

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ABSTRACT

This article examines the semantic refunctionalization and terminological status of Arabic-origin terms in contemporary Uzbek and Tajik tourism discourse and identifies context-sensitive strategies for their transfer into English. The research is qualitative, contrastive, and corpus-informed. Its material comprises nine Arabic-origin terms - safar, musofir, sayyoh, ziyorat, madrasa, masjid, qasr, ziyofat, and markaz - documented in lexicographic sources and selected authentic tourism and cultural-heritage texts in Uzbek and Tajik. A comparative-terminographic matrix is applied to each term, combining six parameters: etymological source, semantic nucleus, tourism microfield, recurrent Uzbek and Tajik realization, type of refunctionalization, and English translation procedure. The findings demonstrate that the selected terms do not form a homogeneous group. Safar and ziyorat show thematic extension and sectoral terminologization; musofir is pragmatically recontextualized as a recipient of tourism services; sayyoh functions as a stable core term for the tourist subject; madrasa, masjid, and qasr are refunctionalized as heritage and destination-representation markers; ziyofat undergoes domain-specific specialization; and markaz acquires an institutional tourism function. Uzbek and Tajik display considerable conceptual correspondence, while their term formation follows distinct structural preferences: Uzbek tends toward compact nominal compounds, whereas Tajik frequently uses analytical and izafa-based formations. The article argues that English translation cannot rely on automatic dictionary substitution. Direct functional equivalence, explanatory translation, and transliteration with a concise cultural gloss should be selected according to the semantic profile of the term, genre, and target audience. The study contributes an integrated comparative model for Uzbek-Tajik-English tourism terminology and establishes a replicable basis for further corpus-based research.

Keywords: Arabic-origin terms; tourism discourse; semantic refunctionalization; comparative terminology; Uzbek; Tajik; translation into English; cultural heritage.

INTRODUCTION

In contemporary tourism communication, language performs far more than a referential function. It names destinations, narrates historical experience, frames religious and architectural objects, and guides the prospective visitor toward a culturally preferred interpretation of place. Tourism discourse therefore combines information, persuasion, heritage interpretation, and destination branding. The linguistic form chosen to designate a site, route, institution, or cultural practice may activate historical associations and influence how a visitor understands the cultural value of what is being described. Research on the language of tourism has repeatedly demonstrated that tourism texts construct rather than merely report destination realities [10, 16].

This observation is particularly significant for Uzbekistan and Tajikistan, where tourism communication is closely connected with Islamic architecture, pilgrimage routes, urban memory, hospitality traditions, and the shared cultural history of Central Asia. In these environments, Arabic-origin terms are not simply lexical survivals from an earlier period. They function as active resources for naming tourism concepts, representing cultural heritage, and mediating the relationship between local knowledge and international audiences. Their present-day relevance cannot be defined by etymology alone. It must be assessed through their contextual meaning, collocational stability, grammatical integration, and pragmatic contribution to tourism communication.

Arabic has contributed substantially to the lexical systems of both Uzbek and Tajik. Yet Arabic-origin forms reached these languages through historically differentiated channels: religious learning, scholarly writing, Persian-Tajik literary mediation, Turkic written traditions, and later institutional usage. Contact linguistics makes clear that borrowing is not a simple importation of a foreign form; it involves selection, adaptation, semantic accommodation, and functional uptake in the recipient language [12, 17, 22]. The same historical term may therefore acquire distinct discourse functions when it becomes embedded in a modern domain such as tourism. The broader literary and cultural circulation of Arabic-origin concepts also provides an important historical context for such contact-mediated transmission [18, 21].

