

Cross-Cultural Communication Barriers and Translation Strategies in Beihai Coastal Tourism Texts

Yin Zheng^{1*}

¹ College of Foreign Study, Guilin University of Technology, Guilin, China

*Correspondence: Yin Zheng

Received: 20 April 2026; Accepted: 7 May 2026; Published: 3 June 2026

Abstract:

Against the backdrop of China-ASEAN tourism cooperation and cultural-tourism integration, Beihai, as a core coastal tourist city in the Beibu Gulf, relies heavily on the English translation quality of its tourism publicity materials to ensure effective cross-cultural communication and shape its international image. Based on texts from key scenic spots such as Beihai Silver Beach and Weizhou Island, this study, guided by cross-cultural communication theory and Skopos theory, analyzes cross-cultural barriers in its English translation from three dimensions: linguistics, culture and pragmatics. It proposes a combined application of domestication, foreignization, amplification and reduction, and verifies the feasibility of these strategies through case studies of typical attractions. The research aims to provide references for Beihai's tourism publicity translation and boost the international development of its tourism industry.

Keywords:

Beihai, Coastal Tourism Texts, Cross-cultural Communication Barriers, Translation Strategies, Skopos Theory

1. Introduction

The acceleration of tourism internationalization has increasingly highlighted the cross-cultural communication value of tourism text translation. The quality of translation for tourism texts in specific regions is directly related to the international image shaping of the destination and the global development of the tourism industry. The international development of Beihai's coastal tourism also relies on the support of high-quality tourism text translation.

1.1. Research Background

In the current era of booming global tourism industry, coastal tourism, leveraging its unique natural resources and leisure experiences, has emerged as a significant driver of regional economic development. Beihai, as a pivotal port city situated on the coast of the South China Sea, boasts abundant coastal tourism resources such as Weizhou Island, Silver Beach, Beihai Ancient Street, and Qiaogang Food Street. It embodies diverse cultural traits, including marine culture, historical culture, and hometown culture of overseas Chinese, making it an important tourism window for

Guangxi Beibu Gulf Economic Zone facing ASEAN. With the in-depth advancement of the “Belt and Road” initiative, economic, trade, and cultural exchanges between China and ASEAN countries have become increasingly frequent. Beihai has attracted an increasing number of international tourists for sightseeing and leisure with its unique geographical advantages.

Tourism texts are the primary medium for international tourists to obtain destination information. Their core functions are to convey tourism information, shape the image of the tourist destination, and promote cross-cultural communication. However, due to obvious differences between China and the West in language systems, cultural traditions, and ways of thinking, there are numerous issues in the translation practice of Beihai coastal tourism texts, leading to frequent barriers in cross-cultural communication. These problems are not conducive to the international development of Beihai’s tourism industry. Therefore, systematically analyzing the linguistic and cultural characteristics of Beihai coastal tourism texts, deeply exploring the existing barriers in cross-cultural communication, and exploring scientific and reasonable translation strategies have become urgent needs for enhancing the quality of Beihai’s tourism external publicity and promoting the international development of tourism.

1.2. Research Purpose and Significance

This study enriches the research dimensions of tourism text translation. Taking the coastal tourism texts of Beihai as the specific research object, this study combines the characteristics of multicultural integration in Beihai, and systematically analyzes its linguistic and cultural features. It can expand the research scope of tourism text translation and provide a reference paradigm for the translation research of tourism texts in similar coastal tourism destinations. Most existing research uses a single theory to analyze tourism text translation issues, while this study combines cross-cultural communication theory and Skopos theory. This study takes cross-cultural communication barriers as the starting point and achieves effective cross-cultural information transmission as the translation purpose, to construct a targeted translation strategy system. In addition, this study refines the translation research of culturally loaded information in tourism texts. The coastal tourism texts of Beihai contain a large amount of characteristic culturally loaded information such as marine culture, historical culture, and overseas Chinese hometown culture. The translation of this information is a difficult point in cross-cultural communication. Through the classification and analysis of these characteristic culturally loaded information and the analysis of translation barriers, this study proposes specific translation methods and strategies, which can provide more detailed theoretical support for the translation research of culturally loaded information and help deepen the practice of cross-cultural communication theory.

This study, through text analysis, examines the cross-cultural communication barriers in the translation of coastal tourism texts related to Beihai, including those at the linguistic, cultural, and pragmatic levels. It proposes practical translation strategies and conducts translation optimization practices in conjunction with typical tourist attractions such as Weizhou Island, Beihai Ancient Street, and Qiaogang Food Street. The optimized translation texts can accurately convey tourism information, helping international tourists better understand the cultural connotations and tourism characteristics of Beihai, thereby strengthening their identification and satisfaction with Beihai.

