

**TRANSLATING THE IUCN VALORIZATION STUDY OF LAKE OHRID:
STANDARDIZING ALBANIAN FOR ENHANCED BILATERAL COLLABORATION
BETWEEN NORTH MACEDONIA AND ALBANIA**

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Abstract: This study explores the translation process of a valorization report on Lake Ohrid, recognized as a UNESCO World Heritage Site and a Monument of Nature, from English to Albanian. The report, conducted by IUCN experts, highlights Lake Ohrid, one of Europe's oldest and deepest lakes, shared by North Macedonia and Albania. Accurate translation is essential for effective bilateral cooperation in preserving this unique ecosystem. The 2021 translation of this document, completed by Associate Professor Dr. Iris Klosi, one of the authors of this research, involves not only linguistic challenges but also the precise conveyance of complex ecological, cultural, and scientific information that underscores the lake's significance.

The study highlights key issues encountered during the translation, such as the need to maintain technical accuracy while ensuring the text remains accessible to a broader audience, including policymakers, environmentalists, and the local population in both countries. It also examines the challenges of translating culturally specific terms and concepts related to the lake's historical and ecological importance. Additionally, the translation process required careful consideration of terminological consistency, particularly in scientific descriptions of the lake's biodiversity, geology, and hydrology.

A significant focus of this research is the effort to use standardized Albanian for both Albanians in North Macedonia and Albania. This standardization aims to establish a common ground of understanding in official documents, particularly in bilateral agreements, ensuring that the use of terms is consistent and unambiguous across both countries. The research discusses the strategies employed to address these challenges, such as the use of parallel texts, consultation with subject matter experts, and the adaptation of terminology to fit the Albanian linguistic and cultural context without losing the original meaning.

The translation's impact on public awareness and conservation efforts is also assessed, considering how the translated document contributes to a shared understanding between North Macedonia and Albania. In conclusion, the study underscores the importance of high-quality, standardized translation in environmental preservation, where accurate communication of information is vital for successful international cooperation and the sustainable management of natural heritage sites like Lake Ohrid.

Keywords: valorization report, Lake Ohrid, IUCN translation, standardized Albanian, bilateral cooperation

1. INTRODUCTION

This study delves into the intricate process of translating the valorization report on Lake Ohrid, a distinguished UNESCO World Heritage Site and a Monument of Nature, from English to Albanian. Lake Ohrid, one of Europe's oldest and deepest lakes, is shared by North Macedonia and Albania, and its ecological, cultural, and scientific significance is immense. The translation of this report is vital for facilitating effective bilateral cooperation in preserving the lake.

Prepared by experts from the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), the report emphasizes the importance of Lake Ohrid's unique ecosystem. The 2021 translation, conducted by Associate Professor Dr. Iris Klosi, involved overcoming linguistic challenges while ensuring that complex ecological, cultural, and scientific information was conveyed in a clear and impactful manner to a wide range of readers, including policymakers, environmentalists, and local communities in both North Macedonia and Albania.

This study further explores the intricate challenge of translating culturally specific terms and concepts that underscore the lake's historical and ecological significance. The necessity of maintaining technical accuracy while adapting these concepts to be understood by a broader readership, including those with limited technical knowledge,

was a key priority. Strategies such as using parallel texts, consulting with subject matter experts, and adapting terminology to fit the Albanian linguistic and cultural context while retaining the original meaning played a crucial role in ensuring translation quality.

An important aspect of this research is the use of standardized Albanian across both North Macedonia and Albania. This standardization effort is aimed at establishing consistency in official documents and bilateral agreements, ensuring uniform terminology that can be understood and applied in both countries. The impact of this translation on public awareness and conservation efforts is also evaluated, highlighting the critical role that high-quality, standardized translation plays in environmental preservation.

By linking both the linguistic and technical dimensions of the translation process with the overarching goal of preserving Lake Ohrid, this study underscores the necessity of accurate and standardized communication. Such efforts are essential not only for fostering international collaboration but also for the sustainable management of natural heritage sites like Lake Ohrid.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The theoretical framework for this study is grounded in several key translation theories that emphasize the balance between fidelity to the source text and adaptation to the cultural and linguistic norms of the target language. These theories provide a foundation for analyzing the translation practices, challenges, and adaptations encountered during the translation of the management plan.

First, Šarčević's (2000) theory of functional equivalence in legal translation offers a critical perspective on how legal terms and frameworks are translated. This theory suggests that legal translations should not only convey the literal meaning of the source text but also ensure that the translated terms function equivalently within the legal system of the target language. More recently, Prieto Ramos (2014) expanded this approach with the concept of multidimensional legal translation, which highlights the complexity of legal discourse and the translator's role in mediating between divergent legal systems and cultures while maintaining both legal precision and cultural sensitivity.

