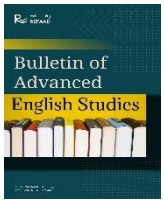
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Reframing Jordan for Global Audiences: A Critical Analysis of Conceptual Metaphor Translation in Jordanian Tourist Brochures

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Abstract:

Background: Translating conceptual metaphors from one language to another is challenging due to linguistic and cultural differences, as well as the need to convey the intended meaning precisely and concisely.

Purpose: The study examines how conceptual metaphors are translated from Arabic into English in official Jordanian tourist brochures and argues that, in this context, metaphor translation functions as both intercultural mediation and destination branding.

Methodology: The study adopts a qualitative descriptive-analytical design and analyzes a purposive parallel corpus of twenty brochure excerpts drawn from official Jordanian tourism materials. Metaphorical expressions are identified through Conceptual Metaphor Theory and examined using Newmark's (1988) taxonomy of metaphor translation procedures.

Findings: This research shows that the English versions do not simply reproduce Arabic imagery. Instead, metaphors are often retained, intensified, substituted, explicated, or newly created to enhance persuasive force and improve readability for international audiences. Four dominant conceptual clusters emerge: Jordan as treasure and living history; landscape as sanctuary and cosmos; mobility as a historical or spiritual journey; and local culture as an immersive experience. Although this reshaping supports readability and marketability, it also softens parts of the local symbolic texture.

Research implications: The study emphasizes that metaphor translation in Jordanian tourism discourse should be approached as a culturally accountable act of re-narration rather than as a narrow issue of lexical equivalence.

Keywords: *Conceptual Metaphor Theory; Tourism discourse; Jordanian tourist brochures; Metaphor translation; Cultural mediation; Destination image.*

1 Introduction

Tourism discourse has never been neutral. Destinations are not simply described in brochures and websites; they are imagined, framed, and emotionally staged through language. In promotional texts, language is expected to do more than convey information. It must persuade, attract, and organize cultural meaning in a form that is immediately appealing to prospective visitors. For this reason, the language of tourism has often been described as a specialized and hybrid concept in which information, evaluation, and invitation are merged into a single communicative act (Cohen & Cooper, 1986; Kelly, 1998; Sulaiman, 2016). Within this concept, metaphor plays a particularly important role because destinations are rarely marketed through literal description alone. Places become treasures, landscapes become sanctuaries, roads become timelines, and local culture becomes experience, memory, and promise.

This issue becomes even more significant when tourism texts are translated. Translation in tourism is not a secondary mechanical step that follows a finished act of communication. Rather, it is one of the main means through which destinations become globally visible and narratively accessible to readers who do not share the source language or its symbolic world (Cronin, 2013; Durán Muñoz, 2011; Alangari, 2022). When a metaphor is involved, the task becomes more complex because the translator must transfer not only lexical meaning, but also a culturally situated conceptual structure. A metaphor may carry historical memory, religious resonance, evaluative force, and destination branding simultaneously. As a result, the translator must decide whether the image should be preserved, explained, replaced, softened, or amplified. Each of these choices affects how the destination is imagined in the target culture.

Conceptual Metaphor Theory has made it difficult to treat such expressions as marginal rhetoric. Since Lakoff and Johnson's intervention, metaphors have increasingly been understood as a conceptual mechanism through which one domain of experience is structured in terms of another, rather than as an isolated stylistic flourish (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). Later research has shown that metaphor is deeply connected to culture, context, and discourse, and that metaphor translation cannot be reduced to a search for dictionary equivalence (Schäffner, 2004; Kövecses, 2010; Chita & Stavrou, 2020). In tourism discourse, this point is especially important. The persuasive function of the text requires metaphors to remain attractive and readable, while the cultural function requires them to continue carrying local meaning. The translator is therefore placed in a role of mediation rather than simple transfer.