2. Theory

Theory serves as the core support guiding the practice of tourism text translation and analyzing barriers in cross-cultural communication. The following discussion will revolve around the core theoretical framework of tourism text translation research. It will first clarify the basic definition and function of tourism texts, and then focus on elaborating on the high- and low-context culture theory within cross-cultural communication theory and Skopos theory, laying a theoretical foundation for subsequent research.

2.1. *The Definition and Functions of Tourism Texts*

Tourism texts refer to various information carriers related to tourism activities and serve as an important medium for information transmission between tourist destinations and tourists. Broadly speaking, tourism texts encompass various textual forms involved in the entire process of tourism activities, including tourist destination brochures, attraction introductions, tour guide scripts, traffic information descriptions, and travel contracts, as well as content on travel websites. Narrowly speaking, tourism texts mainly refer to promotional texts used to convey core information about tourist destinations and attract tourists' attention. In general, all the textual information concerning tourism resources, tourism products, tourism statistics, tourism researchers, tourism education as well as transportation accommodation, food, shopping and entertainment can be defined as tourism texts [5].

The core functions of tourism texts include informative function, expressive function, and vocative function.

Informative function: The informative function of tourism text is reflected on its role to help the tourists and potential tourists know about basic facts including the location, the transportation, the expense, the service and the environment and background information such as specific features and relative historical story about the tourist attraction [4]. Tourism texts need to accurately convey the core information of tourist destinations to tourists. For international tourists, the information transmission function of tourism texts is particularly important, as their understanding of the destination is often limited and they need to obtain comprehensive and accurate information through translated texts.

Expressive function: It is primarily manifested in the author's conveyance of subjective emotions, aesthetic experiences, and unique perspectives towards the tourist destination. It transcends mere information transmission, emphasizing the creation of an artistic image of the destination through vivid language and persuasive rhetoric, in order to evoke emotional resonance in readers. This endows the text with literary quality and aesthetic value, aiming to spark tourists' yearning and imagination. Cao Hui mentioned that a well-written tourism text should be vivid and lively in order to demonstrate the most prominent features of the places of interests and arouse the tourists' interest while giving them pleasure. To realize its expressive function, the art and techniques of language should be employed to make the tourism texts filled with aesthetic perceptions that can further edify tourists' sentiments [4].

Vocative function: The vocative function concentrates on how the tourism text works and all the other functions serve this purpose [7]. It is the core function of tourism texts, aiming to stimulate tourists' interest in tourism through information transmission and guide tourists' tourism behavior, such as attracting tourists to visit

scenic spots. Texts such as tourism brochures and scenic spot promotional posters are typical representatives of the calling function. Their language usually has strong appeal and persuasiveness, which can move tourists' emotions by depicting beautiful landscapes and showcasing unique cultural charm, prompting them to have the willingness to travel and consume. A tourism text that fails to gain the receiver's attention and then hold the person's interest is ineffective [13].

2.2. Intercultural Communication Theory

The intercultural communication theory was proposed by American anthropologist Edward Hall. One of its core contributions is the division of high-context and low-context cultures. In high-context cultures, information is implicit in the context rather than being explicitly expressed in language. In low-context cultures, information is mainly expressed through specific and explicit language. Hall argues that high-context cultures refer to those where people are deeply involved with each other. There is a hierarchical structure in society due to the intimate relationships between people. Individuals' inner feelings are strongly self-controlled, and information is widely disseminated through simple messages with profound meanings. Low-context cultures refer to those where people are highly individualized, distant, and fragmented, interacting relatively less with others [1]. In high-context cultures, most information is contained in the physical context, social context, or shared cultural background of communicators, while explicit language only carries a small amount of information. Conversely, in low-context cultures, information is mainly transmitted through clear, accurate, and complete language, with less dependence on context. Both communicators can achieve accurate interpretation of information without a shared background.

China belongs to a typical high-context culture, while English-speaking countries mostly belong to a low-context culture. Chinese people attach considerable importance to information implied in non-verbal aspects and value interpersonal relationships within groups. Therefore, China belongs to a high-context culture. In contrast, people in English-speaking countries focus more on verbal expression itself and emphasize direct communication, so English-speaking countries are regarded as low-context cultures [6]. The differences between these two contextual cultures are clearly reflected in the writing and translation practice of tourism texts. Chinese communication is built on a shared foundation of historical culture, folk customs, and values. Therefore, this default background information are often omitted in texts. In contrast, communication in English-speaking countries does not rely on such shared backgrounds, requiring texts to explicitly provide necessary background information. Otherwise, it can lead to obstacles in information interpretation. In a high-context culture, readers need to combine context and shared background to infer and supplement information in order to fully understand the connotation of the text, while in a low-context culture, readers only need to interpret the language literally to obtain all core information. This difference leads to English-speaking tourists being unable to accurately grasp the core information, and even resulting in comprehension deviations.