Second, Newmark's (1988) principles of communicative and semantic translation serve as a guide for translating technical and environmental terms. Communicative translation aims to produce the same effect on the target audience as the original text had on its audience, whereas semantic translation focuses on conveying the exact meaning of the source text. Munday (2016) extends Newmark's framework by emphasizing the importance of contextual adaptation in specialized fields like environmental science, where the target audience may have limited familiarity with technical terminology. This emphasis on context ensures that translations are both accurate and accessible to the intended audience.

Third, Venuti's (1995) concept of domestication and foreignization informs the approach to translating proper names, geographical locations, and cultural references. Domestication involves making the text more familiar to the target audience, while foreignization retains elements of the source culture. Recent contributions by Cronin (2017) introduce the concept of ecotranslation, which calls for a balance between linguistic adaptation and ecological sensitivity, especially when translating texts related to environmental conservation. This perspective adds a layer of ecological awareness to Venuti's original framework, particularly relevant in the context of translations dealing with environmental topics.

In the case of abbreviations and acronyms, Gambier and van Doorslaer's (2010) dynamic equivalence theory is applicable. This theory emphasizes that while translations should maintain the meaning and function of the source text, adaptations are sometimes necessary to fit the linguistic conventions of the target language. Olohan (2020) further explores the role of technology-assisted translation in enhancing dynamic equivalence, particularly in the handling of abbreviations and international terminologies, offering translators greater precision in the adaptation process.

Pym's (2010) theory of translational ethics and stakeholder engagement provides valuable insights into translating institutional names and other administrative terminology. Pym argues that translators actively shape the meaning of texts for the target audience, particularly in institutional and administrative contexts. House (2018) expands on this by introducing the concept of pragmatic adaptation, which emphasizes the ethical responsibility of translators to adapt texts in ways that align with both linguistic expectations and the socio-political and institutional constraints of the target culture.

Building on these perspectives, Roig-Sanz and Meylaerts (2021) introduce the role of cultural mediators, particularly in peripheral cultures, who navigate the balance between fidelity to the source text and cultural adaptation for target audiences. This concept broadens the scope of translation studies by emphasizing the translator's agency in cultural negotiation and the importance of ensuring relevance in varied socio-cultural contexts.

Similarly, the *Handbook of Translation Studies: Volume 5* (Gambier & van Doorslaer, 2021) underscores the growing importance of integrating contemporary practices, including the use of digital tools and interdisciplinary approaches, to meet the increasing demands of translating specialized and complex texts. These theories contribute further dimensions to understanding the dynamics of modern translation, particularly for legal, environmental, and institutional texts.

These theoretical perspectives, along with their recent developments, form the basis for understanding the complex process of translating a management plan from English to Albanian. They underscore the importance of balancing linguistic accuracy, cultural adaptation, and contextual relevance in legal, environmental, geographical, and institutional translations.

3. METHODOLOGY

The qualitative methodology of this study focuses on a detailed analysis of the translation process of a management plan from English to Albanian. The research relies on textual analysis as the primary method, examining how specific translation theories are applied in practice and identifying the challenges faced during the translation. A central component of this methodology is the critical examination of linguistic choices, including the translation of legal, environmental, and institutional terminology, as well as the strategies employed to address the cultural and contextual relevance of the target text.

The analysis draws on key theories such as functional equivalence, communicative and semantic translation, and domestication and foreignization, exploring how these theories manifest in the translated text. The management plan is analyzed in its entirety, with particular attention to sections that contain complex legal frameworks, scientific terms, and proper names, as these areas often present the greatest challenges in terms of maintaining both accuracy and cultural appropriateness.

Data for this study are gathered through a detailed review of the translated document, comparing it to the source text to assess how the translator navigated issues of fidelity and adaptation. In addition, the analysis considers the socio-political and legal context in which the translation was produced, exploring how these external factors influenced the translator's decisions. This approach allows for a comprehensive understanding of the translator's role not only as a linguistic mediator but also as a cultural and legal negotiator. By examining the translated text in its specific context, the study seeks to provide insights into the practical application of translation theory and the ethical considerations that arise when translating documents with institutional and environmental significance.

Through this qualitative approach, the study provides a nuanced exploration of translation as both a technical and socio-cultural process, offering a rich understanding of the complexities involved in translating a management plan that must meet both international standards and local expectations.

4. FINDINGS

The analysis of the translation from English to Albanian of the management plan reveals intricate details about the translation practices, challenges, and adaptations made to ensure accuracy and appropriateness for the local context. The translation process reflects a nuanced approach to preserving the integrity of the original text while addressing linguistic and cultural differences.