The present study addresses this issue through the case of Jordanian tourist brochures translated from Arabic into English. Jordan offers a productive site for such analysis because its tourism discourse draws on multiple symbolic layers: Nabataean and Roman heritage, biblical and Islamic resonances, desert and marine landscapes, Bedouin culture, wellness tourism, and family-oriented leisure experiences. In such material, metaphors are not ornamental. They are used to condense large historical and cultural meanings into memorable textual units. Petra may be framed as treasure, Jerash as living history, Wadi Rum as a cosmic or cinematic landscape, the Dead Sea as a healing sanctuary, and religious sites as open-air sanctuaries or living scripture. These formulations do not merely decorate the brochures; they help construct the image of Jordan that reaches the international reader.

This study addresses a research gap concerning the translation of conceptual metaphors in Jordanian tourist brochures, an area with limited existing research and many unresolved questions. It aims to fill this gap by contributing to theoretical understanding and expanding the available translation resources. Additionally, it offers practical guidance for translators to apply in their everyday work.

Accordingly, this study asks how conceptual metaphors in Jordanian tourist brochures are translated from Arabic into English, which strategies occur most frequently, and what those strategies reveal about the mediation of culture, identity, and persuasion in tourism promotion. It is proposed that the English target texts do not merely mirror the source texts. Rather, they often recast them through metaphor retention, metaphor substitution, explicitation, and promotional amplification. In this sense, the translator is shown to function not only as a linguistic intermediary but also as a co-producer of Jordan's destination image.

This study is organized into four main sections after this introduction. First, the theoretical background situates the study at the intersection of conceptual metaphor, tourism discourse, and metaphor translation. Second, the

methodology explains the corpus, selection criteria, and analytical model, which is based primarily on Conceptual Metaphor Theory and Newmark's translation procedures. Third, the discussion and findings section examines the brochure data through grouped conceptual domains and dominant translation tendencies. Finally, the conclusion draws out the implications for tourism translation in Jordan and for metaphor translation more broadly.

2 Literature Review

Previous research shows that tourism translation is shaped by cultural distance, genre expectations, and promotional aims. Kelly (1998) described tourist texts as convention-bound communication that requires attention to textual function and cultural limitations. Durán Muñoz (2011) emphasized the mediating role of tourist translation and the misunderstandings that arise when culture-specific meanings are mishandled. Sulaiman (2016) argued that tourism translation is often misunderstood as literal interlingual substitution rather than a process similar to transcreation. In regional tourism, translators actively connect with the target audience through explanations, exoticization, and selective cultural framing (Alangari, 2022). Studies on metaphor translation reveal that meaning is often negotiated through context-dependent strategies rather than fixed procedures (Schäffner, 2004; Kalda & Uusküla, 2019; Chita & Stavrou, 2020). However, there is limited detailed research into translating conceptual metaphors in Jordanian tourist brochures.

In modern metaphor research, it is widely accepted that metaphors should not be seen simply as decorative language substitutions. Instead, metaphor is more accurately viewed as a conceptual process by which one experience domain is understood in terms of another. Lakoff and Johnson (1980) illustrated this by demonstrating that abstract experiences are often structured using more concrete domains. For example, time is described as money, arguments as war, and life as a journey. This perspective is important because it shows that metaphor extends beyond literary device to become part of everyday thinking and social meaning-making. Kövecses (2010) pointed out that metaphors are both rooted in common human experience and shaped by cultural models. This is especially relevant to translating Jordanian tourist brochures: when Petra is depicted as a treasure, the metaphor is universally understandable; however, when a site is associated with scriptural, pilgrimage, or Bedouin contexts, the metaphor becomes more culturally specific and requires more interpretive effort. Thus, the same metaphorical mapping can exist across different cultures in broad conceptual terms, but vary significantly in emotional impact and textual effect.

The cultural aspect of metaphors helps explain why translating metaphors is challenging, even when their lexical meaning is clear. A translator must do more than identify what a metaphor says, they also need to understand its function in the discourse and how it influences the reader. Chita and Stavrou (2020) pointed out that the ability to translate metaphors depends largely on the shared cultural associations between source and target languages. Similarly, Kalda and Uusküla (2019) emphasized that context is crucial for understanding and translating metaphors, especially when they are new or culturally significant. Consequently, metaphor translation should be approached as a discourse event rather than as an isolated linguistic element.