In the cross-cultural communication process of coastal tourism texts in Beihai, this high-low context cultural difference directly translates into translation barriers. This may result in incomplete information transmission or readers' inability to interpret, ultimately affecting the effectiveness of cross-cultural communication.

2.3. Skopos Theory

Skopos theory was proposed by Hans J. Vermeer. Vermeer stipulated that Skopos theory includes three major principles, including the skopos rule, the coherence rule, and the fidelity rule [2]. The skopos rule refers to the fact that translation methods and strategies must serve the purpose of the translation. The coherence rule refers to the fact that the translation should be understandable to the target language readers in their own culture and context, and read naturally and fluently. The fidelity rule refers to the fact that the translation should be faithful to the original text, with details adjusted as necessary, provided that the skopos rule and coherence rule are adhered to. Lv Qingyuan believes that among the three major principles of Skopos theory, the skopos rule should be considered first, and the fidelity rule is subordinate to the coherence rule. The skopos determines the ultimate purpose of the translation act [10]. Translators need to carefully consider the translation purpose and choose appropriate translation strategies accordingly.

Combining the functions of tourism texts with the needs of cross-cultural communication, the principle of purpose requires that the translation fully aligns with the cultural habits and reading expectations of low-context culture readers in English-speaking countries. Specifically, the cultural habits of the target readers demand that the translation abandons the implicit and euphemistic expression logic of Chinese, adopting direct and clear language to convey core information. Furthermore, the translation prioritizes presenting the practical information that tourists are most concerned about, with clear logical hierarchy and intuitive information structure. It also need to cultural background information under high and low-context cultures.

3. Linguistic and Cultural Characteristics of Coastal Tourism Texts in Beihai

Upon a deep analysis of the coastal tourism texts related to Beihai, its unique linguistic structure and profound cultural connotation are primarily manifested in the following three dimensions.

3.1. Vocabulary Features

As a coastal city, Beihai boasts a wealth of ocean-related terminology in its tourism texts. The ocean-cultural terminology primarily encompasses various aspects such as marine natural landscapes, marine organisms, and marine production and lifestyle.

In terms of marine natural landscapes, common terms include “银滩”, “涠洲岛”, “火山岩” “潮汐”, and “海浪”. These terms accurately show the natural characteristics of Beihai’s coastal tourism resources. For instance, “银滩” highlights the color and texture of the sand, while “火山岩” reflects the geological features of Weizhou Island. In addition, there are some poetic terms for marine landscapes, such as “碧波荡漾”, “渔帆点点”, and “海天一色”. These terms show a beautiful coastal atmosphere and enhance the appeal of tourism texts through vivid descriptions. In terms of marine life, common terms include “珊瑚”, and “热带鱼”. Furthermore, Beihai’s abundant seafood resources are also a significant part of tourism texts. Terms such as “花虾” and “花蟹” not only reflect Beihai’s culinary characteristics but also attract many food enthusiasts. In terms of marine production and lifestyle, common terms include “疍家”, “渔船” and so on. “疍家” is a unique marine ethnic group in Beihai, whose lifestyle of living on boats and fishing is an important part of Beihai’s marine culture. Introductions to “疍

家” in tourism texts allow tourists to gain a deep understanding of Beihai’s folk culture. Terms such as “collect seafood on the tidal flats” reflect the leisure experience characteristics of Beihai’s coastal tourism and attract tourists to participate in interactions.

Beihai boasts a long history and served as a crucial node city on the ancient “Maritime Silk Road”. Its tourism texts contain a wealth of historical and cultural vocabulary with regional characteristics, which carry the historical memory and cultural heritage of Beihai.

“骑楼” is a landmark building in Beihai Ancient Street, which combines Chinese and Western architectural styles and serves as a historical testimony to Beihai’s role as a trading port. Introductions to “骑楼” in tourism texts often cover topics such as “the historical origins of its architecture”, “architectural structural features”, and “commercial functions”, conveying the historical and cultural value of Beihai. Beihai is often introduced in tourism texts through the term “Maritime Silk Road” to show its significant role in ancient Sino-foreign trade and cultural exchanges. “Overseas Chinese merchants” and “returned overseas Chinese” are related to Beihai’s hometown culture of overseas Chinese, reflecting the close ties between Beihai and overseas Chinese. Besides, it serves as an important manifestation of Beihai’s multicultural integration. In terms of folk culture, common terms include “疍家婚俗”, “侨港风情”, and “客家文化”. These terms embody the integration of diverse folk cultures in Beihai. “Qiaogang style” combines Vietnamese culture with traditional Chinese culture, manifesting in various aspects such as food, clothing, and architecture, and is the core carrier of Beihai’s hometown culture of overseas Chinese.

