



This is a contribution from *Cultus: the Intercultural Journal of Mediation and Communication* 2016: 9,2

© **Iconesoft Edizioni Gruppo Radivo Holding**

This electronic file may not be altered in any way.

The author(s) of this article is /are permitted to use this PDF file to generate printed copies to be used by way of offprints, for their personal use only.

Cultus

THE JOURNAL OF INTERCULTURAL
MEDIATION AND COMMUNICATION

TOURISM ACROSS CULTURES
Accessibility in Tourist Communication
2016, Issue 9, Volume 2

ICONESOFT EDIZIONI - GRUPPO RADIVO HOLDING
BOLOGNA - ITALY

Registrazione al Tribunale di Terni
n. 11 del 24.09.2007

Direttore Responsabile Agostino Quero
Editore Iconesoft Edizioni – Radivo Holding
Anno 2016

ISSN 2035-3111 (e) ISSN 2035-2948
Policy: double-blind peer review

© *Iconesoft Edizioni – Radivo Holding srl*
via Giuseppe Antonio Landi 13 – 40132 Bologna

CULTUS

the Journal of Intercultural Mediation and Communication

The Intercultural Question and the Interpreting Professions

2016, Issue 9, Volume 2

Editors

David Katan
University of Salento

Cinzia Spinzi
University of Palermo

ICONESOFT EDIZIONI – RADIVO HOLDING
BOLOGNA

CULTUS

the Journal of Intercultural Mediation and Communication

Editorial Board

Michael Agar

Ethknoworks LLC and University of Maryland, College Park, USA

Milton Bennet

Intercultural Development Research Institute, Italy

Patrick Boylan

SIETAR-Italy and past Professor at Roma Tre University, Rome

Ida Castiglioni

University of Milan (Bicocca), Intercultural Development Research Institute

Andrew Chesterman

University of Helsinki, Finland

Delia Chiaro

University of Bologna (SSLMIT), Forlì, Italy

Madeleine Cincotta

University of Wollongong, Australia

Nigel Ewington

WorldWork Ltd, Cambridge, England

Floriana Di Gesù

University of Palermo

Peter Franklin

*HTWG Konstanz University of Applied Sciences, dialogin-The Delta
Intercultural Academy*

Maria Grazia Guido

University of Salento, Italy

Xiaoping Jiang

University of Guangzhou, China

Tony Liddicoat

University of Warwick

Elena Manca

Università of Salento

Raffaella Merlini

University of Macerata, Italy

Robert O'Dowd

University of León, Spain.

Anthony Pym

Intercultural Studies Group, Universidad Rovira I Virgili, Tarragona, Spain

Federica Scarpa

SSLMIT University of Trieste, Italy

Christopher Taylor

University of Trieste, Italy

David Trickey

TCO s.r.l., International Diversity Management, Bologna, Italy

Margherita Ulrych

University of Milan, Cattolica del Sacro Cuore, Italy

Table of Contents

Introduction <i>David Katan</i>	8
Tourism Across Languages and Cultures: Accessibility Through Translation <i>Mirella Agorni</i>	13
Translating nature tourism and the pitfalls in promoting ‘paradise’ in Malay <i>Mohamed Zain Sulaiman</i>	28
Translating tourism promotional texts: translation quality and its relationship to the commissioning process <i>Novriyanto Napu</i>	47
Translating for Outsider Tourists: Cultural Informers Do It Better <i>David Katan</i>	63
Communicating with International Visitors – the Case of Museums and Galleries <i>Robin Cranmer</i>	91
Navigation and circulation in city audio guides: a comparison between Italian and English <i>Maria Elisa Fina</i>	106
Enriched Descriptive Guides: a case for collaborative meaning-making in museums <i>Joselia Neves</i>	137

Intercultural Communication in Tourism Promotion <i>Nikolas Komminos</i>	155
‘Not up to American standards’: a corpus-based analysis of cultural differences between Brazil and the USA in travelers’ reviews <i>Sandra Navarro</i>	173
Notes on contributors	190

