VISUALIZING TOURISM TRANSLATION LITERATURE (2002-2023): A BIBLIOMETRIC REVIEW

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ABSTRACT

Background and Purpose: With the rapid development of tourism, language plays a significant role in influencing a tourist’s decisions when planning their trip, especially if they do not speak the language of the destination. Given the critical nature of information in the tourism industry, translating tourism materials for international tourists becomes essential. However, there has been limited bibliometric review on the issue. Thus, this bibliometric review aims to comprehend the existing literature and provide a visualized profile for various themes by analyzing hotspots, emerging trends, and the evolution of tourism translation studies.

Methodology: A bibliometric review was conducted using the China National Knowledge Infrastructure (CNKI). The review utilized CiteSpace software to generate a scientific knowledge map and visually analyzed 2764 research articles on tourism translation published in CNKI over the past 21 years (from 2002 to 2023). The analysis encompassed time, author, and institution mapping, keyword clustering, and the identification of emerging words.

Findings: The findings indicated that the study of tourism translation had sparked researchers’ enthusiasm, resulting in a general increase in the number of articles. Furthermore, various theoretical frameworks, including Skopos theory, Translation Aesthetics theory, and Adaptation theory, have been extensively analyzed in tourism texts. Although significant progress has been made in the exploration of translation strategies, there is still considerable room for advancement in terms of research methodology and perspective.
Contributions: This bibliometric review contributes to the advancement of knowledge in tourism translation, helps shape future research directions, and offers practical guidance for industry professionals, researchers, and policymakers involved in the tourism sector.

Keywords: Chinese-English translation, tourism translation, visual analysis, tourism materials, CiteSpace.


1.0 INTRODUCTION

Tourism translation, a multifaceted and intricate discipline, lies at the intersection of language, culture, and visual communication. As the global tourism industry continues to expand, the demand for effective translation practices in conveying the richness and nuances of travel experiences becomes increasingly vital (Sulaiman & Wilson, 2019). In the dynamic landscape of global tourism, the art of translation plays a pivotal role in transcending linguistic barriers and fostering cross-cultural communication (Fennell, 2022). As the tourism industry continues to flourish, so does the need for innovative approaches to translation that go beyond mere linguistic accuracy (Simón, 2022).

The significance of tourism translation in China heightened after successfully hosting major events, leading to increased research focus on translation skills in the industry. Tourism, a business centered on providing accommodation and services, employs various promotional channels such as posters, advertisements, and websites to attract visitors (Xu, 2020). Tourism information has always served as a communicative tool in tourism as it helps people from different cultural backgrounds to plan a trip. The English translation of tourism materials in China became increasingly significant when the Beijing Olympics in 2008 and the Shanghai World Expo in 2010 were successfully hosted in China (Zhu, 2005). The implementation of the “One Belt One Road” project by the China government in 2013 was another motivation that pushed the China tourism industry to occupy market shares (Yuan & Wang, 2021). Tourism translation, as an important publicity and marketing tool, is of great value to international tourists. Hence, translation skills are critical, and research on tourism translation has been increasing in recent years.
Interdisciplinary research enriches the comprehension of the fundamental principles and rules of tourism translation, leading to more effective solutions for practical challenges in the field. Tourism translation is a cross-linguistic, cross-social, cross-temporal, cross-cultural, and cross-psychological communicative activity (Feng, 2018). Researchers engage in interdisciplinary research on tourism texts from various perspectives to advance the field of tourism translation study, drawing on theories and research methodologies from other disciplines. Tourism translation is becoming more closely aligned with other humanities and social sciences due to its practical, open, and comprehensive aspects. Consequently, the study of tourism translation from an interdisciplinary theoretical viewpoint can illustrate, analyze, or explain the fundamental principles and rules of tourism translation on multiple levels and effectively address their practical issues.