Tourism discourse occupies a complex space between description, evaluation, and persuasion. While it may offer practical information, it also aims to generate desire, diminish perceived distance, and endorse a particular perspective of the destination. Cohen and Cooper (1986) highlighted that tourism language is deeply connected to the tourism experience itself. Subsequent research emphasizes that tourism language forms a specialized discourse characterized by recurring lexical and rhetorical patterns (Kelly, 1998; Sulaiman, 2016; Nasution & Kharisma, 2024). Typical features include superlatives, positive adjectives, emotionally charged nouns, and imperative or invitational forms. The destination is seldom presented neutrally; instead, it is depicted as exceptional, accessible, and memorable.

The tourist brochure exemplifies this discourse well. It is a compact genre that combines images, slogans, brief stories, and descriptive context. With just one metaphorical phrase, a location can be depicted as sacred, historic, adventurous, healing, or family-friendly. Consequently, the brochure relies heavily on semantic density, packing a lot of meaning into a few lines. This density explains why brochure translations should not be literal; they must convey not only information but also a carefully crafted promotional tone.

The history of metaphor translation theory shows repeated dissatisfaction with purely literal transfer. Van den Broeck (1981) demonstrated that metaphor exposes the limits of simple translatability, as the translator must handle semantic, cultural, and rhetorical relations simultaneously. Newmark (1988) approached the issue more operationally by proposing both a typology of metaphors and a range of procedures for translating them. His distinction among dead, cliché, stock, adapted, recent, and original metaphors remains especially useful for textual analysis because it highlights the relative novelty and cultural weight of each metaphorical instance. He also outlined several procedures, including reproducing the same image, replacing the source image with a standard target-language image, translating the metaphor with a simile, reducing the metaphor to sense, or combining the image with an explanation.

Although Newmark's model is sometimes criticized for being more procedure-oriented than fully cognitive, it remains highly productive for tourism discourse because it forces the critic to ask what translators actually do when faced with persuasive metaphor. It also allows for a graduated rather than binary description. A metaphor does not need to be either fully preserved or fully lost; it may be retained but reframed, partially reduced, or supplemented by explanatory language. In tourism translation, where clarity and attractiveness must coexist, these gradations are analytically indispensable.

3 Theoretical Background

Taken together, the literature suggests that metaphor translation in Jordanian tourist brochures should be read through three overlapping lenses. First, it must be read cognitively, because metaphor organizes the reader's conceptual access to Jordanian places, histories, and experiences. Second, it must be read culturally, because those metaphors carry local symbolic material that may be partly shared, partly unfamiliar, or strategically reframed in English. Third, it must be read critically as branding discourse, because brochures are not innocent records of place. They are curated promotional narratives in which translators may intensify, soften, simplify, or redirect meanings in order to align Jordan with global tourism imaginaries.

Therefore, this study combines Conceptual Metaphor Theory with Newmark's procedure-oriented framework. The first allows the identification of underlying mappings; the second allows the classification of visible translational choices. Used together, they enable the move from broad conceptual domains to specific textual operations and then to the critical consequences of those operations. Such an approach is especially well-suited to brochure discourse, where the promotional function of metaphor is immediate, and the target text often reveals the tensions between cultural accountability and international readability.

4 Methodology

4.1 Research Design

A qualitative descriptive-analytical design was adopted because the object of study is not frequency alone but the discursive functioning of metaphor in tourism brochures. The aim was to determine how metaphorical expressions in Arabic tourism brochures were re-presented in English target texts and what those shifts revealed about cultural mediation, persuasive orientation, and destination branding. A strictly quantitative method would not have been sufficient because the principal unit of analysis is interpretive: a metaphor must be read in relation to its local context, its conceptual domain, and its promotional task.