A terminological perspective is indispensable here. Not every Arabic-origin word occurring in a tourism text should be classified as a tourism term. A unit acquires a terminological function only when it names a concept in a defined field, occurs in relatively stable contextual patterns, enters a recognizable microfield, and can be related to functionally corresponding forms in the compared languages [8]. For this reason, the present study does not treat Arabic-origin vocabulary as an

undifferentiated list. It concentrates on terms whose use is demonstrably connected with travel, pilgrimage, historical and architectural heritage, hospitality, or tourism information services. Recent Uzbek scholarship on tourism terminology likewise confirms that terminological status must be established through systematic field-specific use rather than through etymological origin alone [5–6]. More generally, studies of lexical innovation and neologism classification demonstrate that linguistic units can acquire new functional values in contemporary use [3–4].

The article analyses nine terms: safar (journey), musofir (traveller), sayyoh (tourist), ziyorat (pilgrimage or sacred visitation), madrasa, masjid (mosque), qasr (palace), ziyofat (banquet or hospitality meal), and markaz (centre). The study asks four related questions: (1) What evidence supports the tourism-specific status of the selected terms? (2) Which semantic and functional changes emerge in Uzbek and Tajik tourism contexts? (3) In what respects do Uzbek and Tajik show conceptual isomorphism and structural allomorphy? (4) Which English translation strategy best preserves the conceptual and cultural value of each term?

The study advances the following hypothesis: a restricted but significant group of Arabic-origin terms has undergone semantic and functional recontextualization in Uzbek and Tajik tourism discourse. Their current usage is characterized not by the loss of inherited meanings, but by the addition or foregrounding of tourism-relevant meanings and functions. The article also proposes a comparative-terminographic matrix that connects semantic analysis with English translation choices. This framework is designed to distinguish direct equivalents from terms that require explanatory rendering or transliteration with a brief cultural gloss.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study adopts a qualitative, comparative, and corpus-informed design. It is not intended as a large-scale frequency study of all tourism texts in Uzbek and Tajik. Instead, it examines a focused analytical set of nine Arabic-origin terms that occur in both languages and participate in tourism-related nomination. The design is purposive: terms were selected because they meet three initial conditions - transparent or well-established Arabic origin, availability of Uzbek and Tajik forms, and relevance to at least one tourism microfield. The microfields are: (a) travel and the tourist subject; (b) pilgrimage and heritage sites; and (c) hospitality and tourism information services.

The material combines two kinds of evidence. First, lexicographic sources were consulted to identify the conventional semantic nucleus and etymological background of the selected terms. These include *Lisan al-Arab*, the explanatory dictionary of Tajik, and descriptions of Uzbek lexical development [11, 13, 15]. Second, contextual evidence was taken from selected authentic tourism and cultural-heritage

texts, especially official or institutional digital publications. Uzbek data were drawn from Uzbekistan Travel pages on pilgrimage tourism, heritage complexes, madrasa, mosque, and palace sites [19–20]. Tajik data were drawn from selected official and institutional tourism and cultural-heritage materials. These texts were used as evidence of current contextual practice rather than as a statistically exhaustive corpus.

The procedure was conducted in five stages. First, the base meaning of each term was established through lexicographic comparison. Second, its tourism microfield was defined. Third, Uzbek and Tajik collocations were compared to determine whether the term had a stable domain-related function. Fourth, the observed development was classified as thematic extension, sectoral terminologization, pragmatic recontextualization, heritage refunctionalization, domain-specific specialization, or institutional refunctionalization. Fifth, the English rendering was evaluated with reference to tourism translation research and culture-specific-item theory [1–2, 7, 14, 16]. The distinction between inherited semantic nucleus and contextual refunctionalization was interpreted through a semantic-pragmatic perspective [9].

The central analytical instrument is a six-parameter comparative-terminographic matrix: (1) Arabic-origin source; (2) inherited semantic nucleus; (3) tourism microfield; (4) Uzbek and Tajik contextual realization; (5) type of semantic or functional recontextualization; and (6) preferred English translation procedure. This model follows the principle that a tourism term must be interpreted simultaneously as a linguistic form, a domain-specific designation, and a cultural sign. It thereby avoids two common reductionisms: treating a term only as an etymological borrowing or translating it only as an isolated dictionary item.