3.2. Syntactic Features

The coastal tourism texts of Beihai often utilize four-character phrases and parallel structures to enhance the aesthetic appeal and emotional impact of the language.

Four-character phrases are concise and condensed, with rich artistic connotations. They can create a beautiful visual and rhythmic sensation with limited words, accurately depicting the characteristics of landscapes. For example, when describing the silver beach, phrases such as “沙细滩平” and “浪软风轻” give readers an intuitive sense of the silver beach’s scenery. Parallelism can enhance momentum through the repetition and juxtaposition of sentence patterns, and is often used to depict natural landscapes or express emotions. For instance, “涠洲岛的海，是清澈的；涠洲岛的天，是湛蓝的；涠洲岛的风，是清新的；涠洲岛的人，是热情的” The sentence highlights the unique charm of Weizhou Island from multiple dimensions, deepening the reader’s impression. The two sentence patterns are often used in combination, such as “漫步北海老街，看骑楼错落有致，听海风轻轻吹拂，品海鲜鲜美可口，感侨乡风情浓郁”，which not only reinforces the rhythmic feel of the text but also allows tourists to truly experience the unique charm of Beihai Ancient Street.

The sentence patterns in Beihai coastal tourism texts are flexible and diverse, primarily reflected in two aspects: the predominance of loose sentences and the combination of long and short sentences. Loose sentence structures are free-form and can flexibly accommodate complex content such as the natural features of scenic spots, historical backgrounds, and practical tourist information. For instance, when introducing “Beihai Ancient Street”, the text clearly lists the construction time, architectural features, historical status, and open tourist information in a clear and orderly manner through loose sentences. The combination of long and short sentences

satisfies the detail of information and the rhythm of language, with long sentences used to elaborate on complex connotations and short sentences used to enhance the rhythm. For instance, when describing “Weizhou Island”, the text first introduces its geological landform and island status in long sentences, and then vividly portrays tourist experiences such as strolling on the beach and climbing the volcanic crater in short sentences, making the text informative and vivid, as well as highly readable.

3.3. Culturally loaded features

The coastal tourism texts of Beihai exhibit distinct cultural characteristics, embodying the unique marine culture, historical culture, hometown culture of overseas Chinese, and folk culture of Beihai.

The marine culture of Beihai has been formed through long-term marine production and living practices, encompassing marine beliefs, marine folklore, and marine cuisine. The introductions to “疍家文化” in tourism texts are typical examples of marine culture-loaded information. This culture-loaded information can enable tourists to deeply understand Beihai’s marine civilization and feel the unique charm of marine culture. Furthermore, as an important city and modern trading port on the “Maritime Silk Road”, Beihai’s historical and cultural load information bears distinct regional characteristics and imprints of the times. The introductions to “骑楼建筑” in tourism texts not only involve the structural features of the buildings but also encompass the historical background behind them, such as the commercial prosperity of Beihai in the late Qing Dynasty and early Republic of China, as well as Sino-Western cultural exchanges. The historical and cultural load information are important testimonies to Beihai’s history, allowing tourists to feel its historical depth. Additionally, Beihai is a renowned hometown of overseas Chinese, where the culture integrates diverse cultural elements such as traditional Chinese culture and Vietnamese culture. The introductions to “Qiaogang Food Street” in tourism texts, such as Vietnamese specialty cuisine, Vietnamese clothing, and the living customs of returned overseas Chinese, are typical examples of hometown culture-loaded information. The hometown culture-loaded information can enable tourists to feel the unique charm of Beihai’s multicultural integration and enhance their understanding and recognition of hometown culture. What’s more, Beihai’s folk culture integrates the cultural characteristics of multiple ethnic groups and ethnicities, including the Han, Zhuang, and Tanka, with diverse forms of expression. The introductions to folk activities such as “疍家婚俗”, “客家山歌”, and “壮族三月三” are typical examples of folk culture-loaded information.

4. Analysis of Cross-Cultural Communication Barriers in Beihai Tourism Texts

Specifically, these obstacles are mainly concentrated at three levels: linguistic, cultural, and pragmatic.

4.1. Language barriers

In the Beihai coastal tourism texts, some texts contain obvious grammatical errors. These basic mistakes directly affect the accuracy of information transmission, leading to barriers in cross-cultural communication.

Example 1: “This scenic spot open from 8:00 to 18:00.” and “The pearls are produce in Beihai.”

Grammatical errors result in chaotic sentence structures and unclear semantic expressions in the translations, making it difficult for foreign tourists to accurately understand the information conveyed by the texts, seriously affecting the effectiveness of cross-cultural communication.