4.2 Corpus and Sampling

The corpus was built from official Jordanian tourism brochures available on the Jordan Tourism Board website in Arabic with corresponding English translations (Jordan Tourism Board). Following the logic of purposive sampling, brochure passages were selected for their salient metaphorical framing rather than for statistical randomness. Twenty metaphor-rich excerpts were extracted from materials on heritage tourism, natural landscapes, religious tourism, wellness tourism, ecology, Bedouin culture, and family travel. The selection was guided by two criteria. First, the metaphor had to play a visible descriptive or persuasive role in the Arabic text. Second, an English rendering had to be available so that the source and target versions could be examined comparatively. Therefore, the selection focuses on brochures that contain rich cultural references, descriptive language, and promotional metaphors, allowing the study to examine how linguistic and cultural elements are conveyed in translation. By balancing the original texts with their translated versions, the data collection

process provides a reliable basis for evaluating translation strategies, cultural representation, and potential shifts in meaning across languages.

4.3 Analytical Procedure

The analysis proceeded in four stages. First, each Arabic excerpt was read closely in order to identify explicit and implicit metaphorical expressions. Second, the dominant source and target domains were determined following the logic of Conceptual Metaphor Theory. Thus, expressions were grouped under larger conceptual patterns such as PLACE AS TREASURE, LANDSCAPE AS SANCTUARY, HISTORY AS LIVING PRESENCE, TRAVEL AS TIME MOVEMENT, and CULTURE AS EXPERIENCE. Third, each English translation was compared with the Arabic source text to identify the type of translational intervention that had occurred. Fourth, the effect of that intervention was interpreted in relation to genre function and cultural representation.

The main classification model for the third stage was adapted from Newmark (1988). In practice, the following operational categories were used: (a) metaphor retention, where the image or a close equivalent was preserved; (b) metaphor substitution, where the source image was replaced by a more familiar or effective English image; (c) metaphor amplification, where a new or stronger metaphorical frame was inserted in the target text; (d) paraphrase or explicitation, where figurative density was reduced in favor of direct explanation; and (e) reduction or partial omission, where the metaphorical element was weakened or removed. These categories were used because they made the actual translational tendencies in the corpus visible while remaining compatible with Newmark's broader procedure-based framework.

4.4 Validity and scope

The aim of the study was interpretive. Therefore, it is not claimed that all metaphors in Jordanian tourism brochures have been captured, nor that a single procedure can fully account for every instance. However, the selected corpus is sufficient to reveal recurrent patterns and to support a critical reading of how Jordan is reframed for English-speaking audiences. The method is also strengthened by triangulation across theory: metaphor identification was guided by Conceptual Metaphor Theory, procedural classification was informed by Newmark, and interpretive evaluation was anchored in tourism translation scholarship that treats translators as cultural mediators rather than neutral transmitters (Durán Muñoz, 2011; Sulaiman, 2016; Alangari, 2022).

The study remains limited in two respects. First, the analysis focuses on brochure discourse and does not extend to audiovisual, social-media, or on-site tourism texts. Second, reception data from actual tourists was not collected. The findings, therefore, concern textual strategy rather than measurable tourist response. Even so, the selected method allows for a detailed account of how metaphor translation operates in one of the most influential genres through which Jordan is narrated internationally.

4.5 Limitations of the study

This study examined a specific sample of twenty Jordanian tourist brochures, so the findings apply only to these texts. It also only considers translation between Arabic and English, excluding other languages that might be used in international tourism communication. Additionally, the focus is solely on analyzing brochures, not other promotional materials like websites or advertisements.

5 Discussion and Findings

5.1 Overview of the metaphorical profile

The analysis shows that metaphor is not peripheral in Jordanian brochure discourse. It is repeatedly used to turn sites, landscapes, and cultural experiences into condensed symbolic propositions that can be quickly consumed by prospective tourists. Across the twenty excerpts, four broad conceptual clusters emerged as dominant. First, Jordan is framed as a treasure, an archive, and a living history. Second, its landscapes are framed as a sanctuary, cosmos, and ecological refuge. Third, movement through Jordan is framed as travel through sacred or historical time. Fourth, Jordanian culture is framed as immersion, hospitality, and participatory experience. These clusters confirm that brochure language is designed not simply to identify tourist sites but to narrate Jordan as emotionally accessible, historically deep, and symbolically rich. The dominant clusters identified in the corpus are summarized in Table 1.