In the table below, Uzbek is represented in official Latin orthography. Tajik forms are romanized for comparative readability, while their conventional Cyrillic spelling remains the normative reference in the sources. English renderings are not presented as absolute one-to-one equivalents; they are recommended options whose suitability depends on genre and communicative purpose. The table is thus descriptive and prescriptive at once: it records observed cross-linguistic correspondences and proposes translation choices that preserve both conceptual content and cultural intelligibility.

Comparative profile of Arabic-origin terms in Uzbek and Tajik tourism discourse

Term	Uzbek tourism realization	Tajik tourism realization	Tourism microfield and refunctionalization	Preferred English rendering
safar	ziyosat safari; madaniy safar	safari ziyorati; safari farhangi	Travel; thematic extension from “journey”	pilgrimage journey; cultural journey

			to organized, purpose-oriented travel	
musofir	xorijiy musofir	musofironi khoriji	Tourist subject/service; pragmatic recontextualization as a traveller receiving services	international traveller; visiting guest (context-dependent)
sayyoh	xorijiy sayyoh; sayyohlik	sayyohi khoriji; sayyohi	Tourist subject/field; stable sectoral terminologization	tourist; tourism
ziyosat	ziyosat turizmi; ziyosat obyeki	sayyohii ziyorati; obyeki ziyorati	Pilgrimage tourism; semantic extension with preservation of the sacred core	pilgrimage tourism; pilgrimage site; religious visit
madrasa	tarixiy madrasa; madrasa majmuasi	madrasai tarikhi; majmuai madrasa	Heritage/architecture; refunctionalization as a cultural-historical site	madrasa; historic Islamic educational institution; madrasa complex
masjid	jome masjid; tarixiy masjid	masjidi jome; masjidi tarikhi	Religious and architectural heritage; refunctionalization through monument value	congregational mosque; historic mosque
qasr	tarixiy qasr; shoh qasri	qasri tarikhi; qasri shohi	Historical architecture/statehood memory; heritage refunctionalization	historic palace; royal palace
ziyofat	milliy ziyofat	ziyofati milli	Hospitality tourism; domain-specific specialization as a scheduled cultural meal	traditional banquet; hospitality dinner
markaz	sayyohlik axborot markazi	markazi ittiloatii sayyohi	Tourism information/services; institutional refunctionalization	tourist information centre

RESULTS

1. Evidence of tourism-specific term status

The selected Arabic-origin units do not display the same degree or type of tourism specialization. Nevertheless, all nine terms meet the minimum criteria for analysis as tourism-relevant terms in the present material. They name entities, actors, activities, services, or institutions that belong to identifiable tourism microfields; they occur in stable or recurrent phraseological patterns; and they have functionally

corresponding forms in Uzbek and Tajik. The terms differ primarily in the pathway through which they enter the field. Sayyoh and ziyorat are directly integrated into tourism naming, whereas madrasa, masjid, and qasr become tourism-relevant by representing heritage sites. Markaz is institutionalized through the information-service microfield, and ziyofat is specialized through hospitality programming.

This distinction is methodologically important. A term such as madrasa should not be treated as a tourism term because its original meaning is “school” or “educational institution.” Its tourism-specific status emerges when it appears in recurring representations of historical buildings, cultural routes, architectural ensembles, or heritage interpretation. In such contexts, the original institutional meaning remains available, but the text foregrounds the site’s historical, aesthetic, and visitor-oriented significance. By contrast, ziyorat turizmi and sayyohii ziyorati are established domain designations: their tourism status derives directly from the semantic relation between sacred visitation and an organized form of travel.

The comparison also shows that terminological status depends on context rather than on a rigid divide between general and special language. In the present material, a single Arabic-origin term can function at three levels: as a general lexical item, as a culturally marked designation, and as a stable tourism term. The analytical task is therefore to identify which level is activated in a specific tourism text. This multilayered status is one of the principal reasons why English translation must be guided by discourse function rather than by isolated bilingual dictionary correspondences.