Communicating with International Visitors – the Case of Museums and Galleries

Robin Cranmer

Abstract

This article will explore how museums and galleries can most appropriately communicate with international visitors. It will do this by drawing attention to important factors to be considered by museums and galleries as they decide on communication strategies aimed at international visitors. First to be discussed amongst these factors will be the impact of cultural background on the needs of international visitors, a discussion drawing on prior research from a range of disciplines like Translation Studies, Applied Linguistics and Social Psychology, but also from the findings of a knowledge-transfer project involving museums, galleries and academic linguists. Other factors will, though, also be considered including very practical ones like cost. The advantages and disadvantages of specific communication strategies will then be considered – strategies like the provision of translations with or without localisation and the use of texts specifically produced for international visitors and often provided in a lingua franca. The article concludes with reflections on what may need to happen in the future if the appropriateness of the communication strategies employed by museums and galleries or similar organisations directed at their international visitors is to progress.

1. Introduction

A common trend in the focus and discourse of museums and galleries in various countries is to try to better understand their visitors and what they need if they are to get the most out of their visits. This comes through in the use of phrases like ‘the visitor experience’ and being ‘visitor focused’ and is reflected in the growing prominence of disciplines like Visitor Studies. At the same time, international visitors have come to represent a

vast, diverse category whose needs demand to be better understood and where possible satisfied. One way in which museums and galleries try to do this is, of course, by communicating with them in ways which facilitate access and this requires them to have some form of, albeit implicit, communication strategy.

The first concern of this article is to articulate important factors museums and galleries need to consider when deciding on their communication strategy for international visitors by drawing on a wealth of research across a range of disciplines, as well as a relevant knowledge-transfer project. Its second is to evaluate current or potential communication strategies bearing in mind factors which a close examination of the needs/preferences of international visitors has identified as important. We will start by focusing on the key factor of cultural background whose potential impact on international visitors and their communication needs is considerable.

2. The cultural diversity of international visitors

Very obviously, diverse media or genres are used for communication with visitors - websites, apps, podcasts, audio-guides, leaflets, maps, books, captions etc. – yet cultural background can potentially affect the reactions of international visitors whatever medium is used. This does not, of course, imply adoption of an essentialist position, but it does involve acknowledging that different cultural groupings can have different norms of behaviour and that members can at least *tend* to have different expectations. The range of areas in which we may be partially shaped by norms which are dominant in the different cultural groupings we each of us inhabit is limitless. I will highlight just a few of the areas in which international visitors may consequently have diverse needs, a diversity which may well differentiate them from domestic visitors. In drawing attention to some illustrative areas I will follow a broad categorisation of content and form.

2.1 Cultural diversity of expectations – content

One obvious area where variance across cultures could easily be expected to generate different reactions to the content of communication concerns what is common cultural knowledge – knowledge of, for example, history

or religion. Differences in this area could easily mean that the required level of contextualisation of a display would need to vary. Similarly, categorisations of historical periods can vary across languages and cultures as can the level of familiarity with artistic movements – both of these potential areas of difference are often reflected in lexis generating forms of ‘non-equivalence’ much discussed within Translation Studies (cf. Leppihalme, 1997).

Another very familiar area of potential differences rooted in cultural background, closely analysed within Cultural Studies, concern ‘representations’, narratives or interpretations (cf. Barker, 2000). Perspectives on colonialism, on historical conflicts, on gender issues, may again vary hugely as a function of cultural background and may generate different reactions to the content of communication.

A final, again familiar, example of how the cultural background of international visitors can impact on their reactions to content concerns values or priorities. These differences have been studied by many researchers often having their starting point within Social Psychology or International Management. The extent to which, for example, it is important in a culture to have tangible evidence of having visited a prestigious foreign gallery may vary as a function of the degree of collective or individual focus dominant in that culture, a form of cultural variation carefully explored in Hofstede’s work (cf. Hofstede, 1993).

2.2 Cultural diversity of expectations – form

Let us turn now to issues of ‘form’ – that is, to ways in which the cultural backgrounds of international visitors can influence what they perceive as ‘normal’ regarding the form in which communication takes place. This is an area in which the distinction between the ‘cultural’ and the ‘linguistic’ becomes blurred, but I will divide issues of form into three broad categories – format, text structure and ‘visual resonance’.

Format first - it is much more common and more acceptable in certain languages, with particular genres or media, to use bullet points (cf. Katan 2012:90) Equally, common uses of particular fonts, line spacing or indicators of new paragraphs can also vary. And, similarly, there can be cultural variation in norms of the layout of webpages.

