

# A Study on Publicity Translation Strategies for the Global Expansion of Greater Bay Area Tourism Brands Empowered by Digital Communication

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**Abstract:** This study investigates the publicity translation practices of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macau Greater Bay Area (GBA) tourism brands from the perspective of digital communication. Guided by Skopos Theory (ST), Eco-translatology (ET), and International Communication Theory (ICT), the study adopted a qualitative research approach combining case study and textual analysis. Tourism publicity materials of four tourism organizations (e.g., Guangzhou Municipal Culture, Radio, Television and Tourism Bureau, Shenzhen Municipal Culture, Radio, Television, Tourism and Sports Bureau, Hong Kong Tourism Board, and Macau Government Tourism Office) were collected from their official websites and major social media platforms, including TikTok, YouTube, Instagram, and Facebook. Results indicate that while tourism organizations in the GBA have developed diverse digital communication platforms and channels to promote regional cultural and tourism resources, their publicity translations still encounter several deficiencies, such as rigid linguistic expression, inadequate handling of culture-specific terminology, limited recognition among international audiences, and insufficient adaptation to the digital communication environment. At the same time, distinctive translation characteristics across websites, social media platforms, and video subtitles are identified. Based on these findings, this study puts forward five targeted optimization strategies, namely audience-oriented translation, cultural adaptation translation, multimodal collaborative translation, platform-adaptive translation, and AI-assisted translation, in order to solve the problems of publicity translation for the global expansion of GBA tourism brands empowered by digital communication.

**Keywords:** Digital communication; Tourism publicity translation; International communication; Translation strategies; GBA tourism brands

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# 1. Introduction

The global communication landscape is being continually reshaped by the rapid advancement of digital technology, creating new frontiers for international tourism promotion. Today, platforms like TikTok, YouTube, Instagram, and Facebook enable destinations to engage worldwide audiences through dynamic, interactive, and multimodal content. As one of China's most economically vibrant regions, the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (GBA) is home to diverse tourism resources, from cultural heritage and culinary traditions to modern urban landscapes and major international events. In recent years, key tourism organizations across the GBA, such as Guangzhou Municipal Culture, Radio, Television and Tourism Bureau (GMCRTTB), Shenzhen Municipal Culture, Radio, Television, Tourism and Sports Bureau (SMCRTTSB), Hong Kong Tourism Board (HKTb), and Macao Government Tourism Office (MGTO), have increasingly turned to digital channels to boost international visibility and strengthen regional branding. Within this digital shift, publicity translation serves as a crucial bridge across linguistic and cultural divides, helping global audiences access local tourism offerings and shaping the international perception of the region.

Under these circumstances, this study endeavors to explore the status quo of digital communication utilized by GBA tourism brands and identifies the major problems in their publicity translation practices. By analyzing tourism publicity materials collected from official websites and social media platforms (e.g., TikTok, YouTube, Instagram, and Facebook), the study examines issues concerning linguistic expression, cultural conveyance, audience reception, and digital-media adaptation. Building on these insights, the research also puts forward practical publicity translation strategies designed to improve the effectiveness of international communication in the digital age. Besides, this study seeks to enrich scholarly discussion on tourism publicity translation from a digital communications perspective while offering actionable recommendations to enhance the GBA's global tourism influence and support the high-quality development of the cultural and tourism sectors.

## 2. Literature review

### 2.1. Studies on digital communication and international communication

Digital communication has become one of the most influential modes of interaction in the information age. The previous research by some scholars has provided a certain literature basis for the discussion on digital communication. For example, Castells (2010) observed that "the rise of network society has fundamentally reshaped the structure of information dissemination, allowing it to flow rapidly across geographical and cultural borders" <sup>[1]</sup>. In the same argument, Van Dijk (2018) emphasized that "digital communication is defined by connectivity, interactivity, and decentralization, which are features that distinguish it clearly from traditional mass communication" <sup>[2]</sup>. From a media convergence perspective, Jenkins (2006) argued that "digital platforms foster participatory culture, transforming audiences from passive receivers into active content creators" <sup>[3]</sup>. Likewise, other researchers have highlighted the multi-modal nature of digital communication. For instance, Kress and van Leeuwen (2001) suggested that "meaning-making in digital environments depends on the integration of multiple semiotic resources, such as text, images, sound, and video" <sup>[4]</sup>. Jewitt (2014) further noted that "multi-modality enhances audience engagement and communication effectiveness by presenting information through diverse channels" <sup>[5]</sup>. Thus, digital communication represents not only a technological innovation but also a profound transformation in how communication is structured and how audiences participate.

