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PROBLEMS OF STANDARDIZING MODERN TOURISM TERMINOLOGY AND THE EXPERIENCE OF THE WORLD TOURISM ORGANIZATION

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Abstract:

This article analyzes the problems of standardizing modern tourism terminology and the experience of the World Tourism Organization based on a comprehensive scientific approach. The accuracy and uniformity of terms in tourism are substantiated as key factors determining the effectiveness of global communication. The formation of the terminological system, its linguistic and social factors, structural features, as well as the theoretical and practical significance of standardization are examined. In addition, existing problems and prospective solutions are analyzed based on international standards and UNWTO experience.

Keywords: Tourism, terminology, standardization, globalization, system, communication, UNWTO

Introduction:

In the context of modern global development, tourism has become one of the most dynamic and systematically expanding spheres of human activity. It is considered not only an important segment of the economic system but also a complex social phenomenon that ensures intercultural communication, strengthens social integration, and promotes international cooperation. This multifunctional nature of tourism determines its close connection with the fields of economy, culture,



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politics, and communication. Especially under globalization, tourism acquires strategic importance as a tool of economic openness, territorial branding, and cultural diplomacy.

The multifaceted nature of tourism directly influences the complexity of its terminological system. Concepts related to tourism are formed in different languages and cultural contexts, leading to various semantic interpretations. This situation causes problems such as synonymy, polysemy, and inconsistency within the terminological system. For example, terms like “*tourist*,” “*visitor*,” and “*traveller*” may be used with different meanings in different scientific traditions and practices. As a result, the accuracy of scientific communication and the efficiency of practical activities in tourism may decrease. Therefore, regulating and standardizing the terminological system becomes an essential scientific and practical task.

Terminology is a fundamental component of any system of scientific knowledge. It clarifies concepts, systematizes categories, and ensures the consistency of scientific thinking. In tourism, the role of terminology is even more significant because this field forms a global system that integrates multiple countries, international organizations, and specialists from various domains. The accuracy and standardization of terms play a crucial role in statistical accounting, service quality assessment, analysis of tourism flows, and strategic planning.

The relevance of this issue is also reflected in international legal documents. Within the United Nations system, the sustainable development of tourism and its role in the global economy are highly recognized. The issue of establishing a unified terminological approach is clearly outlined in the document “*International Recommendations for Tourism Statistics*” (2008) developed by the World Tourism Organization. This document provides standardized



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definitions of key tourism concepts and recommends their use in international statistical systems, thereby ensuring terminological consistency.

Additionally, the UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage (2003) legally reinforces the close relationship between tourism and culture. It emphasizes that the preservation and development of cultural heritage are closely linked with tourism activities, highlighting the cultural dimension of tourism terminology.

At the national level, the development and standardization of tourism terminology are also of great importance. For instance, the Law “On Tourism” (2019) of the Republic of Uzbekistan not only regulates tourism activities but also ensures the clarity of key concepts used in this field. It provides legal definitions of tourism entities, service types, and tourist status, forming a basis for the national terminological system.

Furthermore, strategic documents on tourism development in Uzbekistan emphasize improving terminology, aligning it with international standards, and preserving national characteristics. This shows that terminology has significance not only linguistically but also at the level of state policy.

Thus, the accuracy and standardization of tourism terminology are essential conditions for the effective functioning of the global tourism system. Improving the terminological system on a scientific basis, harmonizing international and national standards, and considering linguocultural features are among the priority directions of modern research.

Analysis and Results:

Tourism terminology is a complex, dynamic, and multi-layered system that functions not only as a set of linguistic units but also as a conceptual system covering all aspects of tourism activity. It is closely connected with fields such as



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transport, hospitality, marketing, management, ecology, and culture, each influencing the formation of terminological units. Thus, tourism terminology should be viewed as a multi-component, functional, and hierarchical system.

Internal linguistic factors form the structural basis of tourism terminology. The grammatical and lexical resources of a language serve as the primary means of creating new terms. For example, Uzbek terms such as “*sayyohlik*” (*tourism*), “*mehmonxona*” (*hotel*), and “*yo‘nalish*” (*route*) are formed based on internal linguistic resources. At the same time, external factors—such as globalization, digital technologies, and international cooperation—enrich and complicate the system. Terms like “*online booking*,” “*virtual tour*,” and “*digital tourism*” reflect technological advancement and new forms of tourism.

One of the key features of tourism terminology is its international character. Many terms are borrowed from English and used globally, such as “*tour operator*,” “*destination*,” “*hospitality*,” and “*package tour*.” While this facilitates communication, it may also lead to misinterpretation in national contexts. For example, “*hospitality*” includes both service and cultural aspects in English, but in some languages, it is interpreted only as a service concept.

This leads to increased synonymy and polysemy. For instance, “*tourist*” and “*traveller*” are often used interchangeably, although they differ conceptually. A *tourist* travels with a specific purpose, while a *traveller* is a broader concept. Such ambiguities highlight the need for standardization.

Another important feature is the hierarchical structure of terminology. For example, “*tourism*” is a general concept, while “*cultural tourism*,” “*eco-tourism*,” and “*medical tourism*” are subcategories. Standardization must address the entire system rather than individual terms. The standardization process involves defining terms, determining their scope, and establishing unified



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norms. It requires interdisciplinary collaboration among linguists, terminologists, communication experts, and tourism specialists.

International organizations play a key role in this process. The World Tourism Organization provides methodological and statistical frameworks that strengthen the scientific basis of tourism terminology. For example, it clearly distinguishes between “*visitor*,” “*tourist*,” and “*excursionist*,” which is essential for statistical and economic analysis.

UNESCO also contributes by introducing terms such as “*intangible cultural heritage*” and “*cultural landscape*,” strengthening the cultural dimension of tourism terminology.

Standardization has both theoretical and practical significance. It systematizes knowledge, improves management efficiency, enhances service quality, and strengthens international cooperation.

However, the process faces challenges. Rapid changes in tourism lead to new terms such as “*e-tourism*,” “*smart tourism*,” and “*digital nomad*.” Another issue is inconsistency between national and international terminology. For example, “*sustainable tourism*” may be translated differently, leading to misinterpretation. Therefore, both linguistic accuracy and cultural adequacy must be ensured in translation.

Conclusion:

The standardization of modern tourism terminology is a crucial condition for the effective functioning of the global tourism system. It ensures clarity, consistency, and unified interpretation of terms, thereby improving communication efficiency and scientific cooperation.

The experience of the World Tourism Organization demonstrates the effectiveness of a systematic, scientifically grounded, and internationally



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coordinated approach to terminology standardization. Future research in this field should focus on improving the terminological system, systematizing new concepts, and ensuring the sustainable development of tourism.

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