This finding is consistent with the literature on tourism discourse, which has long shown that destinations are marketed through affective and identity-laden language rather than through neutral description (Kelly, 1998; Sulaiman, 2016; Nasution & Kharisma, 2024). At the same time, the Jordanian data display a notable density of

religious, historical, and environmental imagery. This is not surprising. Jordanian tourism promotion must market a destination that is simultaneously archaeological, biblical, Islamic, desert, ecological, and family-oriented. Metaphor serves as the mechanism through which these multiple dimensions are compressed into memorable formulations.

However, the most significant finding lies not in the use of metaphor alone, but in what happens when the brochures are translated into English. The target texts do not merely transfer existing metaphors. In many cases, they reselect the symbolic center of the source text. Some metaphors are preserved almost directly. Others are softened through explanation. In several cases, new metaphors are introduced in English, sometimes with stronger promotional force than the Arabic wording itself. Translation is therefore shown to operate here as re-framing rather than as passive transfer.

Table 1: Dominant conceptual clusters in the corpus

Conceptual cluster	Representative metaphors	Dominant procedures	Critical implication
Jordan as a treasure and living history	rediscovered treasure; living history book; open historical archive	Retention: mild amplification	Heritage value is preserved but often made more globally marketable.
Landscape as sanctuary and cosmos	healing sanctuary; cosmic landscape; nature's cathedrals; biodiversity arks	Amplification; cultural substitution	Environmental sites are sacralized and spectacularized for English readers.
Travel as a sacred or historical movement	ancient highways; sacred timeline; divine testimony	Retention; substitution; amplification	Geography is converted into chronology and spiritual witness.
Culture as an immersive experience	family paradise; cultural playground; time travel	Promotional adaptation; explicitation.	Local culture is individualised as a pleasurable transformation.

5.2 Jordan as treasure, archive, and living history

A primary dominant pattern is to present Jordanian heritage sites as both treasures and living, accessible histories. Petra is repeatedly depicted as a rediscovered gem or precious jewel, while Jerash and related archaeological sites are portrayed as living history or as an open historical record. These metaphors serve two purposes. They immediately assign value, and they suggest discoverability. The tourist is positioned not just as a visitor but as an interpreter, witness, or explorer.

In several of the analyzed examples, this metaphorical framing was broadly retained in English. The rendering of Petra as treasure, for instance, preserves the evaluative orientation of the source text while also fitting a widely recognizable tourism idiom. The same can be said for cases in which Jerash or other heritage sites are presented as "living history" or as an "open book" of the past. Here, metaphor retention was possible because the source mappings already had a high degree of international intelligibility. Treasure and book metaphors draw on conceptual resources that travel relatively well across cultures. Their preservation also supports what Chita and Stavrou (2020) describe as translation through overlapping semantic association rather than through strictly local symbolism.

Yet even within this category, the English versions frequently intensify the promotional immediacy of the source text. Where the Arabic source may emphasize continuity between past and present, the English text sometimes shifts toward a more dramatic experiential frame. History is not simply present; it is made to breathe, speak, emerge, or unfold for the traveller. The target text, therefore, does more than preserve a metaphor. It often activates it more explicitly. This tendency reflects the operative character of brochure translation. If the English version is written for readers who may know little about Jordanian history, metaphor becomes a fast route to emotional orientation.

A critical point must be stressed here. The intensification of heritage metaphors is not always culturally neutral. When a site is framed in English through globally marketable formulas such as *treasure, timeless wonder, or living history*, interpretive access is certainly increased. However, historical specificity may also be smoothed out. The site begins to resemble a familiar international tourism script. What is gained is legibility. What may be lost is the particularity of the local symbolic texture. This tension lies at the heart of tourism translation more generally: readability is secured through semiotic simplification, but simplification can also flatten difference (Durán Muñoz, 2011; Sulaiman, 2016).