Tourism translation faces significant challenges, including various issues. There are numerous problems in the process of tourism translation, such as cumbersome and lengthy introductions, inconsistent translation of terms, and a lack of reliable reference tools (Xu, 2020). The irregularity and confusion in translating tourism materials have significantly affected the cultural promotion of Chinese scenic tourist spots and are detrimental to the rapid development of Chinese tourism. Additionally, promotional English materials for major scenic spots in China need revision in terms of word spelling, numbers, grammar, translation strategies, and Chinglish (Huang et al., 2020). However, little bibliometric review has been carried out on the issue. The existing studies primarily focus on linguistic accuracy, often neglecting the bibliometric review that plays a crucial role in conveying the experiential richness of tourism translation. Therefore, using a bibliometric network by CiteSpace, this study presents an in-depth analysis of tourism translation and understands China’s trends and directions in this area that have emerged from 2002 to 2023.

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW
2.1 Translation Strategies in Tourism Materials
Tourism translation, as a form of evocative text, places emphasis on meeting the readers’ needs and prioritizes effective information transfer. According to Tribe and Paddison (2023), tourism texts must satisfy readers’ needs for accurate information, highlighting the critical nature of tourism translation. Previous studies have examined translation quality in tourism materials including public signs (Tian, 2018), brochures (Yang, 2019), tourism texts (Liu, 2011), tourism websites (Wang, 2019), and tourist posters (Bu & Cai, 2015).
Conventional research on translation strategies for tourism materials predominantly delves into straightforward translation techniques. This involves analyzing the distinctive features of tourism materials to identify various errors in translation strategies. Subsequently, the research suggests specific translation methods or techniques, primarily engaging in a basic discussion of these strategies. For instance, Shi and Li (2023) suggested the use of omission, borrowing, imitation, merging, and abbreviation strategies for adaptive selection of transformations in the linguistic dimension. Pendit et al. (2023) emphasized that translators should learn to deal with and harmonize the relationship between cultural differences and differences in the translated text, employing appropriate translation strategies, especially when dealing with geographical structures, human characteristics, historical backgrounds, myths, and legends. Hatipoğlu (2023) concluded that nine translation strategies should be applied when translating restaurant menus from Turkish into English, including preservation, addition, omission, globalization, localization, transformation, and creation. Susini et al. (2023) focused on adjustments in the translation of public signs from Indonesian into English, revealing the linguistic adjustments in Bali were induced by linguistic and cultural differences between Indonesian as the source language and English as the target language.

2.2 Theories in Tourism Translation

Many scholars have focused not only the translation strategies but also on translation theory, including Skopos theory (Salih, 2023), Function-plus-loyalty theory (Li, 2021), Variation Translation theory (Liu, 2023), Ecological Translation theory (Xing & Zhou, 2023), and Reception Aesthetic theory (Jin, 2015). Among these German functional translation theory stands out. This perspective views translation as a cross-cultural activity centered around the text’s function. It promotes the idea that translators should thoroughly consider the unique function of the text, the expectations of the target language readers, the client’s requirements, and other relevant factors. Reiss’s theory of text types, Vermeer’s Skopos theory, and Nord’s Function-plus-loyalty theory align with this particular school of thought. For example, Salih (2023) asserted that translation was a process aiming toward the target text from the standpoint of Skopos theory. The primary goal is to create a target text that effectively fulfills its intended purpose. Additionally, Salih emphasized that translators should approach their task in a way aligned with the needs and expectations of the target text’s receivers. According to Susini et al. (2023), the principles of translation included lexical, syntactic, chapter, and stylistic equivalency, in which the target text was faithfully translated to preserve the original language’s meaning in the context of public signs. Li (2021) investigated translation techniques
in functionalism for the introduction of West Lake tourist attractions. The findings demonstrated that (a) literal translation should be used when the meaning in Chinese could be expressed in an equivalent way in English, and (b) literal translation with annotation approach was used in texts with historical and cultural context. In contrast to functionalism, which focused on the target readers, ecological translation considered readers as integral components of the translation ecosystem. Ecological translation emphasized the central role of the translator in the translation process and the ecological coherence of the translation process. Xing and Zhou (2023) argued that translators should concentrate on the conversion of the three dimensions of eco-translation in terms of political awareness, cross-cultural communication awareness, and cultural capital export awareness to avoid misinterpretation of the original text and reflect the communicative intent of the original text in the translated text.

