

Intercultural Competence in Advertising Translation: Human Mediation vs. AI Limitations

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ABSTRACT: This study examines advertising translation from an intercultural perspective, focusing on the comparison between AI-generated translations and human-mediated localisation and transcreation in the Italian market. Drawing on theories of intercultural communication and intercultural competence, it considers translation as a form of intercultural mediation in which linguistic transfer must be combined with cultural adaptation. The analysis is based on a selected corpus of international advertising slogans, their official Italian versions, and AI-generated translations produced by ChatGPT and Google Translate. Using House's functional-pragmatic Translation Quality Assessment model, the study shows that AI systems can produce grammatically accurate translations but often fail to preserve the persuasive, rhetorical, and cultural functions of slogans. By contrast, human-mediated localisation and transcreation remain more effective in ensuring communicative impact and cultural appropriateness in advertising.

KEYWORDS: intercultural communication, competence, culture, translation, AI (Artificial Intelligence)

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Introduction

In increasingly globalised contexts, communication frequently occurs across cultural boundaries, positioning intercultural communication as a key area of scholarly inquiry in both theory and practice. It refers to the exchange of meaning between individuals from different cultural backgrounds, shaped by distinct values, beliefs, and communicative norms (Ting-Toomey, 1999). Foundational studies demonstrate that culture significantly influences the production and interpretation of messages: Hall (1976) distinguishes between high-context and low-context communication styles, while Hofstede (1980) identifies key cultural dimensions affecting communicative behaviour. These perspectives emphasise that communication across cultures is inherently complex and may result in misinterpretation without appropriate cultural awareness.

Within this framework, communication extends beyond the mere transmission of information and constitutes a process of meaning negotiation across culturally conditioned perspectives. Individuals operate within what Hofstede (2004) conceptualises as a “software of the mind”, which shapes both interpretation and interaction processes. Consequently, effective communication in intercultural contexts requires the capacity to recognise and adapt to cultural differences (Bennett, 2013). This capacity is commonly defined as intercultural competence, understood as the capacity to communicate appropriately and effectively in multicultural situations through the integration of knowledge, skills, and attitudes (Bennett & Bennett, 2004; Deardorff, 2009).

These considerations are particularly relevant in the field of translation, which can be understood as a form of intercultural mediation. Translators do not merely transfer linguistic content but negotiate meaning between source and target cultures, ensuring both accuracy and contextual appropriateness. This role becomes especially critical in advertising, where communication is inherently persuasive and culturally situated. In this domain, preserving communicative effectiveness often requires adaptation rather than literal translation, leading to practices such as localisation and transcreation (Cruz García, 2018; Gromová et al., 2017).

Concurrently, the increasing use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in translation introduces new challenges. While machine translation systems are capable of generating grammatically accurate outputs, they frequently encounter limitations in culturally sensitive and creative texts, such as advertising slogans, in which meaning relies on implicit references, rhetorical devices, and emotional resonance (Alisherovich, 2025; Wojtaszek, 2025). This raises questions regarding the extent to which AI can effectively support translation in contexts where cultural adaptation and persuasive impact are essential.

Against this theoretical background, this study examines the role of AI in advertising translation from an intercultural perspective. Specifically, it examines to what extent AI-generated

translations are able to preserve the communicative, persuasive, and cultural functions of advertising slogans, in comparison to human-mediated localisation and transcreation in the Italian market. By applying a functional-pragmatic framework to a selected corpus of international slogans and their Italian adaptations, the study evaluates the effectiveness of AI translation in culturally sensitive contexts and assesses whether human-mediated transcreation remains necessary to ensure communicative and persuasive impact.

1. Intercultural communication: a bridge between cultures

Intercultural communication is the exchange through which individuals from different cultural backgrounds exchange information and meaning, often shaped by different values, beliefs, and communication styles. According to Hall (1976), culture profoundly shapes how individuals perceive and interpret messages, distinguishing between high-context and low-context communication styles. Hall's framework highlights how implicit versus explicit communication can lead to misunderstandings in cross-cultural settings. Similarly, Hofstede (1980) emphasises the role of cultural dimensions, such as individualism versus collectivism, power distance and uncertainty avoidance, in influencing interpersonal and organisational communication. Ting-Toomey (1999) expands this discussion exploring how cultural values affect conflict management and facework strategies. Together, these perspectives show that effective intercultural communication requires cultural awareness, empathy, and adaptability to bridge differences and foster mutual understanding.