Turning to text structure, features - identified in Translation Studies and Contrastive Linguistics - can have currency in one language but not in another. In certain languages, for example, depending on genre and

medium, greater or lesser emphasis can be put on sequencing of content, on making explicit the logical relations between what is said and on overall cohesion. Equally, in different languages there can be different norms concerning the size of blocks of information or ‘sense units’. (cf. Hatim, 1997) Again, conventions on sentence and paragraph length can be language or culture specific, as can conventions on paragraph structure. Finally, certain types of text in one language may have a stronger tendency to offer explanation via the choice of a representative example rather than explanations via the use of generalisations (Lustig and Koester 2003:242). The final examples of variety of form we will consider are ‘visual’. The frequency, location, size and content of images can, within the same genre and medium, vary across languages and cultures. In some languages or cultures it might be common to begin a text with an image accompanying a title. In others images might come later, or the balance of written text to image or blank space might vary. Colours too can, of course, vary immensely in what they evoke culturally.

Research, therefore, in many disciplines suggests that we should expect to find that international visitors will often, as a result of the different cultural worlds they inhabit, have different expectations in relation to both the content and the form of communication.

2.3 Confirmation of cultural diversity from a knowledge-transfer project

Of direct relevance to the communication strategies of museums and galleries was a government-funded knowledge-transfer project starting in 2007 in which leading London museums and galleries worked with linguists from London’s University of Westminster aiming to improve their communication with international visitors. The project, described by Robertson (2009), can be summarised as follows. Staff in the Visitor Services sections of six museums and galleries were paired with linguists each with a different specialism – Chinese, Russian, Arabic, Spanish, German or French. The medium primarily studied were paper leaflets available in foreign languages. The linguists worked with native speaker focus groups to examine the appropriateness, in terms of ‘readership expectations’, of what was provided. The focus groups were further tasked with assisting the linguist in reworking the texts to render them more appropriate to their needs. The revised texts were piloted on groups of international visitors and in each case were consistently perceived by visitors to constitute improvements on the original translated texts.

Of significance here is the fact that many of the specific areas to which focus groups drew attention corresponded to the kinds of areas which prior research in relevant disciplines would have predicted. To take content, the Chinese focus group didn't find the balance of content in the translated version appropriate - for them, it over-emphasised contextualising the collections at the expense of providing fuller information on merchandising. And to take form, the Spanish focus group expressed concern about the place of images within the leaflet, feeling overall that it contained too much text and too few images and feeling also that the use of generalised descriptions of collections as opposed to collections being introduced via key artefacts was inappropriate.

3. Further factors affecting choice of communication strategy

The factors I will now outline are not intended to be comprehensive, but they fall into two general categories – linguistic and practical.

3.1 Linguistic factors – density of text and choice of language

An issue commonly affecting international visitors, and, therefore, a further factor to consider, is the quantity and density of content with which they are presented whatever the medium. International visitors tend to have far more challenges when trying to engage with a museum or gallery than domestic ones. Processing a lot of culture-specific content is, for example, particularly challenging when, for example, texts are giving background information on domestic cultural artefacts. In addition to the obvious linguistic or cultural challenges, international visitors may also be trying to cope with the countless forms of disorientation that foreign travel can involve varying from food and climate to public transport. Amongst the consequences this can have, commonly acknowledged in both the theory and practice of foreign language teaching, is that the quantity and density of information they may be comfortable with tends to be less than for a domestic visitor (cf. Bailey, 2011). Another broadly 'linguistic' factor concerns the language preferences of international visitors – clearly a museum or gallery is more likely to meet these preferences if they provide a range of linguistically viable options, whether those preferences are based on linguistic competence, aspiration or both.

3.2 Practical constraints on practitioners

One can add to linguistic factors others deriving from the internal concerns of museums and galleries, some of which were regularly raised by visitor services staff involved in the project described above. The first factor amongst these were budgetary constraints, although mention was also often made both of the desire to maintain ultimate editorial control over communication strategy and to maintain a degree of unity of style in communication with all visitors. Clearly, this last concern is potentially at odds with what effective and appropriate linguistically accommodated text might involve.