However, there has been a limited number of authors who have conducted bibliometric review on tourism translation. The main weakness of the study was the failure to visually analyze the tourism translation literature using CiteSpace. In this study, tourism translation literature in the CNKI database will be analyzed by CiteSpace to comprehend the existing literature and provide a visualized profile for various themes through the analysis of the hotspots, emerging trends, and the evolution of tourism translation studies.

3.0 RESEARCH DESIGN
This study adopts a bibliometric research design, aiming to comprehensively analyze academic papers related to tourism translation. The bibliometric approach facilitates the quantitative examination of patterns and trends within the scholarly literature on tourism translation, allowing for an in-depth exploration of the field’s current status and future directions (Jiang et al., 2019). This study employs CNKI as its major database for data collection to analyze in depth how tourism translation is generated. With an emphasis on social scientific articles regionally, CNKI is the largest and most comprehensive database of publication metadata and impact indicators in China (Yang et al., 2021). According to Li and Hu (2022), “the bibliometric methods and tools have been developed to help researchers in different fields construct knowledge maps, assess collective thought states on topics, and identify hot spots in the research field” (p. 144). CiteSpace is a bibliometric analysis visualization software for visualizing and analyzing trends and patterns in the scientific literature for progressive knowledge domain visualization (Chen et al., 2014). This study examines the current situation, hotspots, and upcoming trends in tourism translation by using CiteSpace to analyze academic papers gathered in CNKI linked to tourism translation. It provides an overview of significant
issues, leading organizations, writers, and journals in the field, the distribution of various categories, and the foreseeable future. The search term is subject %="tourism translation" or title %="tourism translation", and the literature type is “article”. After data dealing, there were 2764 articles retained for further screening published from 2002 to 2023, which were reviewed on 15 July 2023. Such a study using the CiteSpace 6.2.R2 provides a bibliometric network profile of tourism translation and casts a light on the relevant studies in the future.

4.0 ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION
This study investigated the literature on tourism translation from the CNKI database. A total of 2764 articles on tourism translation were screened from the CNKI database for visualization and analysis. The study focused on four aspects: time, authors, institutions, keywords, and research trends, utilizing CiteSpace software.

4.1 Time Distribution of Tourism Translation Studies
The number of annual publications serves as an essential indicator of the development trend in tourism translation research. Figure 1 demonstrates an annual increase in papers published between 2002 and 2014. Before 2008, there were fewer than 100 papers dedicated to tourism translation research each year, reflecting the early stage of this field. After 2008, more than 100 papers on tourism translation were published annually. Among them, 263 papers on tourism translation were published in 2014, marking a significant turning point. The Beijing Olympic Games 2008 and the Shanghai World Expo 2010 provided the world with a new understanding of China and its culture, generating increased interest among foreign tourists in Chinese culture, and leading to a yearly increase in inbound tourists (Peng & Wang, 2008). With the full implementation of the Belt and Road Initiative in China in 2013, cities aimed to enhance all forms of public information in bilingual/multilingual public notices for international tourists. The objective was to improve the city’s global perception and address the language service requirements arising from the swift expansion of international tourism. Since then, an escalating number of scholars have directed their focus toward researching tourism translation. The quantity of papers published annually between 2015 and 2017 indicated a declining pattern. Nonetheless, in 2018, the number of published articles increased by 11 papers compared to 2017. The subsequent downward trend observed from 2019 to 2023 could be attributed to the gradual maturation of tourism translation research.
4.2 Author Distribution of Tourism Translation Studies