Chinglish is one of the most prominent problems in the English translation of Beihai coastal tourism texts. It mainly manifests as translators translating word-for-word according to Chinese thinking patterns and expression habits, ignoring the language rules and expression habits of English. This results in translations that do not conform to English grammatical norms and logical thinking, making them difficult for foreign tourists to understand.

Example 2: “小心地滑” was translated as “Carefully slide”.

The correct translation should be “Caution: Wet Floor”.

Chinglish also manifests as redundant expressions and improper collocations.

Example 3: “欢迎来到北海银滩” was translated as “Welcome to come to Beihai Yintan Beach”.

“Welcome to” contains the meaning of “come to”, so “come to” is redundant. The correct translation should be “Welcome to Beihai Yintan Beach”.

Example 4: Translators translated “欣赏海景” as “appreciate the sea view”.

“Appreciate” in English is more commonly used to express “appreciating art, music”, and is not properly collocated with “sea view”. The correct translation should be “enjoy the sea view”.

The existence of Chinglish not only affects the readability and acceptability of the translations, but may also cause misunderstandings among foreign tourists, damaging Beihai’s international image.

4.2. Cultural barriers

Cultural differences pose a major challenge to the foreign publicity translation of Beihai coastal tourism. Cultural and tourism elements carry unique regional cultural memories and folk symbols, such as “北海银滩”, “涠洲岛”, “咸水歌” and so on. These elements are highly prone to information loss in cross-cultural communication. Fundamentally, the difficulties mainly lie in two aspects: information deficiency resulting from cultural default and cognitive deviation in the interpretation of cultural images.

Cultural default refers to the phenomenon that in communication within a specific cultural community, both parties implicitly omit certain information on the basis of shared cultural background knowledge. When communication takes place only among members with the same cultural background, such default will not cause comprehension barriers [12]. In other words, Cultural default refers to the cultural background information omitted by original authors for insider readers, which is missing in target texts due to target readers' lack of relevant cultural knowledge and leads to comprehension difficulties. The Beihai coastal tourism texts contain a lot of information about Chinese culture and Beihai’s local culture. If the translator does not fully consider the problem of cultural default and fails to provide supplementary explanations of relevant cultural background information during the translation

process, it is highly likely to cause foreign tourists to fail to understand the meaning of the translation.

Example 5: 南珠

If “南珠” is directly translated as “Nanzhu”, foreign tourists, who are unaware of the historical and cultural value of “Nanzhu”, will not understand why it is a specialty product of Beihai.

Due to differences in history, geography, values, and other aspects, the same thing may have different cultural imagery in Chinese and Western cultures. Cultural imagery refers to the specific cultural meanings and emotional attachments embodied by a certain thing in a particular cultural context. Li Minghui points out that cultural images contain unique and relatively stable cultural connotations, which are usually endowed with distinct national characteristics. Therefore, differences in cultural images may lead to barriers in cross-cultural communication [8]. Such a challenge also emerges in the translation of cultural images in Beihai coastal tourism texts.

Example 6: 龙

“龙” is a symbol of auspiciousness, authority, and power in Chinese culture. Some scenic spots in Beihai contain the word “龙” in their names, such as “龙回头” and “龙王庙”. If translators directly translate it as “Dragon”, it may evoke negative associations in foreign tourists because “Dragon”, which is a symbol of evil and ferocity, is completely opposite to the “dragon” imagery in Chinese culture. Therefore, “龙” can be translated as “loong”.

Example 7: 红树林

Known as the “Forest on the Sea”, Beihai’s “红树林” symbolize the resilience of life, ecological protection and harmonious coexistence in Chinese cultural and tourism narratives, serving as an iconic image of Beihai’s green coastal eco-tourism. They embody the Chinese people’s pursuit of revering nature and pursuing livability and wellness. Western audiences only have a general scientific understanding of mangroves as wetland vegetation and lack the poetic cultural association of “forests stretching into the sea with endless vitality”. The literal translation “mangrove forest” can only convey botanical information, losing the Chinese aesthetic appreciation of ecology and cultural connotations of wellness, and weakening overseas tourists’ perception of the value of Beihai’s ecological cultural tourism. “红树林” is translated as coastal mangroves, which not only retains the botanical meaning of the species, but also highlights its coastal geographical attribute.

4.3. Pragmatic Obstacles

Register refers to the variety of language that varies according to different situational contexts [3]. Register is defined as the linguistic variations that arise based on different communicative situations, communicative targets, and communicative purposes. Different registers exhibit distinct linguistic styles and expressive characteristics. There are various types of coastal tourism texts of Beihai, and different types of texts have distinct register requirements. If the translator fails to accurately understand the register during the translation process, causing improper register, it will affect the effectiveness of cross-cultural communication. For example, warning signs in scenic spots belong to the formal register and require concise,

serious, and standardized language. However, some translations of warning signs in scenic spots use colloquial expressions.

