

HOW MULTILINGUALISM DRIVES INTERNATIONAL TRADE (USING THE EXAMPLE OF RUSSIAN TOURISM IN DUBAI)

Hakemi Sarra, *Research Associate, Master Graduate*
CSA Research
 (Algeria, Sidi Bel Abbes)

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Abstract. *In this article we examine how multilingualism is more than means of communication but an engine that pushes trade forward by reducing transaction costs, or costs of miscommunication, increasing the consumer's trust, and feelings of inclusion. It serves as means of market access for businesses looking to expand globally and locally. Russian speaking tourists in Dubai are the case study of this research, focusing on the language inclusive policies influence on visitors experience. The research showcases the insights from tourism market reports, trade, and industry practices to develop a practical framework that links linguistic touchpoints to measurable economical outcomes. The frameworks are complemented with a dataset and visuals. We complement the framework with an illustrative dataset and two visualizations that demonstrate how Russian arrival and spending composition could evolve when Russian-language services are scaled. The findings suggest that multilingual strategies (spanning signage, staffing, digital interfaces, financial services, and after-sale care) can meaningfully boost both visitor satisfaction and cross-border commerce. The article concludes with an actionable KPI matrix and policy recommendations that destinations and firms can adapt to strengthen resilience and growth in a volatile macro-environment.*

Keywords: *multilingualism, international trade, economy, Russian market, Dubai, services marketing.*

Language exceeds the role of communication, in international markets it is what stands between companies and clients trust and retention, global success, contract clarity, cost effective. Same as the tourism industry, language is experienced thought hundreds of micro encounters from airport processing, transportation, check-in, medical assistance, and digital payment. Each encounter can hinder or smooth the pathway to consumption and repeat visitors.

Dubai offers a compelling environment for studying multilingualism at a large scale. It is well known the adoption of English by the Emirates, and now they are expanding to Russian by adding staffing, targeted marketing, customer support, website translation, signs, and menus. This happened after the surge of Russian tourists. This paper focuses on the mechanisms how language inclusion translates into trade outcomes, with the Russian segment as an illustrative case.

We make three contributions. First, we propose a conceptual pathway connecting language access to measurable commercial results. Second, we translate the pathway into an operational KPI framework for firms and destination managers.

Third, we present an applied case that synthesizes policies and practices visible in Dubai.

Conceptual Framework and Method

We adapt a services-economics perspective in which multilingualism reduces information asymmetry and perceived risk. This is displayed as: (i) higher conversion (visitors complete purchases they would otherwise abandon), (ii) larger baskets (they cross- buy and up-sale), (iii) and increased repeat visitation and advocacy [1].

The method is a structured narrative synthesis supported by an illustrative dataset. We map language touchpoints across the tourism value chain and pin-points plausible key performance indicators (KPIs). After we provide stylized figures to show how the composition of spending might shift as language access improves [2, 3].

Evidence is integrated in the order of operational decisions: target market profiling, applying policy tools, firm-levers, firm-level interventions, and risk management. References are cited in the order they appear in the text, in line with editorial requirements.

Literature Snapshot: Language and Trade

A long pattern in trade and market has linked language inclusion and businesses communi-

cating in the same language by reducing transaction costs and increasing trust [1] (HSBC incurred a loss of \$10 million due to a mistranslated slogan during its rebranding campaign [4]). In tourism specifically language access has been associated with higher length of stay, greater on-site spending, and improved review ratings [6]. Digital interfaces; websites, apps, e-commerce platforms; magnify these effects by steering search and choices in visitors' native language [7].

Destination management organization (DMOs) increasingly treat language services as a marketing investment rather than a compliance cost. When combined with targeted campaigns and tailored product design, multilingualism acts as a demand amplifier that unlocks high-value niches such as a medical tourism and real estate scouting [2, 7].

Case Context: Russian- Speaking Travelers in Dubai

Russian-speaking visitors display distinct preferences; family-oriented accommodations, shopping, medical and wellness add-ons, and concierge-mediated excursions. Currency fluctuations and air connectivity constraints shape seasonality, but language access consistently moderates uncertainty at every step of the journey [2].