5.3 Landscape as sanctuary and cosmos

A second conceptual cluster concerns Jordan's natural sites. The Dead Sea, Wadi Rum, reserves, canyons, and coral zones are not described only in geographical terms. They are metaphorically transformed into healing sanctuaries, cosmic landscapes, biodiversity arks, and ancient highways. This cluster is especially revealing because it shows how tourism discourse moves from description to experiential staging.

The Dead Sea provides a clear example. In the Arabic material, its physical properties and therapeutic resources are foregrounded, but the English version often intensifies that descriptive base through the language of sanctuary, refuge, and healing haven. The conceptual shift is subtle but important. Mineral richness becomes not merely a fact but an atmosphere of restoration. The site is thus repositioned within global wellness discourse. Such a strategy is highly effective in promotional terms, but it also shows that translation can import additional market-oriented framing beyond what is explicitly stated in the source text. This finding resonates with Alhaj's (2024) broader claim that tourism translation increasingly operates within marketized and technologically responsive environments in which efficiency and audience alignment strongly influence output.

Wadi Rum offers an even stronger case of metaphorical amplification. The Arabic descriptions often emphasize rock formations, silence, or desert experience. In English, these may be reframed as cosmic, cinematic, or even otherworldly. Such translation choices are not arbitrary. Wadi Rum is globally recognizable partly because it has been associated with filmic and extraterrestrial imagery. By drawing on that reservoir, the target text inserts the site into a transnational visual vocabulary. It may therefore become more accessible to the international tourist, but it is also partly detached from its local discursive environment and repositioned within global spectacle culture.

This pattern reveals how translation may redirect environmental discourse through culturally powerful target-language symbols. The result is not necessarily a distortion. In some cases, the English image succeeds precisely because it captures the reverential attitude already implicit in the Arabic source. In general, the landscape begins to speak through metaphors that belong more fully to dominant interpretive repertoires. What is being marketed, then, is the Jordanian nature as re-authored through globally circulating images of refuge and sublime spectacle.

5.4 Movement through Jordan as sacred and historical time

A third major finding concerns the metaphorization of mobility. In the brochures, movement across Jordan is narrated as more than spatial travel. It becomes a travel through sacred time, historical continuity, and spiritual testimony. The examples concerning the King's Highway, migration routes, Mount Nebo, water miracles, and cave sites are particularly important because they show how geography is narratively converted into chronology.

This pattern is conceptually coherent. Tourism itself is structurally linked to the journey metaphor, and travel writing has long organized experience through movement, discovery, and transformation (Cronin, 2013). In the Jordanian data, however, the journey frame becomes culturally denser. Roads do not merely connect locations; they connect eras, memories, and layers of civilisation. Springs and caves are not only natural features; they become signs, testimony, and sacred stations. Such mappings are central to the persuasive power of Jordan's religious and heritage tourism discourse because they allow the reader to imagine travel as an encounter with living sacred history.

From a translation perspective, this cluster combines retention, substitution, and creation. The underlying conceptual mapping of history as a journey or a place as a sacred sign is often preserved. Yet the English text frequently chooses a different image to intensify its rhetorical impact. In this respect, the data support Schäffner's (2004) argument that metaphor translation must be assessed at both conceptual and linguistic levels. A target expression may change substantially at the linguistic surface while still reproducing the broader conceptual structure. What changes is the rhetorical packaging of that structure.

5.5 Culture as an immersive experience, family intimacy, and playful encounter

The fourth conceptual cluster concerns the human experience of Jordan rather than its monuments or landscapes alone. Here, Jordan is framed as a family paradise, a cultural playground, or a place where visitors can step back in time and encounter Bedouin life firsthand. These examples are especially revealing because they sit at the intersection of culture, pedagogy, leisure, and lifestyle branding.

The family and experience-oriented metaphors often show the strongest degree of domestication. Expressions that are implicit or contextually embedded in the Arabic source are sometimes rendered in English through highly recognizable tourism formulas: paradise, immersive journey, or unforgettable experience. These formulations align the text with international brochure conventions, in which the destination must appear to be participatory, safe, and emotionally rewarding. Nasution and Kharisma (2024) found similar tendencies in tourism brochure translation, where equivalence, adaptation, and modulation were repeatedly used to maintain naturalness and accessibility.