The knowledge graph of author co-occurrence in tourism translation research was obtained using CiteSpace software. The time frame was set from 2002–2023 with a 1-year time slice when the node types were set to authors. As depicted in Figure 2, each circle represented an author, with the size of node indicating the number of articles published by the author. There were a total of 628 nodes and 99 links. The most influential authors in the tourism translation field in China included Yu Yibing, Xiao Le, Li Dan, Xiang Cheng, Ye Miao and others. However, there was a need to strengthen collaboration among these authors. The network of the entire map appeared fragmented, with only a few links between each author node, indicating limited collaboration in this research field. Only a few authors had close relationships, such as Liu Dejun and Chen Yanjun, Yang Sigui and Ran Longsen, Zhao Jianxia and Liu Ruiqiang, and He Jizong and Jiang Hua. Most of authors were independent researchers. CiteSpace software also counted the total sample papers designed by 628 authors.
To understand these authors and their published articles, the information on the top 10 authors is presented in Table 1. The top 10 researchers included in Table 1 have published more than four articles, with Yu Yibing having the highest number of papers published (nine articles), securing the first position. Xiao Le follows in second with seven articles, while Xiang Cheng and Ye Miao are in third, each having published six articles. Li Dan, Chen Yanjun, Liu Juan, and Wen Quan share the fourth with five publications each. Yang Qiong and Ding Li are in the fifth place, each having published four articles. Among the top 10 authors, Ye Miao was the first to investigate tourist translation in China, with publication dates starting in 2005. In contrast to Yu Yibing, Xiao Le, and Xiang Cheng, Ye Miao has published relatively few works in this field of study. Xiao Le has been studying tourism translation since 2008, while Yu Yibing and Xiao Le have been working on tourism translation since 2013. However, the most influential authors have published only nine articles, which may not be sufficient for the development of this field in China. Nevertheless, only limited number of articles have been published in the field of tourism translation study.

Figure 2: The mapping of the author co-occurrence network
Table 1: Top 10 authors related to tourism translation study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Authors</th>
<th>Starting year of publication</th>
<th>Publications</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Yu Yibing</td>
<td>2013</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Xiao Le</td>
<td>2008</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Xiang Cheng</td>
<td>2013</td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Ye Miao</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Li Dan</td>
<td>2020</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Chen Yanjun</td>
<td>2008</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Liu Juan</td>
<td>2014</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Wen Quan</td>
<td>2013</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Yang Qiong</td>
<td>2016</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Ding Lifu</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>4</td>
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4.3 Institution Distribution of Tourism Translation Studies

The knowledge graph of institution co-occurrence in tourism translation research was obtained using CiteSpace software. As shown in Figure 3, the time frame was set from 2002–2023 with a 1-year time slice and the node types were set to institution. The nodes numbered 603, and there were 37 links. A circle represented a research institute, with the size of the node indicating the number of papers published by the institutions. The most influential institutions in the tourism translation field in China included Liaoning University of Technology, Henan Normal University, Central South University, Taiyuan Tourism College, South-Central Minzu University, and Leshan Normal University. However, the institutions were dispersed in terms of cross-institutional research, and there was no apparent clustering. This illustrated that academic groups had taken an interest in this field of study, while the research was mainly independent, and the institutions lacked a sense of community. Knowledge transfer and the mobility of research findings were not substantial.
Table 2: Top 10 institutions related to tourism translation study in CNKI database

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Publications</th>
<th>Starting year of publication</th>
<th>Institutions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2015</td>
<td>Liaoning University of Technology</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Henan Normal University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Central South University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2013</td>
<td>Taiyuan Tourism College</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>South-Central Minzu University</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2009</td>
<td>Leshan Normal University</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2015</td>
<td>Xi’an FanYi College</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2016</td>
<td>Chizhou University</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2013</td>
<td>Changchun Sci-Tech University</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2012</td>
<td>Sichuan Minzu College</td>
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As shown in Table 2, Liaoning University of Technology has made remarkable achievements in tourism translation studies in China since 2015. Henan Normal University and Central South University have also contributed to achievements in tourism translation research. Judging from the starting year and the number of articles published by the research institutions, Leshan Normal University was among the first to achieve in the field of tourism translation. However, the number of published articles was relatively small. Later, Henan Normal University, Central South University, South-Central Minzu University, Sichuan Minzu College, Changchun Sci-Tech University, Taiyuan Tourism College, Liaoning University of Technology, Leshan
Normal University, and Chizhou University began to publish articles in tourism translation, contributing to making tourism translation more popular in China. Consequently, it could be concluded that, at this time, universities were the dominant force in tourism translation research. Despite the academic accomplishments achieved, numerous research gaps remained.