4. Choosing a communication strategy

In what follows I want briefly to evaluate a number of possible strategies for communicating with international visitors in relation to the more important factors identified in preceding sections. Obviously, there is no single ‘correct’ strategy, but I will try to clarify how such factors should influence decision-making. I will start by examining two common communication strategies before turning to two less widely practised.

4.1 Common strategy 1 – translation

A common strategy is to initially produce material for websites, audio-guides, leaflets etc. aimed at domestic visitors, and then to translate them into foreign languages. The translators may in some cases ‘adapt’ certain features of the domestic text – they may, for instance, decide not to preserve certain features of the formatting of the domestic text. Equally, where, for example, a lexical item in the domestic text refers to a period of history which doesn’t readily correspond to periods of history commonly referred to in the target language, the translator may opt to deal with this challenge of ‘non-equivalence’ by extending the translated text so as to include explanation of the period. However, even with such minor adaptations, the translated text is likely to remain culturally ‘hybrid’ – that is, it will be likely to contain aspects of both form and content which may be common in the domestic language but which are not so in the target language. To take form first, the domestic text, if it is written, may well involve a balance of text and image unusual in the target language. And to consider content, aspects of displays needing little or no contextualisation for most domestic visitors may need a great deal for many users of a

translation. So domestic texts translated into one of the common first languages of international visitors are, in the eyes of the reader, often a strange hybrid of the linguistically and culturally familiar and the very unfamiliar – familiar overall linguistically, but often not corresponding to what is culturally appropriate or what is needed by its target audience. And clearly museums and galleries need, before opting for this strategy, to consider if this really fits with their declared aims of being visitor-centred and of meeting the needs of *all* their visitors.

Let us just consider briefly two other factors in relation to translation as a strategy. Text density immediately becomes an issue since the quantity of information in the translated text will be such as tends to suit a domestic visitor rather than an international one. Where the factor of cost is concerned, though, whilst culturally adapted translations will tend to prove more expensive than more conventional ones, translation has the advantage of not being especially expensive.

4.2 Common strategy 2 – single ‘international’ texts

A second widely employed strategy is to produce not only a text for domestic visitors but also a separate text consciously aimed at an international audience. Whilst this text may in some sense be ‘derived’ from the domestic text, it is not translated from it, and it tries to take into account the specific needs of international visitors. This ‘international’ text will normally be written in-house often in the domestic language, and will then be translated into one or more foreign languages depending on the communication strategy of the institution concerned.

It is difficult to make valid comments of a summary nature on the strengths and weaknesses of this strategy as there are so many forms the strategy can take and equally because international visitors are so varied. But I will nonetheless offer some generalised comments. Starting again with cultural background let us look at content first. In a text of this kind it is possible to provide background information to displays specifically aimed at the levels of knowledge non-domestic visitors may well have and to be conscious that cultural allusions comprehensible to a domestic audience may be better omitted or explained for an international one.

Equally, where an interpretation, narrative or representation is current in the discourse of the dominant domestic language it can be omitted so as to create an internationally focused text which is less liable to cause offence. Alternatively, a more balanced or neutral perspective could be

added. Gallery information, for example, in a 2016 exhibition on the WW1 naval battle of Jutland, at the National Maritime Museum in Greenwich, London, gave the background context to various displays by juxtaposing British and German press cuttings relating to the events in question, rather than by purely presenting potentially biased British interpretations of the conflict. Texts aimed at international audiences could in similar ways try to limit domestic bias thereby reducing the risk of alienating those audiences. Issues of form, though, remain potentially problematic. The base text, whatever language it is produced in, should not be problematic since it should, where form is concerned, incorporate features of form current in the relevant language – as such it should be linguistically and culturally coherent. But if it is then translated into a variety of languages it is likely, even with some cultural adaptation of form, to once again become hybrid in its translated versions for reasons previously discussed.

If we now turn to considering what were earlier termed ‘further factors’, the quantity of information included can easily be reduced from that offered to domestic visitors as is already quite common practice. From a museum or gallery angle as well, such international texts tend to be relatively inexpensive to produce even if there are translation costs. And, being produced in-house, editorial control is preserved. If there is an overall weakness, however, in this strategy it is inevitably that it is a ‘one size fits all’ strategy – that is, it may offer something more appropriate to international visitors given their cultural backgrounds than a text translated from the domestic one, but it will meet no group of visitors’ needs very precisely.