Intercultural communication is a strategic tool for managing diversity, both on a strictly human level and in relationships between countries and organisations. Intercultural communication enables exchange, encourages dialogue, fostering the desire to enrich ourselves with new and diverse elements. The encounter between different cultures is a source of enrichment for both. Intercultural communication supports us in understanding diverse concepts and meanings from other cultures, and in managing these differences constructively, flexibly, and creatively. Engaging with others and valuing cultural differences represents an important step towards more complete, evolved, and open forms of communication and relationships. Intercultural communication can therefore be defined as a process of symbolic exchange, in which several cultural communities, different from each other, try to share meanings in an interaction situation (Ting-Toomey, 1999). Using Hofstede's metaphor (2004), each person is equipped with a specific "software of the mind," a mental system built on the values specific to their culture that is not always compatible with those of other individuals. In intercultural relations, this system cannot be ignored: the communication that arises from such contacts must be clear, unbiased, and context-appropriate. Interaction with others fosters reflection and reassessment of our own mental systems, recognise ourselves, and question our ways of thinking

and behaving: it is through dialogue with others that we immerse ourselves in a world completely different from our own and develop acceptance of it. The process of negotiating one's identity presupposes, therefore, a continuous exchange with the external relational and social context. The growing multiculturalism that characterizes modern societies leads people to continually redefine their identity and subjectivity. This implies a close relationship between ourselves and others, such that identity and otherness are profoundly intertwined, and their connection is perpetuated through socialization processes: identity is therefore a phenomenon that arises from the dialectic between the individual and society (Malizia, 2006).

Cultures differ in their languages, behaviour patterns, and values. Therefore, attempts to use oneself as a predictor of shared assumptions and responses to messages is unlikely to work. Cross-cultural communication avoids inappropriate assumptions of similarity and encourages the consideration of difference. In other words, the intercultural communication approach is difference-based (Bennett, 2013, p. 2).

Intercultural communication is a highly complex process: recognising the other and engaging in a “dialogue with the different” has never been easy for humankind. This is particularly challenging in contemporary contexts, where otherness is often perceived negatively. Cultural diversity thus becomes a critical factor in communication processes, but also an opportunity for growth for all stakeholders. Effective and proactive communication supports the process of sharing and exchanging values, traditions, and beliefs, building a bridge between them that leads to discussion and active participation among communication stakeholders. Intercultural communication, therefore, becomes a key skill for intercultural relations, helping individuals to “appreciate and understand differences they encounter in everyday life” (Zhu, 2019, p. 211).

The intercultural communication model proposed by Samovar and Porter (2024) illustrates how the content and meaning of a message change when it is encoded by a person belonging to one culture and decoded by a person from another culture within their own sociocultural context. Messages often change meaning during transmission: the greater the differences between cultures, the more likely the message will be changed. When different cultures communicate, misunderstandings are inevitable and recurring. The model highlights the influence of culture on communication. Certainly, a broader understanding of a culture's perceptions, values, and beliefs generates greater awareness of their communication style and anticipates potential misunderstandings.

Individuals should become more aware of the cultural basis of their own behaviours, perceptions, beliefs, and values. Without cultural awareness, it is impossible to be effective in a world that is totally globalized and multicultural and where the possibilities for intercultural contact are

continuous and incessant, and for which every individual should possess a certain “intercultural competence”.

2. From intercultural competence to intercultural communicative competence

If intercultural communication is message exchange between different cultures, intercultural competence is the ability to do so effectively and appropriately, requiring knowledge, skills, and attitude to navigate cultural differences successfully, extending beyond language to include awareness, empathy, and adapting behaviour for mutual understanding in diverse settings. Competence is the key outcome that enables successful communication across cultures, integrating cultural sensitivity, self-awareness, and behavioural adaptability.