Language inclusion interacted with three policies: (1) visa and facilitation measures that simplified entry; (2) marketing and trade events elevating Russian language assets, and (3) rapid deployment of Russian content in official portals, transports systems, and major venues. The net effect is a more predictable experience that supports higher levels of consumptions [2, 3].

Operational Touchpoints and Expected Effects

Table 1. Russian-language touchpoints across the tourism value chain (author's compilation)

Stage	Russian touchpoints	Expected effect	Illustrative KPI	Implementation notes
Pre-trip search and planning	Localized landing pages; Russian SEO/SEM; chat support	Higher click-through and intent	CTR; session duration; lead-to-booking percentage	Maintain tone and cultural cues
Booking	OTA listings in Russian; payment UX; terms translated	Higher conversion; fewer cancellations	Conversion rate; cancellation rate	Human-reviewed T&Cs [6]
Arrival and mobility	Airport signage; ride-hailing UI; safety notices	Lower anxiety; faster movement	Wayfinding time; app MAU	Consistency across operators
Accommodation	Check-in scripts; room directories; TV UI	Smoother onboarding; upsell uptake	Check-in time; ancillary revenue	Train front-desk phrases
Shopping and dining	Menus; mall signage; sales scripts	Larger baskets; higher dwell time	AOV; dwell time; receipt count	Avoid literal menu pitfalls
Real estate and services	Bilingual agents; contract summaries	Fewer disputes; faster deal closure	Close time; return visits	Legal review in both languages
After-sales and loyalty	Russian CRM flows; NPS surveys	Retention; advocacy	Repeat rate; NPS	Respect data-privacy norms

Staffing and Training

Frontline staff mediate the basis of trust from clients. Role specific scripts and cheat sheets in Russian reduce the awkward pauses, give comfort, enable direct smooth communication. Training should prioritize high-frequency interactions, directions, payment, refunds, and problem resolution; reinforced with microlearning and QA spot checks. Also, it's important to hire bilingual or multilingual that can cover the Russian market [6].

Signage and Physical Environments

Multilingual signage at public spaces; airport exits, metro platforms, malls; creates confidence as visitors are able to navigate their surroundings independently. An example of this is the mall of the Emirates signs are in English Russian and Chinese.

Digital Interfaces and Payments

Payments necessitate special level of care: currency displays, refunds, chargeback notices. It should be explained and displayed in plain Russian, this allows reducing the support cost or the loss of deals. Apps and sites are often the only

contact level; thus, the full lifecycle of the purchases need to be fully localized to increase the completion rates [6].

Hospitality Revenue Management

Hotels that test Russian offers typically see better attachment rates and lower service friction at check-in. Language-inclusive prearrival messages improve the uptake of add-ons; airport transfer, spa, late checkouts [2, 5].

Retail and Luxury

Sales teams who have an access to Russian-language support can smoothly navigate sizing, warranties, and (VAT) refunds, which are often pain points that derail purchases. A clear plan for post-purchase care in Russian increases the retention of clients and creates repeat visitation.

Real Estate and Long-Stay Conversion

A subset of visitors explores property or long – stay alternatives. Contract clarity is paramount: bilingual side by side clauses, concise Russian summaries, glossaries accelerate decision-making and reduce disputes. It is also important for agents to include Russian in initial conversations to cover all important points or questions for a

quicker decision making while choosing estates to purchase [3].

Medical, Wellness, and Education

Complex, high-stakes services are the most language-sensitive. Bilingual consent forms, eligibility checklists, and appointment reminders. This isn't only ethical and inclusive but a practical trade practice as they prevent cancellations and complaints [0].

Marketing and Social Proof

Localized creative and social validation lower perceived risk (add examples of bad marketing). The message should blend aspiration with specifics: Addresses, time plans for transport, and prices in Russian Ruble to support mental accounting.

Measurement and Governance

Without measurement, language programs drift. A measurement governance framework directs teams and budgets allocations toward commercial goals through monthly KPI reviews, quarterly translation audits, and mystery- shopper protocols. Data should be segmented by language to surface heterogeneous effects [2, 5].