Furthermore, the interaction between digital communication and international communication has attracted widespread attention from academia. The concept of “soft power” proposed by Nye (2004) stated that “communication technology plays a key role in shaping national influence and international reputation”<sup>[6]</sup>. In the digital age, social media platforms have become an important tool for conveying cultural values and national image to a global audience. According to Kaplan and Henlein (2010), “social media has significantly expanded the organization’s ability to interact with international audiences and promote two-way communication”<sup>[7]</sup>. Simultaneously, Alencik (2013) noted that “digital brand strategy has become an important way for countries and regions to establish a competitive identity in the global market”<sup>[8]</sup>. In terms of destination promotion, a study by Xiang and Gretzel (2010) found that “social media platforms are increasingly influencing tourists’ information search behavior and destination selection process”<sup>[9]</sup>. All these studies show that digital communication has become an important driving force for international brand building and cross-cultural communication.

## **2.2. Studies on the international communication of tourism brands**

Tourism brand building has long been regarded as the core element of destination competitiveness. Aaker (1996) defined a brand as “a set of assets and liabilities associated with a name or symbol that add value to a product or service”<sup>[10]</sup>. Building upon this view, Morgan, Pritchard and Pride (2011) proposed that “tourism brands should create unique emotional experiences to make destinations stand out from the competition”<sup>[11]</sup>. Anholt (2007) further underlined that “successful destination branding is closely related to reputation management and geographic identity construction”<sup>[12]</sup>. Given that Chinese is a high-context language, Zhu (2025) and Mai (2025) argued that “tourism brand construction needs to integrate cultural distinctiveness with modern communication strategies”<sup>[13,14]</sup>.

In addition to the above discussion, destination image has received extensive research in tourism academia. Echtner and Ritchie (1993) raised that “destination topography involves both functional attributes and psychological impressions”<sup>[15]</sup>. Gartner (1994) distinguished three core image-forming factors: promotional materials, media reports, and personal experiences<sup>[16]</sup>. With the advent of digital media, the construction of destination image has become gradually dependent on visual communication and social media interaction. E.g., Yuan & Vui (2023) pointed out that “destination image directly influences tourists’ travel intentions and subsequent behavioral decisions”<sup>[17]</sup>. In addition, Lariba (2023) focused on studying the role of user-generated content (UGC) in shaping destination cognition<sup>[18]</sup>. Their findings show that online comments, travel blogs, and social media posts have been important sources for destination image formation.

## **2.3. Studies on publicity translation and tourism publicity translation**

At first, publicity translation is often considered a communication activity introducing a country’s culture, policies, and social development to an international audience. Babazade (2024) argued that publicity translation should prioritize communicative effectiveness over linguistic equivalence<sup>[19]</sup>. Similarly, He Jiayuan (2019) deemed that “publicity translation is target-reader oriented and should align with the language habits and cultural expectations of overseas audiences”<sup>[20]</sup>. From a functionalist perspective, Nord (2014) contended that “translation decisions should be determined by the communication purpose and the needs of the target audience”<sup>[21]</sup>. This viewpoint is widely adopted in publicity translation research, where successful communication is generally considered more important than literal fidelity to the source text.

Then, regarding tourism publicity translation, it has become a significant topic in translation studies. Newmark (1988) claimed that “tourism translation combines informational and persuasive functions, requiring translators to convey information while also attracting readers”<sup>[22]</sup>. Dann (1996) believed that “tourism discourse is inherently persuasive and should inspire travel intentions”<sup>[23]</sup>. Chinese scholars have also explored tourism translation from cultural and communicative perspectives. For example, Zhao & Zhang (2025) concentrated on the importance of cultural adaptation in tourism translation<sup>[24]</sup>, while Wang Zuoliang (2006) advocated that translators should promote cross-cultural understanding rather than merely transferring linguistic information<sup>[25]</sup>. These studies highlight the crucial role of tourism publicity translation in destination promotion and cultural exchange.