Examples of Bedouin life are especially significant. In Arabic, experiential participation may be invited through cultural cues tied to hospitality and desert life. In English, that invitation may be reformulated as time travel or as the release of an inner Bedouin spirit. The shift is rhetorically effective because it converts cultural encounters into a personalized transformative narrative.

These examples support a broader conclusion: culture in the English brochures is frequently translated through metaphors that individualize the tourism experience. For ease of comparison, the twenty analysed cases are synthesised in Table 2.

Table 2: Analytical map of the twenty brochure examples

No.	**Site/theme**	**Conceptual metaphor**	**Dominant strategy**	**Observed effect**
1	Petra	Heritage fusion/treasure	Retention with mild amplification	Petra is presented as a layered cultural monument whose historical richness remains attractive in English.
2	Dead Sea	Healing sanctuary	Amplification	Wellness properties are reframed as a restorative experience rather than only a descriptive fact.
3	Wadi Rum	Cosmic landscape	Amplification	Desert vastness is intensified into an otherworldly image for global audiences.
4	Jordan (family travel)	Family paradise	Substitution / promotional adaptation	The destination is made immediately legible within family-tourism discourse.
5	Jerash	Living history book	Retention	Historical continuity is preserved through an accessible metaphor of readability.
6	Desert castles	Time machines	Creative substitution	Archaeological distance is converted into experiential immediacy.
7	Nature reserves	Biodiversity arks	Cultural substitution	Ecological protection is moralized through a high-value symbolic frame.
8	Petra	Rediscovered treasure	Retention	Value, rarity, and discovery are maintained with a strong promotional effect.
9	Wadi Rum	Cinematic landscape	Amplification	The site is aligned with global visual culture and spectacle.
10	Nature / local environment	Living classroom	Amplification	Landscape is reframed as a participatory learning experience.
11	Wadi Mujib / canyons	Nature's cathedrals	Cultural substitution	Vertical grandeur is translated through sacralized English imagery.
12	Bird migration routes	Ancient highways	Retention with explicitation	Movement is made historically intelligible and easy to visualize.
13	Bedouin life	Time travel	Amplification	Cultural encounter is personalized as transformation and immersion.
14	Coral reefs	Underwater cities	Retention	Marine complexity is simplified into a vivid urban metaphor.
15	Jordan / religious heritage	Living Bible	Creative amplification	Biblical resonance is made explicit for international religious tourism.
16	Archaeological / pilgrimage sites	Open-air sanctuaries	Substitution	Site reverence is clarified through a broadly accessible sacred frame.
17	King's Highway	Sacred timeline	Amplification	Road travel is turned into movement through holy and historical memory.
18	Sacred springs/water	Divine testimony	Amplification	Miracle narratives are intensified into evidentiary sacred discourse.
19	Caves	Spiritual wombs	Creative substitution	Withdrawal and worship are reframed as renewal and rebirth.
20	Jordanian culture	Cultural playground	Promotional adaptation	Cultural diversity is packaged as an enjoyable and participatory experience.

Table 2 reveals that, when analyzing the twenty excerpts collectively, five common strategies emerge. The first is metaphor retention, used when the source image was already vivid and impactful in English. Common examples include treasure, living history, sanctuary, and journey metaphors. This approach works best when the original metaphors are broadly understood across diverse cultures or can be easily inferred from context.

Second, metaphor amplification appeared frequently. In these cases, the English translation intensified the metaphorical force of the source text or inserted a stronger image than the Arabic original made explicit. Wadi Rum's cinematic and cosmic framings, as well as some of the spiritual and ecological examples, belong here. Amplification made the target text more vivid and marketable, but it also made the translator's co-authorial role more visible.

Third, cultural substitution was used where a direct transfer might have been opaque or weak. Metaphors such as ark, cathedral, or playground provide target readers with faster interpretive access, but they do so by drawing on symbolic resources that are not fully native to the Arabic source wording. This strategy confirms that brochure translation often privileges functional resonance over lexical correspondence.