4.3 Less common strategy 1 – culturally ‘customised’ texts

This strategy was adopted in the project described above and involved producing foreign language texts entirely rewritten in form and content for the linguistic and cultural needs of international visitors. Evaluation of this strategy in relation to certain factors is scarcely necessary. Form and content can naturally be expected to meet the broad linguistic and cultural expectations of the target groups since this is precisely what they are written to do. In terms of text density this strategy is positive too as the quantity of information will be tailored to audience needs. And, again, it increases language choice even if not all international visitors, if they have aspirations to be competent in foreign languages (such as English), will actually want to fall back on material in their first language.

It is also crucially important, though, to consider factors often cited in the course of the knowledge-transfer project by practitioners working in the Visitor Services sections of museums and galleries and who were directly involved in commissioning texts in accordance with their chosen communication strategy. The first, crucially, is cost. The cost of such culturally customised foreign language texts is likely to be extremely high. This is because an almost entirely new text has to be produced, a text which may require background research. There is also an issue of editorial control since a lot of power is handed over to whoever is producing the newly written, culturally customised, foreign language text. Whilst this strategy has much to recommend it, several years after the end of the knowledge-transfer project described above, which explicitly followed this strategy of commissioning culturally customised foreign language texts, no obvious trace of this strategy remains visible in the current practice of the participating museums and galleries.

As no formal follow-up research was carried out to see why this strategy was abandoned, it is not clear what exactly may explain this lack of sustainability, although cost and a lack of continuity of staffing look likely to have played a role. But the very fact that the strategy was not sustained suggests that there is a call for a more careful evaluation of its validity, not just in terms of its meeting its audiences' needs, but also in terms of how deliverable it is in practice for museums and galleries.

4.4 Less common strategy 2 – accessible domestic language texts

A second less common strategy consists not in multiplying the languages in which texts are available, or their cultural form and content, but in facilitating access to, and increasing the appropriateness of, texts in the domestically dominant language or in some other form of dominant language – e.g. a *lingua franca*. There have for some time been attempts both in research and practice to produce texts in dominant languages which are less elitist, less marginalising and more inclusive of the wide sectors of the potential domestic audience to museums and galleries (cf. Coxall, 1997). Less attention appears to have been paid, however, to the inclusion in dominant language texts of *international visitors* who may have some mastery of the languages in question coupled with an aspiration to be able to function using them. Or, to link into another strand of thought and research, it is worth considering what 'linguistic accommodation', in the context of texts of this kind, might involve (Giles et al 1991).

What might this strategy imply in practice? Linguistically, at a lexical level, it might involve checking the level of difficulty of vocabulary and, at the syntactic level, checking how demanding the constructions used were, or even just sentence and paragraph length. Where 'form' is concerned, adaptation for the needs of non-native speakers can be very straightforward. The balance of text, blank space and image can be adjusted, information can be 'chunked' and so on, and all of this in a way implying limited compromise of the needs of native speakers. Where content is concerned what might tend to be obvious to domestic visitors might simply require a little more unpacking for international visitors. Finally, a text aiming to meet as far as possible the needs both of domestic and international audiences might simply need to be slightly shorter than one purely aimed at domestic visitors.

How might such inclusive dominant language texts then fare when evaluated in relation to some of the factors identified earlier? Are such texts, for example, just condemned to fail their international readers because a single dominant domestic language text, however constructed, can never in principle minister to the highly diverse cultural preferences of form and content of its international audience? In many ways issues of form demand little discussion. In reading a text in a foreign language, in this context often out of choice, there is usually no expectation on the part of an international visitor that the form will correspond to what is usual in their first language – this is just part of the challenge of engaging with a foreign language. Where content is concerned, the extent to which dominant language texts designed to be inclusive for international visitors will work for their international audience will depend on the degree of compromise between their serving the needs of domestic and international visitors. But their content will most likely be more appropriate either than texts aimed purely at domestic visitors or texts translated from them.

