

Translations of volcanological terms: cross-cultural standards for teaching, communication, and reporting

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Received: 15 March 2017 / Accepted: 20 June 2017
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Abstract When teaching at a non-English language university, we often argue that because English is the international language, students need to become familiar with English terms, even if the bulk of the class is in the native language. However, to make the meaning of the terms clear, a translation into the native language is always useful. Correct translation of terminology is even more crucial for emergency managers and decision makers who can be confronted with a confusing and inconsistently applied mix of terminology. Thus, it is imperative to have a translation that appropriately converts the meaning of a term, while being grammatically and lexicologically correct, before the need for use. If terms are not consistently defined across all languages following industry standards and norms, what one person believes to be a *dog*, to another is a *cat*. However, definitions and translations of English scientific and technical terms are not always available, and language is constantly evolving. We live and work in an international world where English is the common language of multi-cultural exchange. As a result, while finding the correct

translation can be difficult because we are too used to the English language terms, translated equivalents that are available may not have been through the peer review process. We have explored this issue by discussing grammatically and lexicologically correct French, German, Icelandic, Indonesian, Italian, Portuguese, Russian, Spanish, and Japanese versions for terms involved in communicating effusive eruption intensity.

Keywords Volcanology · Communication · Teaching · Translation

Introduction

Due to the needs of internationalization and globalization in science and education (e.g., Knight 1994; Gacel-Ávila 2005), a lack of peer-reviewed, industry-standard term translation of formal nomenclature is becoming an increasing problem. This

Editorial responsibility: P-S Ross

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