One significant aspect of the translation is the adaptation of the Table of Contents. For instance, the translation of "Legal Framework" as "Korniza Ligjore" effectively captures both the literal and institutional meanings of the term. This choice demonstrates an effort to maintain the original's intent while adapting it to fit Albanian legal terminology. However, an interesting discrepancy arises in the choice of the word "framework" in Albanian legal terminology between the Republic of Albania and the Republic of North Macedonia. In Albania, legal documents typically use the term "kuadri," resulting in the collocation "Legal Framework" being translated as "kuadri ligjor." In contrast, in North Macedonia, the equivalent legal term is "korniza ligjore." To promote a standardized Albanian across both regions, it is recommended that the term "kuadri ligjor" be consistently adopted. Similarly, the term "Key Species of Fauna and Flora" is translated as "Speciet Kryesore të Faunës dhe Florës," which adheres to Albanian grammatical conventions and preserves the meaning. Such translations highlight the translator's focus on ensuring clarity and relevance for Albanian-speaking audiences, especially in terms of legal and environmental contexts.

Geographical names are another area where translation choices play a crucial role. While many names remain unchanged to maintain geographical accuracy, some adjustments are made to align with local phonetic and linguistic norms. For example, "Ohrid" is rendered as "Ohër," and "Studençishko Wetland" is translated as "Ligatina Studençishko," reflecting Albanian phonetic rules. This practice helps in standardizing geographical terms across different regions and enhances the document's accessibility for Albanian speakers in both North Macedonia and Albania. The translation of "Ohrid-Prespa Transboundary Biosphere Reserve" as "Rezervati Ndërkufitar i Biosferës

Ohër-Prespë" exemplifies this effort, aiming to provide a consistent and comprehensible term that bridges the geographical and administrative boundaries between the regions.

The translation of abbreviations also reveals a balance between maintaining international recognition and adapting to local norms. For instance, "CBD (Convention on Biological Diversity)" is translated as "KDB (Konventa për Diversitetin Biologjik)," retaining the original abbreviation's meaning while adapting it for Albanian usage. Some abbreviations, such as "HBI Ohr" becoming "IHB Ohër," are adjusted to fit Albanian conventions, showcasing a flexible approach to localization. Other translations, like "METT (Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool)" being rendered as "Mjeti i Menaxhimit për Gjurmimin e Efektivitetit," involve longer descriptive terms to ensure clarity, demonstrating the translator's effort to maintain comprehensibility in the local language.

The analysis of pressures and threats to habitats, species, and water quality provides further insights into the translation's effectiveness. Terms such as "Lack of Active Management of the Protected Area" and "Human Impact Through Tourism" are translated in a way that accurately reflects the original concepts while adapting them to Albanian context. Environmental pressures are described with appropriate specificity, such as translating "Use of Boats" as "Përdorimi i Anijeve" and "Unsustainable and Uncontrolled Fishing" as "Peshkimi i Paqëndrueshëm dhe të Pa Kontrolluar." The translation addresses both local and global issues, including pollution sources like "Urban Wastewater," which becomes "Ujërat e Zeza të Vendbanimeve," and "Agricultural and Fertiliser Runoff," translated as "Ndotja nga Transportimi i Plehrave Kimike dhe Bujqësore." This adaptation demonstrates a careful consideration of both local environmental contexts and global factors like climate change.

The comparative analysis of legal texts, such as Article 94 on the submission of proposals for the proclamation of a protected area, shows how regional dialects and administrative preferences influence translation choices. Terms such as "State Administration" and "Nature Protection" are translated with local nuances, such as "organi i drejtorisë shtetërore" and "mbrojtjes së natyrës," which reflect North Macedonian administrative language preferences. The translation incorporates regional language variations, indicating a need to align with local administrative practices while maintaining the article's original intent.

Finally, the stakeholder lists translated into Albanian reveal significant adaptations to local terminology and administrative structures. Institutional names, like "Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning," are translated as "Ministrinë e Mjedisit Jetësor dhe Planifikimit Hapësinor," reflecting regional naming conventions. Similarly, "Global Water Partnership - Mediterranean" is translated as "Partneriteti Global për Ujërat – Mesdhe," incorporating localized terms. The translation of stakeholder types, such as those from the tourism sector and various NGOs, maintains consistency with the original list while adapting to local language and cultural contexts. This comparative analysis underscores the importance of context-specific translations and highlights the impact of regional linguistic preferences on interpreting institutional and sector-specific terminology.

Overall, the translation process demonstrates a thorough and contextually aware approach, addressing the challenges of linguistic adaptation while striving to preserve the original text's accuracy and intent.

5. DISCUSSION

The findings of this study reveal several significant insights into the complexities of translating a management plan from English to Albanian, emphasizing the interplay between linguistic accuracy, cultural adaptation, and the translator's ethical responsibilities. The application of translation theories such as functional equivalence, communicative and semantic translation, and domestication and foreignization highlights the intricate balancing act translators must perform when navigating between source and target texts. Legal and institutional terminology, in particular, emerged as areas where functional equivalence was most challenging, requiring translators to make careful decisions to ensure that terms were not only accurate but also aligned with the legal and institutional frameworks of the target culture.