Lastly, with the quick advancement of digital communication, tourism publicity translation has entered a new phase characterized by multi-modality and audience interaction. O’Hagan (2013) suggested that “digital technology has transformed traditional translation practices through innovations such as online and collaborative translation”<sup>[26]</sup>. Silaban et al. (2025) perceived that “globalization and digitization require translators not only to possess linguistic competence but also digital literacy and intercultural communication skills”<sup>[27]</sup>. Recent studies have explored the translation of social media content, short videos, and multi-modal tourism materials. For instance, Krishnan (2026) discussed that multi-modal translation should consider the interaction between verbal and non-verbal elements<sup>[28]</sup>. However, despite growing interest in digital translation, there are still relatively few studies centering on publicity translation of tourism brands on digital platforms, particularly within the context of the GBA.

## 2.4. Theoretical foundations

This study adopted three theoretical frameworks, namely Skopos theory (ST), eco-translatology (ET), and international communication theory (ICT), to guide the analysis of tourism publicity translation in the context of digital Communication. In the first place, Vermeer’s (1989) ST emphasized that “the primary principle of translation is its intended purpose (Skopos)”<sup>[29]</sup>. According to this theory, translation strategies should be selected based on the communication needs of the target audience rather than striving for strict linguistic equivalence. Since tourism publicity materials aim to attract international tourists, promote destination image, and facilitate intercultural communication, ST provides a practical analytical framework for assessing whether translated texts effectively achieve their promotional goals. In the second place, Hu Gengshen’s (2008) ET viewed translation as a process of adaptive selection within a translation ecological environment<sup>[30]</sup>. This theory asserts that translators must dynamically adjust at linguistic, cultural, and communicative levels to ensure successful intercultural exchange. Considering that tourism publicity translation often involves conveying specific cultural information and local tourism resources, ET offers valuable insights into how translators balance cultural expression with audience receptivity. In the third place, ICT focuses on the transmission of information across nations and cultures, emphasizing audience awareness, cultural adaptation, media channels, and image construction. Scholars such as Hall (1976) and Nye (2004) underscored the critical role of Communication in shaping International perceptions and cultural influence<sup>[31,32]</sup>. In the field of tourism promotion, translation is not merely a linguistic act but a strategic tool for constructing destination image and enhancing International visibility. Thus, ICT helps explain how tourism publicity translation facilitates the global dissemination of tourism brands and effectively presents local culture in the digital era. In a word, these three theories witness an integrated analytical framework in this study for exploring tourism

publicity translation and its role in international tourism communication.

## **2.5. Research gaps**

Existing scholarly studies have significantly advanced the fields of digital communication, tourism branding, and publicity translation. Prior research has explored the distinctive features of digital media, strategies for destination branding, and methodological approaches to translating tourism publicity content. These contributions provide a solid theoretical foundation for understanding tourism publicity in the digital context. However, several research gaps persist. Firstly, current studies have largely treated digital communication and tourism translation as separate domains, with limited interdisciplinary integration. Secondly, there remains a scarcity of focused research on the international communication of tourism brands within the GBA. Thirdly, the influence of evolving social media platforms on tourism publicity translation has yet to be sufficiently examined. In accordance with these gaps, this study addresses these gaps by investigating publicity translation of GBA tourism brands through the lens of digital communication. By synthesizing theories from digital communication, tourism branding, and translation studies, this study aims to develop a practical framework for publicity translation strategy to enhance the effectiveness of global tourism brand promotion in the digital era.

## **3. Methodology**

### **3.1. Research design**

This study employed a qualitative methodology integrating case study and textual analysis. The case study approach allowed for a detailed examination of publicity translation practices used by leading tourism brands within the GBA. Complementing this, textual analysis was applied to investigate the linguistic, cultural, and communicative dimensions of tourism publicity materials. Together, these methods enable the identification of prevailing translation challenges and support the development of effective strategies to improve the international reach of tourism branding in digital environments.