Fourth, paraphrases and explicitation were used to secure clarity where metaphorical density risked obscurity. This strategy is common in tourism translation because overly culture-bound imagery can hinder immediate comprehension. However, repeated explicitation may reduce the symbolic richness of the source text and turn metaphor into information.

Fifth, selective reduction occurred when the metaphor could not be sustained efficiently or when the translator seemed to prefer smoother promotional prose. Reduction is less spectacular than substitution, but its cumulative effect is significant because it gradually removes layers of local imagery from the translated text.

Taken together, these strategies show that metaphor translation in the brochures is governed by a dual imperative: the English text must remain persuasive and culturally manageable. It follows that the best criterion of success is not literal sameness, but the balance achieved between source-culture density and target-reader accessibility. The problem is that this balance is unstable. Whenever accessibility is strongly prioritized, symbolic flattening becomes possible. Whenever cultural density is strongly preserved, opacity becomes possible. The translator's work consists of managing that instability, not eliminating it.

5.6 Critical implications

A successful tourism translator needs to expand their knowledge beyond language skills. To excel professionally, they must grasp the social and technical contexts of the text. This deep understanding becomes especially crucial when dealing with concepts and terms that embody the culture and social nuances of a specific society. Furthermore, the translation of metaphors in Jordanian tourist brochures should be understood as a form of image management. What is managed is not only linguistic meaning but the international readability of Jordan itself. The translator decides, explicitly or implicitly, whether Jordan will appear ancient or contemporary, mystical or approachable, scriptural or experiential, distinctively local or globally familiar. Because brochures are short, such decisions are made under pressure; metaphor becomes one of the fastest instruments through which those choices are made.

This observation aligns with studies that treat tourist translation as cultural mediation rather than simple transfer (Durán Muñoz, 2011; Alangari, 2022). It also supports the argument that tourism translation often approaches transcreation when promotional effectiveness becomes central (Sulaiman, 2016). In the Jordanian corpus, the English text is repeatedly shown to mediate, repackage, and at times strategically universalize the source discourse. That does not mean that the translations fail. On the contrary, many of them are rhetorically effective. The critical issue is that effectiveness is achieved through selective reconfiguration.

6 Conclusion

This study set out to examine how conceptual metaphors are translated from Arabic into English in Jordanian tourist brochures and to determine what those choices reveal about tourism discourse, cultural mediation, and destination branding. It has been shown that metaphor is central to the brochure genre because it condenses value, emotion, and identity into highly portable textual forms. Jordan is framed through recurring conceptual patterns of treasure, living history, sanctuary, sacred journey, and immersive cultural experience.

These patterns are not incidental; they provide the symbolic architecture through which the destination is marketed.

It has also been shown that the English translations do not simply transmit those metaphors. They frequently reshape them through retention, amplification, substitution, explicitation, and selective reduction. In many cases, the broader conceptual frame remains stable while the linguistic image is recalibrated for international readability and persuasive force. In other cases, the English text becomes more overtly promotional than the Arabic source, introducing metaphors that align Jordan with globally recognizable tourism imaginaries such as healing sanctuary, cinematic landscape, cultural playground, or open-air spirituality.

The main critical conclusion is therefore that metaphor translation in Jordanian tourism discourse should be understood as culturally consequential re-narration. The translator is positioned not only as a language specialist, but also as a mediator of symbolic value and a participant in destination-image construction. This role carries responsibility. If source-text imagery is excessively normalized, the local symbolic texture of Jordan may be diluted. If it is transferred too rigidly, the target text may lose persuasive immediacy. A publishable and professionally responsible translation practice must therefore balance cultural density with reader accessibility rather than sacrificing one to the other.

Further research would benefit from expanding the corpus to include digital campaigns, social media tourism content, multilingual reception data, and comparative studies across Arab destinations. Even within its present scope, however, the study demonstrates that translating metaphors in tourist brochures is not a minor stylistic problem. It is one of the principal sites at which language, culture, commerce, and national representation intersect.

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7 Reference

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