Example 8: “禁止攀爬” was translated as “Don’t climb”.

Although the meaning is correct, the register is too casual and does not meet the formal register requirements of warning signs. Therefore, the correct translation should be “No Climbing”.

As an important component of tourism texts, public signs serve as a core function to provide guidance, warnings, and information to tourists. The translations must be clear, accurate, and intuitive, enabling tourists to quickly obtain the necessary information. However, the translations of public signs in some scenic spots in Beihai have issues with unclear instructions, which fail to effectively fulfill their function, leading to barriers in cross-cultural communication. Some translations of signboards are too vague.

Example 9: The signboard of “前往码头” was translated as “Go to the pier”.

The translation fails to convey the specific direction and distance to the pier. It is unhelpful for foreign tourists to find their destination based on the translation. The issue of unclear instructions not only affects the tourism experience of foreign tourists but may also pose danger.

5. Translation Strategies in Cross-Cultural Communication and the Practice of Scenic Spot Optimization

To comprehensively enhance the quality of translations, this chapter will systematically elaborate on three dimensions: the selection of dialectical strategies, the coordination of addition and deletion skills, and the specialized optimization of typical scenic spots.

5.1. Dialectical Use of Domestication and Foreignization Strategies

Domestication and foreignization are two crucial strategies for handling cultural differences in the translation process. Domestication refers to translating cultural information from the source language text according to the cultural habits and expression patterns of the target language, making the translation more in line with the reading habits and cognitive level of the target readers, and enhancing the readability and acceptability of the translation. On the other hand, foreignization, refers to breaking through the constraints of the target language and retain the unique stylistic features of the original work. Its core lies in the source language culture [9]. In the English translation of Beihai coastal tourism texts, domestication and foreignization strategies should be used dialectically based on the translation purpose, text type, and the importance of cultural information.

5.1.1. Annotated Foreignization

Tourism texts abound with diverse cultural images. If the cultural images in tourism texts have no equivalents in the target culture, flexible translation strategies such as transliteration with annotations and amplification can be adopted to make these cultural images more acceptable to target readers [11]. For core culture-loaded terms with unique connotations in Beihai’s local culture, the foreignization and annotation method should be adopted. Specifically, transliteration or direct translation should be used to preserve the cultural characteristics of the source language. In addition,

relevant cultural background information should be supplemented through annotations to fill in cultural defaults with a view to helping foreign tourists understand their connotations.

Example 10: 疍家

Translation: Tanka people (boat dwellers who have lived on the sea for generations in Beihai)

Example 11: 南珠

Translation: Nanzhu Pearls (the legendary pearls produced in Beihai, known as the “King of Pearls” with a long history)

Example 12: 海上丝绸之路

Maritime Silk Road (an ancient maritime trade route connecting China with other countries. Beihai was an important starting point of it.)

The foreignization annotation method not only preserves the characteristics of the source language culture but also supplements necessary cultural background information. It can effectively avoid communication barriers caused by cultural default and promote the dissemination of local culture in Beihai. When using this strategy, annotations should be concise and clear, with key points highlighted.

5.1.2. Domestication

For some general tourism information, such as the opening hours of scenic spots, ticket prices, and sightseeing routes, as well as redundant modifiers in Chinese texts, domestication should be adopted. Additionally, sentence structures that do not conform to English expression habits should also be translated using domestication. Translation should be conducted according to English language rules and expression habits to ensure that the translation is concise, clear, and accurate, as well as easy to understand.

Example 13: 欢迎来到北海银滩，这里沙白如银、浪平如镜，是休闲度假的好去处。

Translation: Welcome to Beihai Silver Beach, a perfect place for leisure and vacation with silver sand and calm waves.

This sentence has removed redundant modifiers in Chinese and adjusted the sentence structure, making the translation more in line with English expression habits.

Example 14: 请勿大声喧哗

Translation: No Loud Talking.

The translation adopts a common expression form in English public signs, which conveys the warning message concisely and clearly.

5.2. The Rational Application of Addition and Omission Strategies

Amplification and omission are commonly used in tourism text translation. Their core purpose is to adjust the information content of the translation according to the translation purpose and the needs of the target readers, ensuring that the translation can accurately and effectively convey the core information of the source text.

5.2.1. Amplification

The amplification strategy is primarily employed to address cultural default issues, which involves supplementing essential cultural background information and contextual information to aid foreign tourists in comprehending the connotations of the translation. In the English translation of tourism texts, background information of culturally loaded words and implicit contextual information in the text, such as time, place, and characters, can be added.

Example 15: 北海老街始建于 1883 年，是“海上丝绸之路”的历史见证。

Translation: Beihai Ancient Street, first built in 1883, is a historical witness to the Maritime Silk Road, an ancient trade route linking China with the outside world.