Whether or not international visitors will find a domestic language text of this kind too dense in content will depend on the balance of priority given in producing it to the needs of the domestic and international parts of its intended audience. Again, though, the text density will be more appropriate for international visitors than either a non-inclusive domestic language text or a translation of it. Finally, as far as cost is concerned, there is no reason why this strategy should prove expensive as there are no translations or culturally customised texts to commission. But what is demanded in producing the text is a high level of linguistic and intercultural awareness – its production requires a refined capacity to

‘decentre’ (cf. Byram, 1997), to see things through the eyes of someone from outside the dominant language and cultural grouping and to adapt communication accordingly. But provided practitioners can access the skill set required there is much to recommend this form of strategy.

To sum up this section (see also table 1 below) – there are a range of communication strategies museums and galleries can adopt for communication with international visitors, four of which have been considered above, and these strategies can, of course, within a single institution be combined where resources permit. As we have also seen, however, all such strategies have their advantages and disadvantages. Museums and galleries, quite apart from their individual sense of purpose, function in extremely varied contexts and there is no right or wrong strategy for them to communicate with their international visitors – what makes good sense in Canada may make far less in Slovakia.

Strategies	Correspondence to the culturally familiar?	Appropriate quantity of information?	Cost?	Comments
Translation	Limited although cultural adaptation can help	Probably overloaded	Reasonable	Entirely viable but imperfect
Single international alttext	Difference of need from domestic visitors recognised but international visitors seen as single group	Should fit overall although needs of different groups of international visitors vary	Base text inexpensive. Translated versions will add to cost	Diversity of need recognised, but only those of two large groups
Culturally customised texts	Very close	Very close	Very expensive	More admirable than viable
Accessible domestic language texts	Limited, but international visitors can feel welcomed into foreign culture	Reasonable - text should be a compromise between what suits domestic and international visitors	Cheap provided skills exist in-house	In line with general moves towards accessibility

Table 1: Evaluation of strategies for communicating with international visitors

5. Research and practice

What then might need to be done to allow museums and galleries to refine their decision-making when choosing a strategy for communicating with international visitors? Research, naturally, has the potential to inform decision-making and could focus on a vast range of relevant areas. Just one amongst them would involve trying to assess the measurable effects on visitor responses of different communication strategies using the sort of well-established observation-based, empirical methodologies commonly found in articles in international journals such as *Visitor Studies*. This would, however, be far from yielding some easy mechanism allowing comparisons of effectiveness, since any communication strategy for a mass audience involves subjective choices to privilege the communication needs of certain sections of that audience over others.

Other relevant forms of research are already being carried out, focussing on the intercultural skills needed by translators (cf. Koskinnen, 2015) and the pedagogy of their development within translator training programmes (cf. Cranmer, 2015). The importance many working both at the theoretical end of Translation Studies and on the pedagogy of translation are coming to attach to this area is more generally attested to in the existence both of conferences and volumes of international journals dedicated to the topic –special volumes, for example of *The Interpreter and Translator Trainer* (Volume 10, 2016 – Number 3), *Perspectives: Studies in Translatology* (Volume 24, 2016 – Issue 3) and *Cultus* (Volume 7, 2014) are all dedicated to themes of this kind. Equally, the European Commission has supported this strand of translator training by funding initiatives like the PICT project (www.pictlp.eu) designed to help teachers of Translation to improve the intercultural competence of their students. Such developments should leave translators better placed to show an awareness in their practice of the common influence of cultural background on international visitors and their possible reactions to texts. They should also leave them better placed to explain to those commissioning texts the rationale behind certain decisions they have taken in producing/customising texts.

Where museums and galleries are concerned, if they are to commit to putting the visitor at the centre of what they do, and if they are to do justice to the fact that those visitors are often increasingly international, they will need to show an increasing awareness of the intercultural complexities such communication involves. How, then, is this intercultural

awareness to be developed? It is important to be clear here what kind of question this is – it is *not* a question about intercultural aspects of translation technique, of linguistic or format choices. It is a question about organisational change and that is an area theorised in rather different disciplines, such as Management Studies, and not those primarily considered in this article. Progress will come, in my view, as much by looking for successful precedents in relation to other areas of organisational change as it will by the further refinement of translator training.