### **3.2. Research objects**

To ensure representativeness and reliability, this study focused on four prominent tourism authorities in the GBA (such as GMCRTTB, SMCRTTSB, HKTB, and MGTO) as primary cases. Each of these institutions holds a central role in regional tourism promotion and possesses substantial experience in international marketing and digital engagement. Their publicly available promotional content offers a robust and relevant corpus for analyzing translation strategies in tourism communication.

### **3.3. Data sources**

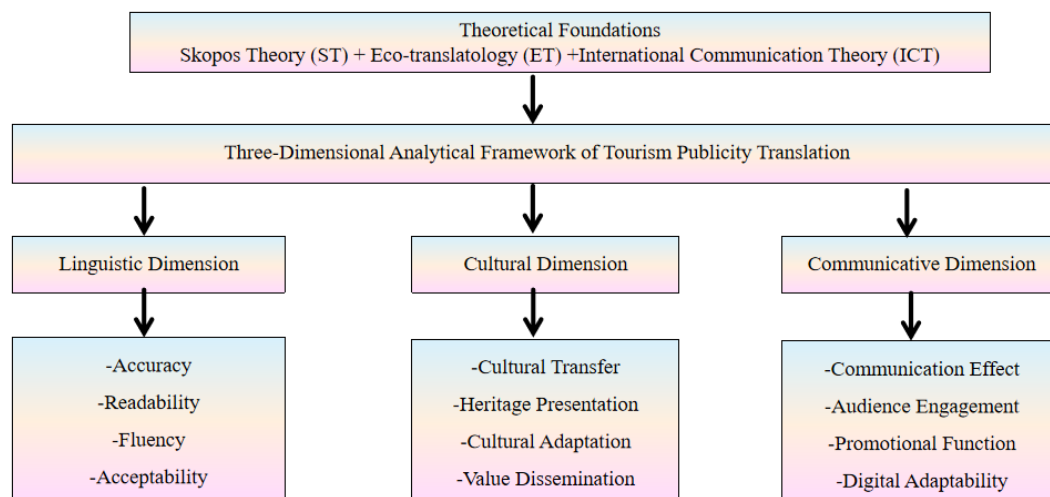
The research data were drawn from multiple digital communication platforms and official publicity channels of these four tourism organizations in the GBA (e.g., GMCRTTB, SMCRTTSB, HKTB, and MGTO). Primary sources included: (1) English versions of official tourism websites; (2) promotional videos published on TikTok; (3) tourism marketing content on YouTube; (4) promotional images, texts, and captions posted on Instagram; and (5) official posts disseminated through Facebook accounts. These materials encompass a wide range of tourism publicity content, such as destination branding, cultural promotion, festival events, culinary experiences, and urban image building.

### 3.4. Data analysis methods

This study used three data analysis methods. First, content analysis was used to examine the themes, communication purposes, and discourse features of tourism publicity materials. Through systematic analysis, the study identified the main communication characteristics and promotion priorities of GBA tourism brands across different digital platforms. What is more, a comparative analysis was conducted by comparing Chinese original texts with their corresponding English translations. By examining language choices, translation techniques, and information transmission, the study revealed the strengths and weaknesses of current publicity translations and evaluated their effectiveness in cross-cultural communication. Finally, typical translation cases were selected for in-depth analysis. Through case studies, specific translation issues were explored, and potential solutions were discussed from linguistic, cultural, and communicative perspectives. This approach provided empirical evidence for developing translation strategies suitable for the digital dissemination environment.

### 3.5. Analytical framework

Based on ST, ET, and ICT, this study establishes a three-dimensional analytical framework to evaluate the effectiveness of tourism publicity translations in the digital communication context (see **Figure 1**).