4.4 Keyword Distribution of Tourism Translation Studies

The co-keyword network belongs to the category of topic co-occurrence network, utilizing a word frequency analysis algorithm based on word frequency and co-occurrence (Lozano, 2019). It serves to represent the knowledge distribution across different topics, disciplines, and physical spaces (Hu et al., 2020). According to Li and Hu (2022), “The word frequency analysis method extracts the keywords or subject terms that can convey the key messages from the research and specify research in a field” (p. 153). Li and Gong (2018) indicated that the relationship between topics and keywords could be explored by using the network of co-occurring topic words and co-occurring keywords. Thus, the keyword co-occurrence analysis may access the author’s first-hand information, which helps explain the study themes and current issues. As shown in Figure 4, links represent the co-occurrence of two keywords. As the link strength increases, the link becomes stronger. The evolution of color from grey to red represents the variation of the hot topic over time, visible in the bottom left corner of Figure 4. The size of the circle represents the keyword’s frequency, with less frequent keywords depicted by smaller circles, and more frequent ones by larger circles. Figure 4 illustrates that the nodes are 490 and the links are 676. Tourism translation, translation strategies, and Skopos theory have been critical topics in tourism translation in China in the past two decades. Tourism translation is the most significant node, while translation strategies and Skopos theory are also more prominent than other keywords. The ring’s color, from grey in the core to red in the outer ring, indicates that the research on these three topics has been hot from 2002 to 2023. The connections between the many nodes are extraordinarily complicated, indicating that the research on tourism translation is currently advanced and has grown into a vast network. Additionally, the emergence of tiny nodes like Chinese-English translation and tourist attractions shows that China’s tourism translation study started to combine studies with conversion in two languages in field research at that time.
As shown in Table 3, the top 10 keywords in tourism translation studies are identified. The keywords with high occurrence times include tourism translation (114), translation strategies (80), Skopos theory (42), tourism English (36), tourism text (35), public signs (32), tourist translations (28), Chinese-English translation (28), English translation (25), and cultural difference (20). Betweenness centrality is an index reflecting the importance of keywords in the scientific knowledge map (Zhang, 2016). A critical node is defined as betweenness...
centrality exceeding 0.1 in CiteSpace (Chen et al., 2010), so keywords tourism translation (0.23) and translation strategies (0.20) are critical nodes, while tourism text and cultural difference are the lowest betweenness centrality (0.02 and 0.03 respectively). Many keywords belong to the category of tourism translation, such as tourism text, tourist attractions, and public signs, indicating that tourism translation research continues to focus on translation strategies and techniques. Among them, the keyword, Skopos theory, appears more frequently, indicating that relevant scholars concentrate on Skopos theory when researching tourism translation. Additionally, the keyword, cultural difference, also commonly appears, indicating its significant role in advancing the growth of tourism translation research in China and providing novel viewpoints on Chinese tourism translation.