Intercultural competence broadens perspective, being more effective in interactions with other speakers, and having greater personal and professional opportunities. According to Holden (2002), the key elements to bring about intercultural competence are participation, interaction, communication, networking, collaborative learning, knowledge transfer, experiences and values, and the creation of a cooperative climate. Moreover, it includes the ability to gain and interpret new information, approaches, practices and products of a different cultural context (Koehn & Rosenau, 2002). Literature refers to the concept of intercultural competence as inclination, sensitivity, attitude, character or personal features and qualities such as respect, open-mindedness, empathy and curiosity. Intercultural competence is about an experience, both socially and communicatively oriented, starting with the concrete relation with *the other*, different from us, within a shared space where *other* elements meet through a mediation (Fabris, 2002).

Intercultural competence is considered as “the capacity to communicate effectively in multicultural situations, and to interact in appropriate ways in a variety of different cultures” (Bennett & Bennett, 2004, p. 149). Specifically, it is a set of capacities and abilities used in multicultural contexts as the ability to communicate effectively with people having different cultures, behaviours, traditions and values or the capacity to identify behaviours that are "culturally driven" and that allow us to completely understand the person we are communicating with. The development of intercultural competence requires consciously developing the conscious development of our own value system involving the cognitive, affective and behaviour-oriented levels. This enables individuals to act properly and spontaneously in an intercultural situation or context. Moreover, the development of intercultural competence is an active process of continuous learning, which implies a transformation of the person’s identity while experiencing different cultures or group interactions, in their own country or abroad (Richards, 2006). Risager (2007) conceptualised a model of intercultural competence where linguistic competences (linguastructural, languacultural competences and

interpretation), above all, are prevalent, while Kim (2002) and Deardorff (2009) claim that intercultural competence involves attitudes, skills, knowledge, and behaviours. It is clear that intercultural competence is “a multifaceted state of being – which includes knowing that there are cultural differences, what they are, and how to apply that knowledge. In essence, it is the ability to adapt to different cultural settings, the essence of being bicultural” (Ashwill & Hoâng Oanh, 2009, p. 141).

In addition to the core components of intercultural competence, an interculturally competent individual is expected to be flexible, motivated, tolerant and adaptable, to use appropriate linguistic means and communication styles, to listen, observe and adjust to different situations and behaviours. Intercultural competence not only regenerates experience but also creates a different knowledge, a “forth talent” (Reggio, 2009, p. 59). It emerges in critical cultural situations when individuals draw on previously unrecognised resources (Onorati et al., 2011). The complexity of this process is due to the fact that intercultural competences take into account cognitive, motivational and behavioural aspects. Developing intercultural skills is a complex, ongoing process that unfolds throughout a person's life (Portera, 2019). Such competences are the result of communicative, interactive, behavioural and language abilities. Moreover, most models of intercultural competence indicate “communicativeness” as core competence (Solhaug & Kristensen, 2020), which includes shared elements, such as relationship-building, listening, self-awareness, respect, perspective taking, adaptation and cultural humility (Arasaratnam-Smith & Deardorff, 2023). Intercultural competence involves both a social and communicative experience, as it is activated in the concrete encounter with individuals from different cultural backgrounds, within a shared space in which a mediation is triggered between elements arising from being different and mutually other.

The encounter between different cultures is indeed a source of enrichment for intercultural communication and facilitates understanding of a range of different concepts and meanings, which belong to people culturally different from ourselves, and to manage these differences constructively and flexibly. The concept of intercultural communication as a competence is particularly significant: intercultural communication competence is effectively achieved if a range of other skills, such as paralinguistic, gestural, proxemic, performative, pragmatic, psychosocial, and sociolinguistic, are also considered. Therefore, significant emphasis is placed on linguistic dimension as effective communication is a necessary skill both for living together and sharing common spaces and for building positive relationships between members of different cultures. According to the model developed by Byram (2014), intercultural communicative competence requires specific linguistic, sociolinguistic, and discursive skills and attitudes, as well as curiosity and openness, a readiness to suspend disbelief about other cultures and belief in one's own. This allows individuals to acquire new

knowledge of cultures and cultural practices, including skills in cross-cultural interactions. There are three core areas to take into account, involving linguistic, extralinguistic and contextual skills, that is knowing the language and using it in communicative contexts, governed by social, pragmatic, and cultural rules (Balboni, 2015). Balboni (2015) proposes his model of intercultural communicative competence to define the relationship between language and culture, which is especially useful in situations where intercultural communication becomes a necessary skill. In this context, he also discusses specific relational skills such as observing, decentering, and distancing oneself, suspending judgment, relativizing, actively listening, emotional understanding, and negotiating meaning. In order to transform a foreign language learner into an enlightened intercultural speaker in the foreign language teaching environment, language and culture must be introduced not as independent, but rather, as interdependent attributes of language learning (Nava, 2024).