2. Terms of travel and the tourist subject

Safar provides the clearest example of thematic extension. Its inherited semantic nucleus is “journey” or “travel,” but in Uzbek and Tajik tourism discourse it regularly appears in combinations that specify purpose, cultural orientation, or institutional organization. Uzbek ziyorat safari and Tajik safari ziyorati designate travel undertaken with a sacred or pilgrimage-related purpose; Uzbek madaniy safar and Tajik safari farhangi designate cultural travel. The meaning of safar is not replaced. Rather, a general movement term receives a more sharply defined tourism profile through its collocational integration. The English equivalent should therefore follow the semantic modifier: pilgrimage journey, cultural journey, or organized trip may be appropriate depending on genre.

Musofir has a different profile. In its traditional sense, it denotes a person who is travelling or away from home. In tourism communication, the term can acquire a service-oriented pragmatic component, particularly where transport, accommodation, reception, or visitor assistance is involved. It becomes relevant not only as a traveller

but also as an addressee of tourism services. This is best described as pragmatic recontextualization rather than full semantic broadening: the basic notion of travel remains unchanged, while the interactional role of the traveller becomes more salient. In English, international traveller is usually preferable in formal tourism information; visiting guest may be appropriate in hospitality-oriented texts, but only where the host-guest relation is explicit.

Sayyoh, in contrast, has a high degree of terminological stability. It directly names the participant in tourism and provides the lexical base for the corresponding field terms Uzbek sayyohlik and Tajik sayyohi. In phrases such as Uzbek xorijiy sayyoh and Tajik sayyohi khoriji, the term operates as a standard designation for the international tourist. This stability distinguishes sayyoh from musofir: both can refer to persons in motion, but sayyoh is more tightly linked to tourism as a professional, institutional, and economic field. The normal English equivalent is tourist, while tourism is used for the associated field designation.

3. Pilgrimage, architecture, and heritage representation

Ziyorat is one of the most semantically significant terms in the corpus. Its conventional core is a visit to a sacred place, a shrine, or a revered person. In current tourism discourse, that core is retained but becomes integrated into the organized tourism microfield. Expressions such as Uzbek ziyorat turizmi, ziyorat obyekti, and Tajik sayyohii ziyorati or obyekti ziyorati show that sacred visitation has been reframed as a type of tourism activity, a tourism object, and, potentially, a route or itinerary. This development is neither simple secularization nor a loss of religious meaning. It is a semantic extension in which a devotional concept acquires organizational, representational, and economic dimensions. English translation must reflect the degree to which the sacred dimension is foregrounded: pilgrimage tourism is suitable for the field term; pilgrimage site is appropriate for a destination; religious visit may be used where the context is broader and less institutionally defined.

Madrasa and masjid are characterized by heritage refunctionalization. In their conventional senses, they designate an educational institution and a place of worship. In tourism discourse, however, they function simultaneously as architectural objects, carriers of historical memory, and visually salient components of a destination. Uzbek historical descriptions use forms such as tarixiy madrasa, madrasa majmuasi, tarixiy masjid, and jome masjid; Tajik contexts use madrasai tarikhi, majmuai madrasa, masjidi tarikhi, and masjidi jome. The referential core remains constant, but the tourist text constructs an additional heritage value around the term. This explains why school is normally an inadequate translation for madrasa in a guidebook, heritage label, or tourism website. Madrasa should generally be retained, with a

concise explanatory gloss when comprehension is necessary, for example “madrasa, a historical Islamic educational institution.”

The term *qasr* likewise becomes a heritage representation marker. In Uzbek *tarixiy qasr* and Tajik *qasri tarikhi*, the term does not simply identify a palace. It activates an interpretive frame of political history, court culture, architecture, and visual attraction. In this microfield, historic palace is usually more precise than palace alone because the modifier preserves the term’s tourism-oriented heritage function. Where the text specifically emphasizes royal ownership or courtly residence, royal palace is an appropriate alternative. The term’s discursive value consists in connecting the material object with the historical imagination of the visitor.