![Figure 5: Keyword clustering map of tourism translation study](image)

To further classify the co-occurrence keywords in tourism translation research, these high-frequency keywords are divided into seven clusters: tourism translation (#0), translation strategies (#1), tourist attractions (#2), tourism English (#3), Skopos theory (#4), red tourism (#5) and adaptation theory (#6) in Figure 5. When the module value is near zero, it suggests that the boundaries between modules are unclear. When the module value is between 0 and 1, an acceptable value and an approximately centered position of the value indicate unambiguous module boundaries (He, 2018). As shown in Figure 5, the modularity Q value is 0.6705 in
keyword clusters related to tourism translation, which indicates that it is an acceptable value and an approximately centered position of the value. According to Rao and Liu (2017), the silhouette $S$ value of a cluster assesses the effectiveness of a clustering configuration. Its range of values is from -1 to 1. The most significant value represents a flawless solution. $S>0.5$ is typically regarded as a respectable clustering class, and $S>0.7$ is a convincing clustering class (Chen et al., 2010). In Figure 5, the mean silhouette value of 0.9067 indicates a high degree of independence between modules, which is between -1 and 1, a reasonable value.

4.5 Trends of Tourism Translation Studies in China

Trending topics in tourism translation research between 2002 and 2023 are analyzed by keyword burst analysis. Keyword citation burst, which denotes the direction of trend shift in the research field, is defined as the dramatic increase in the number of citations within a certain period (Chen et al., 2014). Burst detection is an effective analytical method for identifying keywords of particular concern to the relevant scientific community over time (Guo, 2022). CiteSpace was employed to conduct citation bursts analysis to detect intense research directions in tourism translation. High-frequency keywords can effectively highlight the research hotspots in the field (Wei et al., 2020).

As shown in Table 4, the word “year” represents the starting time of the analysis; the word “strength” means the intensity of the bursts; the word “begin” means the starting year of the burst of keywords; “end” represents the end year of the burst of keywords. The red bars represent frequently cited keywords. The green bars represent infrequently cited keywords. The keywords with the strongest citation bursts in tourism translation literature were analyzed and
visualized in keyword burst maps using CiteSpace to obtain the frontier topics and research trends based on their appearance over time, as detailed in Table 4. The result showed that twenty-five keywords had the strongest citation bursts from 2002 to 2023. In this study, the most recent burst keywords included “tourist translation (6.23)”, “tourist attractions (5.98)”, “public signs (5.79)”, and “tourist materials (5.23)” according to the intensity of the bursts. Before 2012, burst keywords were mainly related to basic tourism translation, such as translation principle (beginning in 2003) and translation method (beginning in 2008). Then, functional translation theory (beginning in 2009) and reception aesthetic theory (beginning in 2009) gradually developed in the first decade. After 2012, keywords like red tourism (beginning in 2015), ecological translation (beginning in 2018), and rural tourism (beginning in 2021) started to emerge in the latest decade. Currently, red tourism has become the most popular research topic. The keyword “red tourism” began in 2015 and ended in 2023 with a duration of nine years, which indicated that the studies on tourism translation would focus on spreading traditional Chinese culture in the future. As China becomes increasingly the central on the world stage, and due to the profound integration and mutual influence between China and the world, telling the story of China in English and introducing a comprehensive China to the world has become essential (Cheng & Lu, 2008). The keyword with a citation burst reveals a deeper understanding of tourism translation studies in China.

5.0 CONCLUSION
This study, using CiteSpace knowledge mapping, visually analyzed the hot topics and research frontiers in tourism translation by reviewing the literature on tourism translation. Utilizing a bibliometric approach and data from the CNKI database, the research aimed to explore the research gaps in the field of tourism translation from 2002 to 2023. The analysis encompassed time, author, and institution mapping, keyword clustering, and the identification of emerging words. The findings revealed that the study of tourism translation had captured researchers’ enthusiasm, leading to a general increase in the number of articles. Moreover, among the latest research results, some emerging keywords have surfaced in tourism translation research, such as publicity translation and red tourism. While these finding are preliminary to some extent, they offer new directions for researchers in tourism translation. Moreover, various theoretical frameworks, including Skopos theory, Translation Aesthetic theory, and Adaptation theory, have been extensively analyzed in tourism texts. Despite significant progress in exploring translation strategies, there remains considerable room for advancement in research methodology and perspective. As for future research directions, there is a need to explore the
opportunities and challenges presented by emerging technologies and their potential to enhance translation quality, accessibility, and efficiency in the tourism industry.

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