**Figure 1.** Three-dimensional analytical framework for tourism publicity translation.

As illustrated in **Figure 1**, the proposed framework integrates three key dimensions: linguistic, cultural, and communicative, to assess translation quality and its effectiveness in international communication holistically. The linguistic dimension evaluates textual accuracy, readability, and fluency, with particular attention to lexical choice, syntactic structure, and stylistic appropriateness for target audiences. The cultural dimension examines how culture-specific elements such as historical references, local customs, and traditional values are transposed and adapted to foster cross-cultural accessibility while preserving authentic representation. The communicative dimension focuses on the functional effectiveness of translations in achieving promotional objectives, enhancing destination appeal, and adapting content across digital platforms. These interconnected dimensions provide a structured yet flexible approach to analyzing and improving the international publicity strategies of the GBA's tourism sector in the digital era.

## **4. Results**

### **4.1. Current status of digital communication of GBA tourism brands**

#### **4.1.1. Diversification of communication platforms**

Analysis of tourism publicity materials shows that tourism organizations within the GBA have adopted multiple digital communication platforms to promote their destinations internationally. Different platforms are utilized to target distinct audience groups and achieve specific communication objectives.

For example, HKTb actively manages its official account (DiscoverHongKong) on the digital platforms of TikTok, Instagram, and Facebook to regularly upload short videos showcasing Victoria Harbor, local street food, and cultural festivals. One popular video highlighting Hong Kong's skyline combines drone footage, background music, and concise English subtitles such as "See Hong Kong from Above". This video format effectively attracts young international audiences and stimulates user engagement through likes and comments.

Similarly, MGTO also uses YouTube (Official Account: Macau Government Tourism Office) to release longer promotional videos. A video titled "Experience Your Own Macau Charm" presents a three-minute English narrative introducing Macau's cultural heritage, Portuguese architectural styles, and entertainment facilities. Compared to TikTok, YouTube offers more comprehensive information, allowing tourism agencies to present destination images in greater depth.

In addition, GMCRTTB extensively utilizes Facebook, YouTube, and Instagram (Official Account: Guangzhou Travel or Guangzhou China) to share visually appealing photos of urban landscapes, local cuisine, and cultural events. Meanwhile, SMCRTTSB leverages TikTok and Facebook platforms (Official Account: Amazing Shenzhen) to promote inbound tourism and enhance Shenzhen's international reputation. All these examples demonstrate that GBA tourism brands have established a diversified digital communication system, boosting their international visibility.

#### **4.1.2. Characteristics of communication content**

Data collected indicate that the communication content of GBA tourism brands exhibits strong regional and cultural characteristics.

First, food culture is one of the most frequently promoted themes. For instance, the official website of GMCRTTB highlights local delicacies such as Cantonese dim sum, roasted goose, and double-skinned milk. Promotion texts often emphasize Guangzhou's reputation as "the Capital of Chinese Cuisine", underscoring its rich gastronomic culture and culinary traditions.

Second, intangible cultural heritage is another key communication theme. HKTb frequently promotes Cantonese opera performances and traditional festivals through social media posts and travel websites. Likewise, tourism agencies in Foshan and Guangzhou regularly feature lion dances and dragon boat races to showcase the region's cultural vitality.

Third, urban image plays a significant role in tourism communication. Shenzhen is consistently portrayed as a hub of innovation and technology. For example, publicity materials often highlight Shenzhen Bay area, modern skyscrapers, and high-tech industries to construct a dynamic global city image.

Finally, festival and event promotion is widely applied. During the Dragon Boat Festival, multiple tourism departments issue bilingual (Chinese-English) publicity materials introducing dragon boat races and traditional customs. These examples show that GBA tourism brands have successfully integrated cultural heritage, urban development, and tourism experiences into their communication content.

## **4.2. Problems in the publicity translation of GBA tourism brands**

### **4.2.1. Rigid language expression**

Analysis of tourism publicity materials reveals that literal translation remains a common issue in English renditions of GBA tourism content. In many cases, translators prioritize preserving the linguistic form of the original Chinese text rather than adapting it to suit international audiences' communication habits.

