

FORMATION CAUSES AND FUNCTIONS OF NEW LEXICAL UNITS IN THE ERA OF DIGITAL TOURISM (ON THE EXAMPLES OF E-VISA, E-PASSPORT, AND VIRTUAL TOUR)**Kodirov Sobirjon Solijon ugli,**University of Economy and Pedagogy, Uzbekistan,
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Annotation. In this article, the linguistic features, formation mechanisms, and communicative functions of new lexical units that have emerged in English and Uzbek as a result of the development of digital tourism are analyzed. The socio-technological factors that have led to the appearance of terms such as e-visa, e-passport, and virtual tour are examined. Furthermore, the study provides a scholarly explanation of how the terminological system of tourism discourse has expanded during the process of digital transformation and elucidates the role of neologisms in international communication, marketing, and the simplification of services.

Keywords. Neologisms, digital tourism, formation of new lexical units, tourism discourse, e-visa and e-passport terms, virtual tour, lexical innovation process, language and technology integration, cross-linguistic influence and adapted units, linguistic functions of digitalization.

Introduction. In recent years, particularly from the early stages of the 21st century, digital modernization in the tourism sector has been actively implemented. Online booking, electronic documents, remote services, and virtual experiences have become the new standard for tourism services. These processes directly affect the language system, accelerating the emergence of neologisms, semi-terms, and hybrid units representing digital services.

From a linguistic perspective, neologisms reflect innovations in social life. Digital tourism is a sector shaped by the application of new information and communication technologies, in which numerous new lexical units—such as e-visa, e-passport, virtual tour, online check-in, travel app, and digital guide—are widely used. Although these terms were initially coined in English, they are now actively used in many other languages, including Uzbek. The main aim of this article is to analyze, from a linguistic standpoint, the causes and functions of new lexical units that have emerged in the era of digital tourism.

Digital tourism refers to a complex system encompassing the planning, execution, and management of tourism services through digital technologies. It not only simplifies individual travel experiences but also establishes new communicative and operational models across the tourism sector.

Digital tourism comprises the following key components:

Online services — platforms that facilitate travel planning, booking, and introduction to available services (e.g., Booking.com, Airbnb);

Mobile platforms — enabling users to access services quickly via smartphones or tablets;

Artificial intelligence-based services — automated guides, personalized recommendations, AI chatbots;

Virtual and augmented reality (VR/AR) — providing remote tours of museums, landscapes, and urban environments as virtual experiences;

Electronic identification systems — including e-passports, e-visas, and biometric data-based fast and secure identification.

Moreover, digital tourism directly influences linguistic processes. Terms and abbreviations associated with new technologies and services enter the language, generating new neologisms within tourism discourse. Units such as e-visa, e-passport, and virtual tour serve to concisely and precisely represent technological innovations. Simultaneously, these terms, primarily coined in English, are also widely used in Uzbek, facilitating international communication. Consequently, digital tourism not only transforms service systems but also stimulates innovative processes in the semantic and lexical structure of language.

Conceptual Framework. The rapid development of digital tourism activates a range of new linguistic processes and significantly enriches the lexical composition of tourism discourse. One of the primary tendencies observed is the transfer of technological terminology into the domain of tourism vocabulary. As tourism activities undergo digital transformation, technology-related terms are used in new contexts, giving rise to hybrid semantic units. For instance, e-ticket, digital concierge, AI tour guide, and mobile check-in were originally associated with the technological sphere, yet they have now become integral components of contemporary tourism practice. These lexical units not only denote new types of services but also help conceptualize the evolving model of tourist experiences.

A second major process concerns the strengthening of English as a dominant global linguistic source. Since the majority of innovative technologies, mobile applications, digital services, and tourism platforms are initially developed in English, newly emerging concepts are typically coined in English as well. As a result, such lexical items enter the Uzbek language directly, with minimal adaptation. Terms like virtual tour, online check-in, and smart tourism are commonly used without translation, which ensures their universality and communicative transparency. This pattern reflects increasing language contact and further consolidates the role of English as a global lingua franca.

The third process can be explained through the linguistic principle of economy. Digital tourism requires fast, precise, and concise communication, which drives the frequent use of short forms, abbreviations, and prefixed constructions. Highly productive prefixes such as e-, smart-, and eco- are actively employed to create new tourism-related terms, including e-visa, smart tourism, and eco-travel. These units are valued for conveying substantial semantic meaning in compact form, facilitating ease of comprehension in transnational communication, and maintaining structural efficiency.

Overall, the advancement of digital tourism accelerates lexical renewal, borrowing, abbreviation, and semantic expansion within the language system. These processes clearly reflect the ongoing integration between the tourism sector and modern communication practices.

Methodology. The emergence of new terms and neologisms in the context of digital tourism is not a random phenomenon; rather, it develops in response to specific social, technological, and communicative needs. Transformations occurring within the global tourism industry also stimulate changes in the linguistic system, leading to the active appearance of new words, abbreviations, and hybrid units. This section provides a scholarly analysis of the key factors influencing the formation of new lexical items.

Technological innovations. The rapid development of information and communication technologies has transformed nearly all stages of the travel process. Each new service type, electronic document, mobile platform, or digital identification system introduces new terminology into the language. Units such as e-visa (electronic visa), e-passport (biometric electronic passport), QR-ticket (QR-coded ticket), and digital boarding pass represent the direct linguistic reflections of technological innovations. This process demonstrates the sensitivity of language to external factors, particularly to advancements in technical fields. When an

innovative service is introduced, the need to name it arises, and as a result, a new lexical unit is formed.