4. Hospitality and institutional-service terms

Ziyofat traditionally denotes hospitality, reception, or a banquet offered to guests. Within tourism programmes, it often becomes the designation of a planned cultural meal or hospitality event, as in Uzbek *milliy ziyofat* and Tajik *ziyofati milli*. This is a case of domain-specific specialization. The general semantic association with generous reception remains present, but its range is narrowed to a scheduled experience that can be included in a programme, itinerary, or promotional description. English banquet is possible in formal contexts, but traditional banquet or hospitality dinner better conveys both the cultural framing and the service function.

Markaz demonstrates institutional refunctionalization. In combinations such as Uzbek *sayyohlik axborot markazi* and Tajik *markazi ittilootii sayyohi*, it no longer denotes only a spatial centre. It names an organized tourism service unit responsible for information, orientation, coordination, maps, materials, or visitor assistance. The term is therefore linked to institutional tourism infrastructure. English tourist information centre is the established functional equivalent in most informative and administrative texts. In promotional materials, visitor information centre may be chosen where the intended audience is broader than tourists alone.

Taken together, the results show that the selected terms form a layered tourism vocabulary rather than a flat list of borrowings. Some terms directly name tourism participants and activities; others construct the cultural and religious value of heritage sites; still others organize hospitality and information services. The terms are connected by shared Arabic origin, but their contemporary semantic pathways are distinct. This is precisely why a single translation procedure cannot be applied uniformly across the dataset.

Translation decision model for Arabic-origin terms in tourism texts

Translation procedure	When it is appropriate	Illustrative terms and recommended output
Direct functional equivalence	Use where English has a conventional term and cultural loss is minimal.	markaz - tourist information centre; masjid - mosque in non-heritage administrative contexts; sayyoh - tourist
Explanatory translation	Use where the term's cultural, religious, or service-specific content exceeds a simple dictionary equivalent.	ziyosat - pilgrimage visit / pilgrimage tourism; ziyofat - traditional hospitality dinner; qasr - historic palace
Transliteration plus concise gloss	Use where the source designation is internationally recognizable or culturally dense and should be retained.	madrasa - madrasa (a historical Islamic educational institution); occasionally ziyosat in ethnographic or interpretive texts
Contextual modulation	Use where a single term changes value according to genre, audience, or communicative task.	musofir - traveller / visiting guest; safar - journey / trip / pilgrimage journey

DISCUSSION

The findings confirm that Arabic-origin terms in Uzbek and Tajik tourism discourse should not be understood as a static lexical stratum inherited from religious, literary, or scholarly history. Borrowing theory predicts that forms entering a recipient language may undergo semantic integration and functional adaptation [12, 17, 22]. The present analysis specifies how this process works in a tourism environment. Tourism discourse recruits historically dense vocabulary not merely to fill lexical gaps, but to organize a destination's cultural narrative. A term may therefore retain its inherited semantic nucleus while acquiring a new function in the representation of routes, monuments, visitor experiences, hospitality practices, or institutional services.

The proposed six-parameter matrix offers a methodological contribution to comparative terminology. It makes it possible to examine a term beyond the binary question of whether it is borrowed or native. The matrix links source layer, semantic nucleus, microfield membership, bilingual contextual realization, refunctionalization type, and translation procedure. This integrated perspective is especially useful for tourism terminology because tourism texts frequently combine professional information with cultural mediation. A term is selected not only for conceptual

precision but also for its ability to make a destination legible, attractive, and culturally distinctive to visitors [10, 16].

The Uzbek-Tajik comparison reveals a high degree of conceptual isomorphism. The terms safar, ziyorat, madrasa, masjid, qasr, ziyofat, and markaz are available in both languages and can be integrated into corresponding tourism microfields. The principal difference lies in structural realization. Uzbek often favours compact nominal constructions with a dependent-first pattern, for example ziyorat turizmi and madrasa majmuasi. Tajik frequently uses analytical structures and izafa-based formations, for example sayyohii ziyorati and majmuai madrasa. These differences are allomorphic rather than conceptual: the two languages share the general tourism concept, but organize its grammatical expression according to their own structural resources.