The translation adds a definition of “Maritime Silk Road”, enabling foreign tourists to clearly understand its meaning.

5.2.2. Omission

Chinese tourism texts often emphasize the elegance and embellishment of language. Chinese is rich in four-character phrases, parallel structures, and redundant expressions, whereas English tourism texts prioritize conciseness and accuracy of information. Therefore, in translating Chinese into English, a strategy of abridgment should be adopted. This means removing redundant modifiers, duplicate information, and sentence structures that do not conform to English expression habits from the source text, in order to retain the core information.

Example 16: 银滩风光旖旎，景色迷人，沙白如银，浪平如镜，滩长无际，水清见底，是名副其实的“天下第一滩”。

Translation: Beihai Silver Beach, known as the “No.1 Beach Under Heaven”, boasts silver sand, calm waves, endless shoreline and clear water, presenting beautiful scenery.

The phrase “风光旖旎，景色迷人” overlaps with the detailed descriptions that follow, which is not in line with the concise expression habits of English. Therefore, the strategy of omission is adopted to remove redundant parts. In addition, multiple four-character phrases are integrated into concise noun phrases, making the translation more concise and clear, in line with English expression habits.

5.3. Special Optimization Practice for Typical Scenic Spot Translation

The following will conduct a detailed optimization analysis on three representative scenic spots.

5.3.1. Optimization of Weizhou Island Tourism Text Translation

Weizhou Island, as one of the most representative tourist attractions in Beihai, contains a great amount of professional vocabulary and cultural information related to volcanic geology, island ecology, and other fields in its scenic area overview text. The original translation suffers from issues such as Chinglish and cultural default.

Example 17: 涠洲岛是中国最大、最年轻的火山岛，拥有独特的火山地貌与丰富的生态资源。

The original translation: Weizhou Island is China's largest and youngest volcanic island, have unique volcanic landforms and rich ecological resources.

The optimized translation: Weizhou Island, the largest and youngest volcanic island in China, features unique volcanic landforms and abundant ecological resources.

The original translation contains grammatical errors and issues with Chinese-style expression. This optimized translation not only corrects grammatical errors but also replaces “have” with “features,” which is more in line with English expression habits, making the translation more concise and accurate.

Example 18: 火山弹 and 熔岩堆积

The original translation: “volcanic bomb” and “lava accumulation.”

These translations lack explanations. It is difficult for foreign tourists to understand their meanings. The translator can adopt a foreignization and annotation method, translating them as “volcanic bomb (a type of volcanic ejecta formed during volcanic eruptions)” and “lava accumulation (a landform formed by the accumulation of lava flows).” This can more easily help foreign tourists understand the geological features of the scenic area.

There are some issues with the original translations of some public signs on Weizhou Island.

Example 19: 注意落石

The original translation: Pay attention to falling stones.

The translation is too mild in tone, failing to alert tourists to the potential danger. The optimized translation is “Caution: Falling Rocks Ahead”. This adopts a common warning expression in English public signs, conveying the danger message concisely and clearly.

5.3.2. Optimization of Tourism Text Translation for Beihai Ancient Street

Beihai Ancient Street is renowned for its unique Qilou buildings and its rich historical and cultural heritage.

In tourism texts, the term “骑楼” is translated as “Qilou”. Foreign tourists may not understand its specific characteristics and cultural connotations. A method combining foreignization and annotation can be adopted to supplement the structural features and functions of Qilou. For example, “Qilou (a type of architectural style combining Chinese and Western features, with overhanging floors supported by pillars, which were mainly used for commercial purposes in ancient times)”. Such a translation can better assist foreign tourists in understanding this unique architectural style.

Beihai Ancient Street is home to numerous shops and specialty snack bars, and the translation of their commercial promotional texts directly impacts the consumption willingness of foreign tourists. The original translation suffers from issues such as Chinglish and unvivid expressions.

Example 20: 特色小吃: 虾仔饼

The original translation: Special Snack: Shrimp Cake

The translation fails to accurately convey the meaning of “虾仔” and the expression is too bland. The translation can be optimized to “Local Specialty: Shrimp Roe Pancake.” “Shrimp roe” accurately conveys the meaning of “虾仔”. Besides, “虾仔饼” is thin and not sweet. Changing “cake” to “pancake” is more appropriate. Additionally,

“Local Specialty” better highlights the regional characteristics of the snack compared to “Special Snack”.

5.3.3. Optimization of Tourism Text Translation for Qiaogang Food Custom Street

Qiaogang Food Street is a settlement of returned overseas Chinese in Beihai, and its tourism texts contain rich information about the fusion of Southeast Asian culture and local culture. The original translation has issues such as cultural default and inaccurate expression.