The components of intercultural communication competence include attitudes, knowledge and understanding, discovery and interaction skills, interpretation and relationship skills, cultural awareness/education, and provide skills for acting on mutual understanding and effective communication. Intercultural communicative competence goes beyond language use to understanding how to communicate effectively and respectfully within diverse cultural frameworks, fostering deeper connections and avoiding misunderstandings.

Recalling the objective of this paper, intercultural communicative competence applied in translation means that a translator extends beyond lexical meaning, bridging cultural gaps by understanding source/target cultures, adapting messages appropriately, and mediating meaning for effective, nuanced communication. It makes them crucial "intercultural mediators" rather than merely bilingual speakers. It involves deep cultural knowledge, sensitivity, adaptability, and the ability to handle cultural differences, ensuring translations resonate culturally and do not cause misunderstandings.

3. Advertising translation: an intercultural perspective

Advertising marketing is a complex activity beyond linguistic transfer of a text from a source into a target language. Current studies highlight how advertising translation is a strategic and cultural process, whose main objective is preserving the persuasive effectiveness of the message destined to the target market, rather than the formal accuracy of source text (Cruz García, 2018; Gromová et al., 2017). A key debate concerns the relationship between standardisation and adaptation of advertising communications. On one hand, standardisation allows global coherence of the brand and cost reduction; on the other hand, research shows that cultural differences deeply influence the perception and the interpretation of advertisements, often requiring adaptation of the meaning of the source text

(Rasekh A'zam, 2013). In this context, translation becomes an essential tool to localise the message and make it culturally appropriate.

The analysis of advertising translation shows that slogans, metaphors, humour and cultural references resist literal translation. Therefore, research emphasises transcreation, i.e. the recreation of the advertising message in the target language, maintaining the same communicative objectives and emotional impact of the source text (Cruz García, 2018; Gromová et al., 2017). Thus, the translator assumes the role of cultural mediator, cooperating actively with the marketing strategy.

Another key aspect is the relation between culture and persuasion. Research shows that cultural values influence the most efficient persuasive strategies: what is effective in individualist cultures may be ineffective in a collectivist culture and vice versa (Rasekh A'zam, 2013). Consequently, advertising translation should consider not only the language, but also elements, such as social values, communicative norms, and expectations of the target audience. Finally, literature shows how advertising translation is closely linked to brand identity. An inappropriate adaptation can undermine the image of a company, while a culturally aware translation can reinforce the credibility and the effectiveness of a brand also in international markets (Haihua, 2024).

In this context, the introduction of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and of machine translation systems creates opportunities but also challenges, mostly when dealing with advertising texts with a high creative content (Ločmele, 2025). A key difficulty of AI in advertising translations concerns the limited cultural sensitivity of automatic systems. In advertisements, metaphors, cultural allusions, and implicit references are used, with which AI tends to deal in literal or standard ways. As a result, translations may be accurate but pragmatically ineffective or culturally inappropriate for the target audience (Alisherovich, 2025).

Another issue concerns the persuasive function of advertising texts. Research shows that AI systems operate mainly on a statistical and probabilistic basis, thus struggling to recreate communicative intention, tone or brand identity (Wojtaszek, 2025). This limits their effectiveness in texts oriented towards the creation of the brand image and the relation with the customers.

Professionally, AI also introduces difficulties linked to quality control and responsibility of the final result. Although automatic systems can enhance speed and reduce costs, they require significant human intervention and post-editing, mostly in texts where minor imprecisions can undermine the credibility of the brand (Wojtaszek, 2025). Thus, translators assume not only a linguist role, but also a more strategic one: they are reviewers, guaranteeing communicative coherence.