The data also refine the notion of semantic change. It would be inaccurate to claim that every selected term undergoes a complete semantic transformation. Madrasa, masjid, and qasr retain their basic referential meanings; the significant change is the foregrounding of heritage, architectural, and representational value. Safar and ziyorat show more visible extension because they are integrated into types of organized travel. Ziyofat narrows within the hospitality microfield, and markaz becomes specialized by institutional tourism use. The umbrella term semantic refunctionalization is therefore preferable to a generalized claim of semantic replacement. It captures the coexistence of inherited meaning and new tourism-specific function.

The translation findings support a context-sensitive approach. Tourism texts cannot be translated adequately through automatic lexical matching because the selected terms carry different degrees of cultural density. Translation research on culture-specific items and tourism mediation shows that translators must balance accessibility with the preservation of cultural specificity [1–2, 7, 14, 16]. In the present data, direct equivalence works well for tourist and tourist information centre. Explanatory translation is more suitable for pilgrimage tourism or traditional hospitality dinner, because it conveys conceptual information that would be weakened by a bare literal equivalent. Transliteration with a concise gloss is the most appropriate solution for madrasa in heritage interpretation, because the form is widely recognizable and its cultural-historical profile should not be reduced to school.

The article has clear limitations. The dataset is deliberately small and qualitative; it does not measure the frequency of the selected terms across all tourism genres or regional varieties. The online materials represent public tourism and heritage communication, not the totality of travel writing, guide speech, social-media

promotion, or machine-translated content. The study also focuses on English as the target language and does not compare alternative translation traditions in Russian, Persian, Arabic, or other languages. These limitations do not weaken the interpretive value of the analysis, but they define its scope and indicate directions for further research.

Future work should expand the corpus and test the present model against multilingual websites, audio guides, museum labels, travel-platform descriptions, and social-media materials. A larger corpus would permit frequency analysis, collocation mapping, and genre comparison. It would also support the development of a trilingual Uzbek-Tajik-English tourism terminology resource with definitions, contextual examples, preferred English renderings, and cultural notes. Such a resource would be useful not only for translators and guides, but also for educational programmes in tourism, translation studies, terminology, and heritage communication.

CONCLUSION

The study demonstrates that Arabic-origin terms in Uzbek and Tajik tourism discourse constitute an active, semantically differentiated, and culturally productive layer of tourism terminology. The nine terms examined do not follow a single developmental pattern. *Safar* and *ziyosat* display thematic extension and sectoral terminologization; *musofir* is pragmatically recontextualized; *sayyoh* functions as a stable core term; *madrasa*, *masjid*, and *qasr* undergo heritage refunctionalization; *ziyofat* is specialized within the hospitality microfield; and *markaz* acquires an institutional tourism function. These findings confirm that Arabic origin alone neither determines nor exhausts a term's contemporary value.

The comparative analysis establishes a high degree of Uzbek-Tajik conceptual correspondence. The terms participate in parallel tourism microfields, while Uzbek and Tajik preserve their own grammatical preferences in constructing multi-component terms. The distinction between conceptual isomorphism and structural allomorphy provides a more precise account of the two languages than a simple inventory of shared borrowings. The article's central theoretical contribution is the six-parameter comparative-terminographic matrix, which can be applied to other culturally marked tourism terms in Central Asian languages.

For English translation, the decisive principle is functional and cultural adequacy. Direct functional equivalents should be used where the English term is well established and semantically sufficient; explanatory translation should be preferred where cultural or religious content needs to be made explicit; and transliteration with a concise gloss should be retained for terms whose heritage value would be lost through reduction. The resulting framework offers practical guidance

for tourism websites, guidebooks, heritage labels, translator training, and the compilation of bilingual or trilingual terminology resources.

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