Example 21: 侨港风情街是越南归侨的聚居地，这里的建筑、美食都充满了东南亚风情。

The original translation: Qiaogang Style Street is a settlement of Vietnamese overseas Chinese, the buildings and food here are full of Southeast Asian style.

The translation has obvious grammatical errors and cultural default issues. It can be optimized to “Qiaogang Food Street is a settlement for Vietnamese returned overseas Chinese, where the buildings and food are full of Southeast Asian flavors.” The term “Qiaogang Food Street” is more appropriate than “Style Street”, as it accurately reflects the street’s focus on food. Additionally, the inclusion of “returned” accurately conveys the meaning of “归侨”. Furthermore, “Southeast Asian flavors” is a more vivid expression of Southeast Asian style.

6. Conclusions

Taking Beihai coastal tourism texts as the object, this study combines cross-cultural communication theory with Skopos theory, and analyzes the three major cross-cultural communication barriers in their English translation: language, culture and pragmatics. In addition, this study proposes targeted translation strategies, and applies them to analyze case studies of scenic spots. The core conclusions of this study are as follows: Beihai coastal tourism texts have distinct linguistic and cultural characteristics, rich in marine and historical cultural vocabulary. It often uses four-character phrases and parallel sentences, carrying abundant cultural-loaded information, which is both charming and poses cross-cultural communication challenges. The barriers in the English translation of Beihai coastal tourism texts are reflected at the linguistic, cultural, and pragmatic levels, affecting information transmission and the international image of the city. Based on the theories, it proposes the dialectical application of domestication and foreignization, reasonable addition and omission of translation, and foreignization annotation of culturally loaded words. It is confirmed that the strategies proposed in this study can effectively overcome barriers and improve the quality of translations through the analysis of three scenic spot case studies.

This study has certain limitations: the corpus only covers the core coastal scenic spots in Beihai, and does not involve areas such as the coastal mangroves in Jinhai Bay. Thus, the universality of the conclusions remains to be verified. The research method mainly focuses on text analysis and the combination of theory and practice, lacking empirical support such as tourist surveys.

In the future, this study should expand the scope of the corpus to enhance the universality of the conclusions and introduce empirical methods to clarify tourist needs. Subsequent research practices will help improve the quality of tourism text translation in Beihai and eliminate cross-cultural barriers.

Conflicts of Interest

The author declares that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this article.

Funding

This research received no specific grant from any funding agency in the public, commercial or not-for-profit sectors.

References

- [1] Hall, E.T. *Beyond culture*. Anchor Press-Doubleday: New York, USA, 1976.
- [2] Vermeer, H.J. *Skopos and Commission in Translation Action*. Routledge: London and New York, 1989.
- [3] Ai, Q. *Register Theory and C-E Translation of Tourist Texts*. Heifei University of Technology, Anhui, 2010.
- [4] Cao, H. *A Study on C-E Translation of Tourist Texts from the Perspective of Functional Translation Theory*. Jilin University of Finance and Economics, Jilin, 2017.
- [5] Chen, G. *Tourism Translation and Guide-Interpreting*. China Translation & Publishing Corporation: Beijing, China: 2004.
- [6] Huang, Y.L. A Study on C-E Translation from the Perspective of High Context and Low Context Cultures. *Modern English*, 2023, 19, 119-122.
- [7] Kang, N. On the Translation of Chinese Tourist Discourse from the Perspective of Textual Function. *Chinese Translation Journal*, 2005, 03, 85-89.
- [8] Li, M.H. *A Study on English Translation of Cultural Images in Tourist Texts from the Perspective of Reception Aesthetics*. Hainan University, Hainan, 2017.
- [9] Lu, J. *An Analysis of Tourism Text Translation in Guihzou Through Domestication and Foreignization Strategies*. Guizhou Normal University, Guihzou, 2017.
- [10] Lv, Q.Y. *A Study on Localization Strategies of Culture-Loaded Words in Domestic Games from the Perspective of Skopos Theory*. Beijing Foreign Studies University, Beijing, 2025.
- [11] Wei, J. English Translation Strategies of Cultural Images in Tourist Texts. *Contemporary Tourism*, 2019, 12, 285-286.
- [12] Wu, Y.L.; Wang, X.F. A Study on Cultural Default and Compensation Strategies in Cultural Scenic Spot Signage. *Modern and Ancient Literary Creation*, 2025, 44, 97-99.
- [13] Xiong, F.F. *A Study on C-E Translation of Tourist Texts from the Perspective of Skopos Theory*. Hainan University, Hainan, 2016.



© 2026 by the author(s); licensee International Technology and Science Publications (ITS), this work for open access publication is under the Creative Commons Attribution International License (CC BY 4.0). (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>)