Greater reliance on AI risks standardisation of messages, in contrast with the need for advertisements to differentiate and adapt to different local markets. As literature highlights, effectiveness of advertising translation depends on the ability of responding to cultural and

communicative needs of the target audience, which is an objective which AI, currently, is not able of obtaining autonomously (Ločmele, 2025)

In conclusion, although AI represents a useful support instrument, advertising translation remains a domain where human intervention is essential. The difficulties linked to creativity, to culture and to persuasion confirm that AI can assist the translation process but cannot replace the role of the translator as cultural and strategic mediator.

4. AI: Localisation vs. Translation

In many global campaigns, especially in Italy, slogans are not translated literally, but adapted creatively, which is called transcreation. The purpose of this practice is to maintain rhythm, sound, rhyme or cultural impact on the target culture. In the following table the examples illustrate brands, which decided to localise their slogans, instead of just translating them.

The selection of slogans included in this study is guided by specific criteria in order to ensure methodological consistency and relevance to the research objectives. In particular, the sample focuses on globally recognised brands with established international campaigns, for which official Italian versions — either translated or transcreated — are available. Furthermore, the slogans were chosen to reflect a range of linguistic and rhetorical features, such as brevity, metaphor, rhyme, and cultural references, as well as varying degrees of translation complexity. This allows for a systematic comparison between source slogans, their Italian adaptations, and AI-generated translations, while reducing potential selection bias and ensuring alignment with the functional-pragmatic framework adopted in the analysis.

Brand	Source slogan	Source Language	Italian slogan	Notes
Nike	Just Do It	EN	Just Do It	Not translated officially, used in English also in Italy
Apple	Think Different	EN	Think Different	Not translated officially, used in English also in Italy
Mastercard	There are some things money can't buy; for everything else, there's Mastercard	EN	Ci sono cose che i soldi non possono comprare. Per tutto il resto c'è Mastercard.	Common translation in Italian campaigns

Esso	Put a tiger in your tank	EN	Metti una tigre nel motore	Creative adaptation, due to sound and Italian culture
Haribo	Haribo macht Kinder froh, und Erwachsene ebenso	DE	Haribo è la bontà che si gusta ad ogni età	Adaptation due to effectiveness and fluency in Italian
Swiffer	When Swiffer's the one, consider it done	EN	La polvere non dura, perché Swiffer la cattura	Translation preserves the meaning, but it is not literal
Coca-Cola	Open Happiness	EN	Stappa la felicità	Official translation of the Italian market
De Beers	A Diamond is Forever	EN	Un diamante è per sempre	Official translation for Italian campaigns
Coca-Cola	Taste the Coke side of life	EN	Vivi il lato Coca-Cola della vita	Translation adopted in the Italian markets
I ❤️ NY	I ❤️ NY	EN	Io amo New York	Translation used in Italian promoting materials

Table 1. Intercultural Adaptation of Advertising Slogans: Selected Examples

The following section examines the same slogans translated by two Machine Translation (MT) systems: ChatGPT and Google Translate. The first one is a Large Language Model (LLM) and creates generative, context-aware translations and is trained on diverse data sources, such as web text, books and some parallel corpora. It can consider larger context and understand tone and rhetorical devices, making it more appropriate for literature translation. On the other hand, Google Translate is an NMT and is trained on massive corpora and prioritizes word-for-word accuracy and consistency. Generally, its translations are rigid and refer to a limited context.

Original slogan	ChatGPT Version	Google Translate Version
Just Do It	Fallo e basta	Fallo e basta
Think Different	Pensa diversamente	Pensa in modo diverso

Original slogan	ChatGPT Version	Google Translate Version
There are some things money can't buy; for everything else, there's Mastercard	Ci sono cose che i soldi non possono comprare; per tutto il resto, c'è Mastercard	Ci sono cose che i soldi non possono comprare; per tutto il resto, c'è Mastercard
Put a tiger in your tank	Metti una tigre nel tuo serbatoio	Metti una tigre nel tuo acquario
Haribo macht Kinder froh, und Erwachsene ebenso	Haribo rende felici i bambini, e anche gli adulti	Haribo rende i bambini più eccitanti e più maturi
When Swiffer's the one, consider it done	Quando Swiffer è quello giusto, consideralo fatto	Quando Swiffer è la scelta giusta, considerala fatta
Open Happiness	Apri la felicità	Apri la felicità
A Diamond is Forever	Un diamante è per sempre	Un diamante è per sempre
Taste the Coke side of life	Assaggia il lato Coca-Cola della vita	Assapora il lato Coca-Cola della vita
I ❤️ NY	Io ❤️ NY	Amo New York