6. Conclusion

The idea that there is no single ‘appropriate’ strategy for museums and galleries to pursue when communicating with their international visitors, but that there are instead a range of factors they need to consider in their own contexts when deciding on such a strategy, has run through this whole article. What, then, in brief might be the future of the strategies considered and how far can they realistically square the increasingly international nature of visitors with the desire to be visitor-focused and to recognise diversity?

Translation will, almost certainly, continue to play a major role though hopefully in ways which increasingly will come to incorporate forms of cultural adaptation. But no-one should be fooled that culturally adapted translations fully speak to the needs of international visitors. If they are translated from texts aimed at domestic visitors no amount of cultural adaptation will entirely remove elements that address the needs of domestic visitors more than those of international ones. Culturally customised texts, of the kind produced by the knowledge-transfer project, do not have this problem, but it is not easy to see many museums and galleries being willing to commit to the cost or process implications of this strategy. Refusal, in some contexts, to meet the needs directly of non-dominant social groups on grounds of cost would be illegal as might be the case with those having physical disabilities. But even if failure to fully include international visitors rarely risks being illegal, the failure to do so should sit uncomfortably with the claim on the part of any museum gallery to be either ‘visitor-focused’ or to ‘acknowledge diversity’.

Texts written specifically for an international audience, considered as a ‘single’ audience will also, most likely, continue to have currency, and do

partly show visitor focus and acknowledgement of diversity, though they inevitably have the shortcoming of putting all international visitors in the ‘same basket’. What, though, finally, of texts in the domestically dominant language(s)? One way to include ‘outsiders’, in many contexts, is to make the dominant norms easier to learn or to cope with. And with texts of this kind one can do this by adjustment of lexis, by limiting complexity of syntax, by incorporating information in ‘chunked’ sections, by limiting the amount of content as well as by using multimodality, all of which is already in some contexts being done in order to increase access to a wider range of domestic visitors. There is no reason why this should not be done to increase access for international visitors, or more generally, for visitors who do not have a native grasp of the relevant domestically-focused text.

One might argue, with some justification, that this strategy makes best sense only where the domestically dominant language is widely spoken as a foreign language, as with English. But that might be to forget that immigration is a feature of almost all societies and that even meeting the needs of *domestic* visitors includes addressing the needs of those whose first language is not the locally dominant language.

In conclusion, there undoubtedly are ways to improve communication with international visitors which are focused on their needs and which acknowledge diversity. But serious commitment is needed for the process to be successful and careful thought needs to be given by practitioners in choosing an appropriate strategy.

References

- Bailey, S. 2011. *Academic Writing – A Handbook for International Students*. Abingdon: Routledge,
- Barker, C. 2000. *Cultural Studies*. London: Sage,
- Byram, M. 1997. *Teaching and Assessing Intercultural Communicative Competence*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters,
- Coxall, H. 1997. “Speaking Other Voices”. In E. Hooper-Greenhill (Ed.), *Cultural Diversity*, Leicester: Leicester University Press,
- Cranmer, R. 2015. “Introducing Intercultural Communication into the Teaching of Translation”. *Russian Journal of Linguistics*, 19 (4), 155-174.
- Giles, Howard, Coupland, Justine and Coupland, Nikolas (eds.) 1991. *Contexts of Accommodation: Developments in Applied Sociolinguistics*. Cambridge: CUP

-
- Hatim, B. 1997. *Communication Across Cultures – Translation Theory and Contrastive Text Linguistics*. Exeter: University of Exeter Press
- Hofstede, G. 1991. *Cultures and Organisations: Software of the Mind*. London: McGraw-Hill,
- Katan, David 2012 “Translating the tourist gaze: from heritage and ‘culture’ to actual encounter”, *Pasos* 10 (4), 83-95.
- Koskinen, K. 2015. “Training Translators for a Super-diverse World. Translators’ Intercultural Competence and Translation as Affective Work”. *Russian Journal of Linguistics*, 19 (4), 175-184.
- Leppihalme, R. 1997. *Culture Bumps*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters
- Lustig, Myron W. and Koestler, Jolene 2003. *Intercultural Competence*. Boston: Pearson
- Robertson, P. 2009. “What Can We See? London’s Museums and Galleries and the International Visitor Experience.” *Liaison Magazine*, 2, 22-27