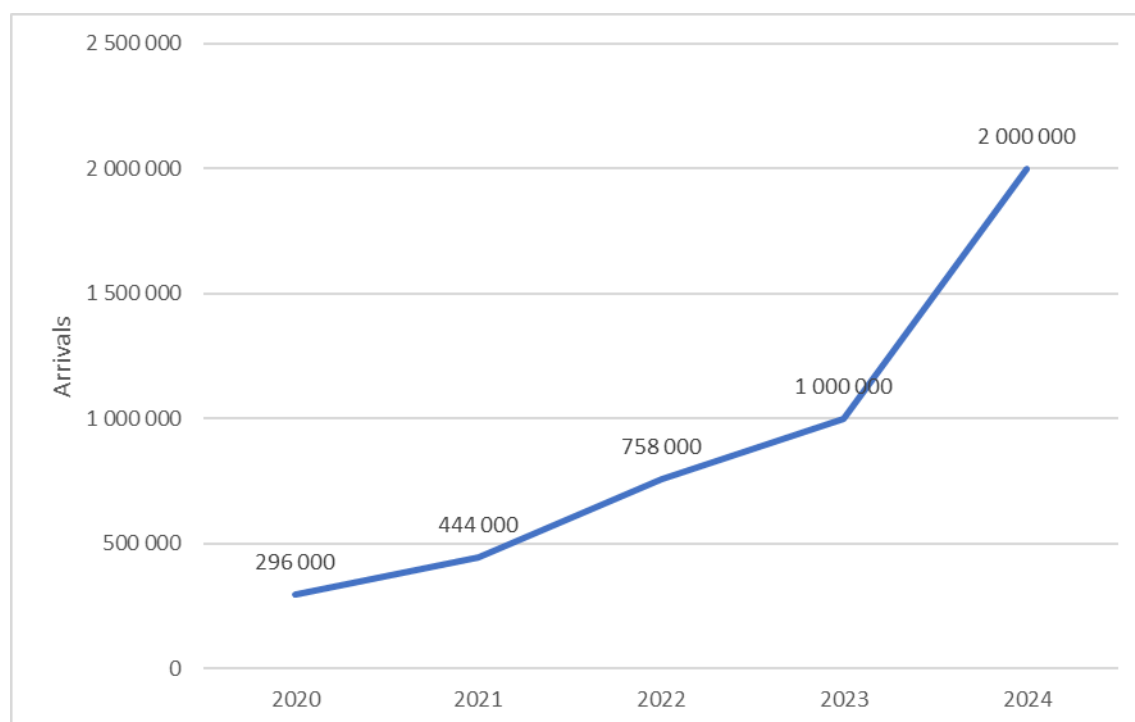


Fig. 1. Illustrative trend in Russian arrivals to Dubai, 2020-2024

Economic Mechanisms: From Language Access to Trade Uplift

Four mechanisms dominate the path from language access to trade outcomes. First, search-cost reduction: Russian language content improves discoverability and comprehension, pushing

more prospects into the consideration set [1]. Second, perceived-risk reduction: clear terms and customer reviews in Russian decrease uncertainty about product fit and post-sale support [5]. Third, friction removal: streamlined Russian UX during payment and delivery reduces abandonment.

Fourth, loyalty flywheels: satisfied visitors seed advocacy in Russian-language networks, lowering acquisition costs for the next cohort [6].

These mechanisms operate across sectors beyond tourism. Real estate pre-sales pipelines, health screening, and private education admissions all hinge on clarity, empathy, and predictable service recovery. Where regulatory complexity is high, the ROI of bilingual mediation is especially pronounced [3, 7].

Risk and Resilience Considerations

Macroeconomic volatility such as changes in energy prices and exchange-rate swings, along with air-capacity constraints, and geopolitical disruptions, can cause demand to fluctuate unpredictably. Language access is not a hedge against these shocks, but it moderates their commercial impact by preserving conversion rates among intent-rich travellers. Service continuity plans should include multilingual crisis messaging, refundable options, and clear rerouting instructions.