For example, a promotional text in Guangzhou describes the city as “千年商都” (translates as “Millennium Commercial Capital” in English). While this accurately reflects the literal meaning, it may sound unnatural and vague to English readers. “Millennium Commercial Capital” fails to clearly convey Guangzhou's historical significance as a major trade hub. A more audience-appropriate rendering such as “Guangzhou: A Historic Trade Hub with Over 1, 000 Years of Commercial Legacy” would be more informative and better attract international travelers.

Another example is the slogan “来了就是深圳人” (translated as “Once You Come, You Are a Shenzhen Citizen” in English). Although grammatically correct, this version fails to capture the inclusive and open spirit embedded in the original Chinese. To overseas audiences, the phrase might even be confusing. A more natural and effective alternative could be “Shenzhen welcomes everyone to become part of its story,” better reflecting the city's identity as an innovative and inclusive metropolis. These examples illustrate how over-reliance on literal translation often weakens the persuasiveness and promotional impact of tourism materials.

### **4.2.2. Insufficient translation of culture-specific terms**

The study also finds that many culturally specific expressions in GBA tourism content are inadequately explained in English translations, potentially hindering foreign audiences' understanding of local culture.

A typical case is the translation of “粤剧” as “Cantonese Opera”. While widely accepted, this term only provides the name of the cultural practice without conveying its significance. For international tourists unfamiliar with Chinese performing arts, this label alone may not convey its value as a UNESCO-recognized intangible cultural heritage. An improved version would be “Cantonese Opera, a traditional performing art recognized by UNESCO as Intangible Cultural Heritage.”

Similarly, “醒狮” is commonly rendered as “lion dance.” While grammatically accurate, this translation fails to distinguish Southern-style lion dancing from other lion dance traditions worldwide. Adding explanatory notes such as “Southern-style lion dance: a traditional Cantonese folk performance symbolizing prosperity and good fortune” can further enhance cross-cultural understanding.

Moreover, another common example is “早茶”; it is often translated as “morning tea” in some documentaries introducing Guangdong culture. However, foreign readers might interpret this simply as drinking tea in the morning. In Cantonese culture, “Yum Cha” (translated as “饮茶” in Cantonese) is a social dining tradition combining tea with dim sum. Therefore, a translation like “Yum Cha: Experience the traditional Cantonese lunch where tea meets dim sum” better conveys its cultural depth. These examples show that relying solely on literal translation is insufficient for effectively communicating culturally rich tourism resources to international audiences.

### **4.2.3. Lack of international audience awareness**

Research findings indicate that some tourism publicity translations remain heavily influenced by Chinese expression patterns and fail to meet international audiences' expectations.

For instance, a travel website introduces a site with the sentence “这里承载着中华民族 5000 年的文明记忆”, which is translated into English as “This place carries the memories of 5, 000 years of Chinese

civilization”. While accurate, the phrasing is overly abstract and may not resonate with overseas visitors. International travelers typically care more about specific attractions and unique experiences. A more audience-centered translation could be “Explore a destination where centuries of Chinese history come alive through architecture, culture, and local traditions.”

Likewise, many promotional texts emphasize domestic ideals or development achievements familiar to local audiences but hold little relevance for international tourists. This mismatch between content and audience expectations undermines communication effectiveness.

#### **4.2.4. Inadequate adaptation to digital communication**

Analysis shows that many translated texts have not been sufficiently adapted to the characteristics of social media platforms.

For example, an Instagram post promoting Guangzhou’s culinary culture uses the title “Guangzhou Food Culture Introduction”. While informative, it lacks appeal and emotional resonance. International travel accounts typically use more engaging phrasing, such as “Why Guangzhou Is a Food Lover’s Paradise?” or “Top 5 Must-Try Dishes in Guangzhou”.

Additionally, some YouTube publicity videos display subtitles that closely follow the original Chinese narration. In one video describing a historical site, the subtitle reads: “This building was constructed during the Ming Dynasty and has witnessed numerous pivotal historical events throughout the city’s development”. The sentence is too long for viewers watching a short video, making it difficult to read comfortably. A more effective subtitle could be “Built in the Ming Dynasty, this landmark tells Guangzhou’s storied past”. These examples demonstrate that tourism publicity translations must not only convey information accurately but also align with digital media users’ reading habits and communication styles.