Global standardization. Modern tourism infrastructure operates as a globally interconnected system. The use of unified standard terminology across airlines, airports, hotels, and online booking platforms is essential for ensuring communicative clarity. Due to global standardization, terms such as online check-in, boarding pass, e-ticket, and non-refundable booking are used in nearly identical forms across different languages. Such universal terms help to:

reduce informational ambiguity,
increase the efficiency of services,
minimize language barriers between speakers of different cultures.

Consequently, English-based terminology increasingly becomes established as the global standard in the international tourism arena.

Economic and social processes. The expansion of the tourism industry, diversification of services, and growing consumer demand intensify the need to name new concepts. This process is directly linked to socio-economic developments. For example, during the COVID-19 pandemic, heightened health requirements led to the rapid spread of terms such as contactless tourism, travel bubble, health pass, and vaccination certificate. These lexical units emerged as linguistic expressions of new global needs. As economic activity grows, service diversification accelerates, which in turn increases the linguistic demand for new nomenclature.

Socio-cultural factors. The formation of digital culture and the increasing prevalence of virtual experiences constitute another significant driver of new lexical creation. As virtual tours, digital heritage formats, and online excursions become more widespread, terms such as virtual tour, 3D heritage museum, digital storytelling, and virtual destination have become active elements of tourism discourse. These units reflect society's growing inclination toward digital cultural experiences and the emerging processes of reinterpreting cultural heritage in new, technologically mediated formats.

Findings. The terms widely used in contemporary tourism practices—e-visa, e-passport, and virtual tour—represent key linguistic units that reflect the integration of digital technologies into the tourism sector. These terms clearly demonstrate several linguistic features, including the global dominance of the English language, the productivity of technology-related prefixes, semantic expansion processes, and patterns of translation and adaptation. The linguistic characteristics of these units are discussed in detail below.

E-visa is a shortened form of “electronic visa” and functions as a universal term widely used in the international tourism system. Its linguistic structure contains several important features:

The prefix e- functions as a reduced form of “electronic” and is highly productive in modern English. It is actively used to generate terms associated with technological processes: e-commerce, e-learning, e-ticket, e-signature, and others. In tourism discourse, this prefix serves as a semantic marker indicating digitalization.

In Uzbek, the form e-visa is used almost without modification. This linguistic phenomenon reflects the dominant role of English as a global source of terminology in tourism technologies. The use of the term without translation preserves its universal function.

Syntactic compactness. The term is short, precise, and free from redundant structural elements. According to the principle of linguistic economy, expressing a multi-step process through a minimal unit increases communicative efficiency.

Adapted Uzbek variants include: e-viza, elektron viza.

Although semantically equivalent, the form e-viza is more frequently used in technical and official documents.

E-passport is an electronic identification document containing biometric data and constitutes an important element of digital tourism infrastructure. Its linguistic features can be described as follows:

The lexeme “passport” is already assimilated into Uzbek as “pasport”. It conforms to the phonetic and morphological norms of Uzbek, which makes the localization of e-passport relatively straightforward.

The prefix e- functions as a marker of digital format, indicating not simply a change from paper to electronic form, but the document’s technological essence: biometric data, embedded chip, digital signature, and electronic verification.

Semantic innovation. While a traditional passport represents a physical identification document, an e-passport is primarily understood as a data-based identity record. Its semantic field is enriched with technical, security-related, and digital identification meanings.

Uzbek usage includes: e-pasport, elektron pasport.

Virtual tour refers to a remote exploratory experience created using VR/AR technologies, allowing users to engage with a tourist site through digital visualization or interactive navigation.

From a linguistic perspective, it demonstrates the following:

A compound unit (multi-component term). Formed from “virtual” + “tour,” both free lexical items that acquire new terminological meaning when combined.

Technical semantic expansion. The word “virtual” originally related to computer environments and simulations. Within tourism, it now denotes digitally generated impressions that approximate real physical experiences.

Semiotic characteristics. A virtual tour represents not the physical object itself but its digital representation. The semantic essence of this term lies in experiences constructed through signs, models, and visual simulations.

Uzbek equivalents include: virtual tur, masofaviy sayohat, virtual ekskursiya.

Although semantically appropriate, the international form virtual tour remains the most widely used.

Discussion and Conclusion. In the context of digital tourism, the language system is rapidly renewing itself and adapting to emerging communicative needs. Terms such as e-visa, e-passport, and virtual tour have formed as a direct linguistic reflection of digitalization processes, becoming key neologisms that characterize the technological nature of modern tourism. Their emergence has been shaped by several significant factors, including globalization, the advancement of information and communication technologies, increasing economic demand, and the growing need for communicative efficiency.

The functional characteristics of these terms manifest in their ability to ensure precision in information transmission, promote unified standards in international communication, enhance the marketing value of tourism services, simplify operational procedures, and comply with the principles of linguistic economy. This process is relevant for both English and Uzbek, strengthening lexical exchange between the two languages. Due to the global status of English as a primary linguistic source, many neologisms enter Uzbek through borrowing or adaptation.

The expansion of digital-tourism-related terminology marks an innovative stage in the evolutionary development of language, contributing to the formation of a new layer within contemporary linguistic culture. The formation of such terms continues to evolve in both

languages, reflecting ongoing technological progress and the transformation of communication practices within the tourism sector.

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