Chapter 7

Paratexts in the Translation of Tourism Texts: Adaptation of Online Peripheral Content

ABSTRACT

This chapter considers Gérard Genette's concept of “paratext” from a translational approach. Based on the previous research carried out by different authors in the field of Translation Studies, the author uses the idea of the paratext and applies it to the specific case of the translation of business tourism texts. More specifically, this chapter discusses the alterations and adaptations that are performed in elements such as images, the menus of websites, or the layout of the information when the contents are translated into a different language. In addition, it will be necessary to understand the social, cultural, or economic limitations that influence this adaptation for an international public. To do so, after a review of the literature on this topic, the text carries out a comparison between two websites in Spanish and English and includes specific examples that will be discussed based on the premises presented here.

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INTRODUCTION: THE CONCEPT OF “PARATEXT” IN TRANSLATION STUDIES

When a publishing company publishes any kind of work, regardless of its nature, the text is not presented to the readers as an isolated item, but surrounded by a series of elements that largely facilitate the transmission of contents to the reader. Gérard Genette (1997) carried out an in-depth analysis of the relationships that were established between the text in a literary work and other elements such as the cover, the title, the prologue, the epilogue or the dedication, among many others, because of the large amount of information they could provide to the readers when they had the book in their hands. According to the terminology put forward by Genette (1997) in his research, all these elements can be considered part of a large category which the author calls *paratexts*, and which contribute to contextualizing the literary work within a specific literary universe. According to this author, paratexts can be interpreted as *thresholds* (Genette, 1997, p. 1) because they are conceived, in the first place, as a gateway to the work itself from the outside, but also as a means to present the book that makes it easier to receive and market it in the society in which it has been published (López Ponz, 2012, p. 201). In the simile that Gil-Bardají, Orero and Rovira-Esteva (2012a, p. 7) establish between a literary product and a city, according to the description provided by Genette in his research, paratexts become gateways to the text that are external and adjacent to it and that define its interior from the periphery, which makes it possible to understand the work as a whole from a global perspective and to locate it in a specific cultural and social context: “the in-depth comprehension of texts [...] also requires seeing them from a perspective that goes beyond the texts themselves and which also takes into account all those elements which, while separate, accompany and define them” (Gil-Bardají et al., 2012a, p. 7). Considering these concepts, in this chapter we will analyze, from a translational perspective, the processes of adaptation that paratexts undergo during the translation of contexts related to the tourism market. More specifically, we will use the theoretical framework that has been developed by different voices in this field in order to observe, in different selected examples, the way in which paratexts of websites with promotional and tourism content have been adapted and manipulated.

In the initial description presented by Genette (1997, p. 7), he refers to the fact that, in most instances, paratexts will be textual elements (prefaces, interviews, titles, etc.), but that this is not always the case. Therefore, we will
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