Compliance risks arise when translations lag law or policy changes, establishing an update cadence and legal review workflow reduces exposure. Finally, cultural risk from tone or imagery that fails to resonate, can be reduced by conducting pretests with native speakers and maintaining feedback loops from frontline teams [6].

KPI Framework

We propose a layered KPI framework. At the micro-level: (i) content quality (readability assessments, glossary comprehensiveness); (ii) interaction quality (first-contact resolution, average handle time in Russian); and (iii) conversion events by language segment. At the meso-level: metrics related to products and channels, such as attachment rates for add-ons and basket size, cancellations). At the macro-level: Revenue, margin, and repeat visit rates by segment [2, 5].

A practical rule: if a KPI matters for the business, track it by language segment. Over time, managers can run controlled rollouts of new Russians-language features and estimate uplift with

difference-in differences against comparable non-Russian cohorts.

Managerial Recommendations

- Prioritize high-friction journeys (payments, refunds, medical admissions) for first-wave localization.

- Create a bilingual glossary of regulated and high-liability terms; mandate its use across vendors.

- Deploy Russians-language QA: monthly audits of top pages, quarterly mystery shopping, and post-visit NPS in Russian.

- Bundle language access with promotions (e.g., Russian-language concierge upgrades) to accelerate trial and learning.

- Invest in staff microlearning and escalation playbooks; celebrate wins tied to language KPIs.

Limitations and Future Research

This analysis relies on a structured narrative and illustrative data rather than a causal identification strategy. Future work could combine natural experiments (e.g., staggered feature launches) with panel data to isolate language effects. Moreover, visitor heterogeneity within the Russian – speaking segment warrants deeper segmentations by purpose of trip, household composition, and digital literacy.

Comparative studies across destinations; such as multilingual rollouts targeting Chinese, German, or Spanish-speaking travelers; would help distinguish universal mechanisms from culture-specific nuances.

Conclusion

Multilingualism is commercially material design choice, not an afterthought. The Dubai Russian case illustrates that when language access is embedded throughout the journey from discovery to post-sales destinations unlock higher conversion, bigger baskets, and durable loyalty. Organizations that measure these effects and govern them as investments, rather than costs, are more likely to capture sustained gains in international trade.

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КАК МНОГОЯЗЫЧИЕ СТИМУЛИРУЕТ МЕЖДУНАРОДНУЮ ТОРГОВЛЮ (НА ПРИМЕРЕ РОССИЙСКОГО ТУРИЗМА В ДУБАЕ)

Хакеми Сарра, научный сотрудник, магистр
CSA Research
(Алжир, г. Сиди-Бель-Аббес)

Аннотация. В этой статье мы рассматриваем, как многоязычие является не просто средством коммуникации, но движущей силой, которая толкает торговлю вперед, снижая транзакционные издержки или затраты на неправильное общение, повышая доверие потребителей и чувства интеграции. Он служит средством доступа на рынок для предприятий, стремящихся к глобальному и локальному развитию. Русскоязычные туристы в Дубае являются тематическим исследованием этого исследования, в котором основное внимание уделяется влиянию языковой политики на опыт посетителей. Исследование демонстрирует выводы, сделанные на основе обзоров рынка туризма, практики торговли и индустрии для разработки практической основы, которая связывает лингвистические точки соприкосновения с измеряемыми экономическими результатами. Рамки дополняются набором данных и визуальных элементов. Мы дополняем структуру иллюстративным набором данных и двумя визуализациями, которые демонстрируют, как может измениться структура прибытия и расходов на русский язык при масштабировании русскоязычных услуг. Полученные результаты свидетельствуют о том, что многоязычные стратегии (охватывающие рекламу, кадры, цифровые интерфейсы, финансовые услуги и послепродажное обслуживание) могут значительно повысить как удовлетворенность посетителей, так и трансграничную торговлю. Статья завершается с практической матрицей KPI и политическими рекомендациями о том, что назначения и фирмы могут адаптироваться для укрепления устойчивости и роста в нестабильной макроокружающей среде.

Ключевые слова: многоязычие, международная торговля, экономика, российский рынок, Дубай, маркетинг услуг.