### **4.3. Translation characteristics across digital communication platforms**

#### **4.3.1. Characteristics of website translation**

Website translations are typically formal, comprehensive, and high in information density. Their primary purpose is to provide potential travelers with thorough travel information. For example, the English version of the Guangzhou Tourism website describes Canton Tower as: “Standing at 600 meters, Canton Tower is one of the tallest towers in the world, offering panoramic views of Guangzhou”. This translation clearly lists factual details such as height, location, and tourist value. Such translations emphasize accuracy and information delivery. However, compared to internationally common commercial travel websites, these versions tend to be more descriptive and less emotionally engaging. Thus, website translations mainly serve an informational function rather than a promotional one.

#### **4.3.2. Characteristics of social media translation**

Social media translations are generally more concise, interactive, and audience-focused than website translations. For instance, an Instagram post promoting Guangzhou’s cuisine uses the headline “ 品味粵菜精髓 ” (translated as “Savor the Essence of Cantonese Cuisine” in English). Compared to the lengthy descriptions on official websites, the social media version is brief and powerful, with strong emotional appeal. The post is paired with mouthwatering food photos and hashtags like #FoodieParadise and #VisitGuangzhou, boosting user engagement. Similarly, a Facebook post introducing Hong Kong’s Wine & Dine Festival uses the phrase:

“Ready for an unforgettable culinary adventure?” This rhetorical question directly addresses the reader and encourages interaction. These examples show that social media translations often adopt conversational and persuasive tones to capture viewers’ attention.

#### **4.3.3. Characteristics of video subtitle translation**

Subtitle translation is characterized by conciseness, immediacy, and synchronization with visual content. For example, in a publicity video introducing how Hong Kong celebrates the Dragon Boat Festival, the original Chinese narration states: “Dragon boat racing is not just a sporting event but also an essential part of Chinese traditional culture”. The English subtitle translates this as: “Dragon boat racing is a beloved Chinese tradition”. Compared to the original narration, the subtitle simplifies the information while preserving the core message, enabling viewers to read it easily within limited time. Another example appears in a TikTok video promoting Shenzhen, where the subtitle offers no detailed description. It simply states that “Creativity connects to the future”. This brief and memorable slogan perfectly aligns with the fast-paced nature of short-form video platforms, enhancing communication efficiency. These examples illustrate that subtitle translation often requires information compression and adaptation to audiovisual contexts. The effectiveness of subtitle translation depends not only on linguistic accuracy but also on readability and audience acceptance.

## **5. Discussion**

### **5.1. New Requirements of digital communication for tourism publicity translation**

The rapid development of digital communication technologies has fundamentally transformed how tourism destinations promote themselves to international audiences, thereby imposing new demands on tourism publicity translation.

First, digital platforms such as official tourism websites, social media networks, and video-sharing apps have dramatically accelerated information dissemination, requiring translators to produce timely, accurate, and audience-centered translations that swiftly respond to ever-changing travel trends and market needs. Unlike traditional travel posters and brochures, digital tourism content is continuously updated and instantly delivered, making translation efficiency and responsiveness increasingly crucial.

Second, digital communication has greatly expanded the reach of tourism audiences. Through platforms like YouTube, Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok, GBA tourism brands can now engage potential travelers from diverse linguistic, cultural, and educational backgrounds around the globe. Therefore, translators must adopt an audience-centered strategy, carefully considering target audiences’ expectations, cultural knowledge, and reading habits to foster effective cross-cultural communication.

Third, the emergence of multimodal communication has enriched the formats of tourism promotion. Contemporary tourism campaigns increasingly integrate textual language with visuals, videos, animations, subtitles, and interactive features, transforming translation from a purely linguistic activity into a process of multimodal meaning construction. In this context, translators should not only ensure linguistic accuracy and readability but also coordinate text with visual elements to maximize communication impact. Thus, tourism publicity translation in the digital age must fully integrate speed, audience awareness, and multimodal competence to support international brand promotion.