One key observation is the importance of contextual adaptation when dealing with environmental and scientific terms. While Newmark's principles of communicative and semantic translation were useful in maintaining scientific accuracy, this study found that translators also had to account for the varying levels of familiarity with scientific concepts within the Albanian-speaking audience. In this regard, the findings align with Munday's (2016) suggestion that technical translations must consider the target audience's contextual understanding. Translators must strike a delicate balance between conveying the source text's precise meaning and making it comprehensible and culturally relevant for the target audience.

The domestication and foreignization strategies applied in the translation of geographical names, proper nouns, and culturally specific references further illustrate the nuanced choices made by translators. The decision to domesticate certain names, such as "Ohrid" becoming "Ohër," was motivated by a desire to align the translation with Albanian linguistic and cultural norms. However, there was also an awareness of the need to retain the geographical accuracy and integrity of the original text. This reflects Cronin's (2017) theory of ecotranslation, which underscores the

importance of ecological sensitivity in translations concerning environmental issues. The translator's choices reflect a conscious effort to balance cultural familiarity with ecological accuracy, ensuring that the translation remains faithful to both the source text and the target culture.

The translation of institutional and administrative terms also raised important ethical considerations, particularly in relation to Pym's (2010) theory of translational ethics. Translators were required to navigate between linguistic precision and the socio-political context in which the translation would be used. The study found that translators played a key role in shaping the way institutional terms were presented, not only adhering to linguistic norms but also considering the broader institutional and legal implications of their translations. This highlights the active role translators play in the translation process, particularly when translating texts with institutional significance.

The use of abbreviations and acronyms in the management plan presented a unique challenge. While Gambier and van Doorslaer's (2010) dynamic equivalence theory provided a useful framework for maintaining the functional integrity of abbreviations, technological tools such as machine translation also influenced the decision-making process. As Olohan (2020) notes, technology-assisted translation can facilitate greater precision, particularly when dealing with standardized international terms. However, this study also found that relying too heavily on technology may overlook the subtleties of cultural adaptation, necessitating the translator's expertise to fine-tune the final output.

Overall, the study illustrates the multi-dimensional role of the translator, who must navigate between technical accuracy, cultural sensitivity, and ethical considerations. The application of translation theories in this context sheds light on the practical realities of translating complex, institutionally significant texts, where accuracy alone is insufficient. Translators must constantly adapt their strategies to account for the cultural, legal, and ecological implications of their work, ensuring that the translated text not only faithfully represents the source material but also resonates with its intended audience. These findings underscore the dynamic nature of translation as both a linguistic and socio-cultural practice, where the translator's role extends far beyond linguistic mediation.

6. CONCLUSIONS

The conclusions drawn from this analysis of the translation of the management plan from English to Albanian underscore the complexity and significance of adapting legal, environmental, and institutional terminology to suit the local linguistic and cultural context. The translation process successfully balances the preservation of the source text's integrity with the need to adjust for regional nuances in both the Republic of Albania and the Republic of North Macedonia.

One of the key findings is the divergence in legal terminology between the two regions, particularly the discrepancy in the translation of terms like "Legal Framework." This highlights the importance of standardizing terminology across Albanian-speaking regions to ensure consistency and facilitate mutual understanding in legal and institutional discourse. The recommendation to adopt "kuadri ligjor" as the standardized term reflects a broader need for harmonization of legal language in official documents.

The translation of environmental terms, such as those related to species and habitats, demonstrates an effective approach to ensuring both scientific accuracy and linguistic accessibility for Albanian-speaking audiences. The careful adaptation of geographical names and environmental terminology also illustrates the translator's awareness of local phonetic norms and the need for standardized geographical terms, enhancing the document's usability for stakeholders in both Albania and North Macedonia.

Additionally, the handling of abbreviations and acronyms showcases a balance between maintaining international recognition and adapting to Albanian linguistic norms. This approach ensures that the translation remains comprehensible while aligning with global environmental and legal standards, which is crucial for cross-border projects like the management of the Ohrid-Prespa region.

The translation also effectively addresses local environmental and socio-political contexts by adapting terms related to pressures and threats to habitats, as well as administrative and institutional structures. The nuanced translation of legal and stakeholder-related terms reflects an understanding of regional language preferences and the importance of aligning translations with local administrative practices.

In conclusion, the translation of the management plan highlights the challenges of adapting complex, technical, and legal documents while maintaining accuracy and contextual relevance. The recommendations for standardizing terminology across Albanian-speaking regions, along with the demonstrated flexibility in adapting to local linguistic norms, suggest a model for future translations of similar documents that require both linguistic precision and cultural sensitivity.

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