## **5.2. Optimization strategies for tourism publicity translation of GBA tourism brands**

### **5.2.1. Audience-oriented translation strategy**

The primary goal of tourism publicity translation is to attract potential visitors and shape destination image. Therefore, translation should be reconstructed from the perspective of the target audience rather than simply reproducing the source expression. Translators must consider international tourists' cultural background, cognitive expectations, and information needs. Tourism texts should be adjusted to improve readability, usability, and persuasiveness. This audience-centered approach aligns with ST, which emphasizes that translation strategies should serve communicative purposes and audience expectations.

### **5.2.2. Cultural adaptation translation strategy**

Tourism publicity materials frequently contain culturally specific references, historical allusions, local customs, and traditional values. Literal translation may fail to convey the original cultural meaning to international audiences. Therefore, when necessary, translators should employ strategies such as expansion, explanation, paraphrasing, or annotation to adapt content culturally. By providing appropriate cultural explanations, translators can reduce cultural barriers and promote cross-cultural understanding.

### **5.2.3. Multimodal collaborative translation strategy**

In the digital communication environment, tourism publicity translation should be integrated with visual and audio-visual resources. Translators need to consider the interplay between text, images, videos, subtitles, background music, and graphic design. Effective multi-modal collaboration can increase audience engagement and improve communication outcomes. For instance, concise and engaging subtitles paired with travel videos significantly enhance viewers' comprehension and viewing experience. Thus, tourism publicity translation should be regarded as a multimodal communication practice, not merely a linguistic task.

### **5.2.4. Platform-adaptive translation strategy**

Different digital platforms possess unique communication characteristics and audience preferences. Tourism publicity translation should therefore be tailored according to platform-specific traits. For example, YouTube video descriptions may require detailed explanatory text, while Facebook and Instagram posts tend to favor concise and attention-grabbing expressions. TikTok content often emphasizes brevity, emotional resonance, and visual appeal. Adopting a platform-adapted translation strategy can boost content visibility, audience interaction, and cross-platform communication effectiveness.

### **5.2.5. AI-assisted translation strategy**

The advent of artificial intelligence technology brings new opportunities to tourism publicity translation. Tools such as ChatGPT, DeepL, DeepSeek, Doubao, and machine translation systems can significantly improve translation efficiency and reduce production costs. These technologies are especially suitable for large-scale multilingual content creation and rapid translation tasks. However, AI-generated translations may still face challenges related to cultural adaptation, stylistic appropriateness, and pragmatic effectiveness. Therefore, human translators must play a key role in proofreading, quality assessment, and cultural refinement. The human-machine collaborative translation model effectively combines technological efficiency with human creativity and cross-cultural competence.

## 6. Conclusion

### 6.1. Summary of key findings

This study explored the publicity translation practices of GBA tourism brands in the context of digital communication. Through the analysis of tourism publicity materials from official websites and social media platforms, the study found that GBA tourism organizations have actively adopted diversified digital communication channels to promote regional tourism resources. However, several translation problems remain, including rigid language expression, insufficient translation of culture-specific terms, lack of international audience awareness, and inadequate adaptation to digital media characteristics. The findings also indicate that different digital platforms require different translation approaches. Based on the analytical framework of ST, ET, and ICT, this study proposes five optimization strategies: audience-oriented translation, cultural adaptation translation, multimodal collaborative translation, platform-adaptive translation, and AI-assisted translation. These strategies will help enhance the international communication effectiveness and global influence of GBA tourism brands.

### 6.2. Research limitations and prospects

This study has several limitations. First, the research primarily focuses on four representative tourism organizations in the GBA, which may not fully reflect the overall situation of all regional tourism brands. Second, the analysis is mainly based on official publicity materials and does not include user-generated content or audience feedback. Third, the study relies predominantly on qualitative methods and lacks empirical investigation into audience reception. Future research could expand data collection by incorporating quantitative methods such as surveys and interviews, and delve deeper into how audiences respond to translated tourism content. Additionally, further studies could explore the application of artificial intelligence and multi-modal translation technologies in tourism promotion, offering new insights into international communication for tourism brands in the digital era.

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