Table 2. Comparative Analysis of AI-Generated Advertising Slogan Translations

To evaluate translation quality beyond surface-level accuracy, this study adopts House's functional-pragmatic Translation Quality Assessment (TQA) model (Ehsani & Zohrabi, 2014), which is grounded in systemic functional linguistics and pragmatic theories of language use (Thúy, 2013; Liu et al., 2022). In contrast to purely linguistic or error-based approaches, House conceptualizes translation as the production of a target text that achieves functional equivalence with the source text, meaning that it reproduces not only semantic content but also the communicative purpose and interpersonal effects.

The model is based on a systematic comparative procedure in which both the source text and the target text are analysed through detailed textual profiling. This profiling relies on the notion of register, articulated through the dimensions of field, tenor, and mode, which together define how meaning is constructed within a specific communicative context (Mateo, 2014; Thúy, 2013). Field refers to the subject matter and type of social action, tenor captures the relationship between participants and the tone of interaction, and mode concerns the channel of communication and rhetorical organisation. By reconstructing these dimensions for both texts, the model enables a structured comparison aimed at identifying the extent to which the translation preserves the original communicative function.

A key aspect of House's framework is the distinction between overt and covert translation. Overt translations maintain a visible link to the source culture, whereas covert translations are

designed to function as if they were originally produced in the target culture, often requiring the application of a cultural filter to adjust pragmatic norms and expectations (Thúy, 2013; Liu et al., 2022). This distinction is particularly relevant in the context of advertising, where slogans are typically expected to operate as culturally embedded persuasive messages, thus aligning more closely with covert translation strategies.

The model also differentiates between overt errors, which involve denotative or linguistic mismatches, and covert errors, which arise when the translation fails to reproduce the appropriate register, tone, or pragmatic effect (Mateo, 2014). This distinction is especially useful for analysing advertising slogans, where translations may be lexically accurate but still ineffective in conveying persuasive intent.

The application of House's functional-pragmatic TQA model to the slogans presented in Table 2 reveals that AI-generated translations generally achieve denotative equivalence, but only partially preserve the functional and persuasive dimensions of the source texts. At the level of field, both ChatGPT and Google Translate tend to reproduce the propositional content accurately, as observed in slogans such as *Just Do It* and the Mastercard campaign, where the core message and communicative intent remain largely intact. However, differences emerge more clearly at the level of tenor and mode, which are crucial in advertising discourse. These dimensions involve tone, interpersonal engagement, brevity, and rhetorical structure, all of which contribute to the persuasive impact of slogans.

In several cases, the translations maintain semantic accuracy but fail to reproduce stylistic markedness and communicative force. For instance, *Think Different* is rendered in grammatically standard Italian forms (*Pensa diversamente / Pensa in modo diverso*), thereby losing the unconventional and iconic character of the original slogan. Similarly, the Swiffer slogan loses its rhyme and rhythmic structure, resulting in reduced memorability and persuasive appeal. These instances can be classified as covert errors, as the translations do not fully reproduce the pragmatic and rhetorical effect of the source text despite being semantically correct.

More critical issues arise in cases where lexical inaccuracies lead to a breakdown of meaning. The translation of *Put a tiger in your tank* as *Metti una tigre nel tuo acquario* represents a clear overt error, as the mistranslation of "tank" compromises both semantic content and communicative intent. Likewise, the Google Translate version of the Haribo slogan introduces semantic distortions that significantly alter the intended meaning and tone. In contrast, ChatGPT tends to produce more fluent and contextually plausible translations, but these remain largely literal and fail to recreate key persuasive features such as rhyme, wordplay, and cultural resonance.

Overall, the analysis shows that while AI-generated translations are generally linguistically accurate, they often fail to achieve functional equivalence in House's terms, particularly in relation to tenor and mode. Advertising slogans rely heavily on stylistic and cultural elements, and the inability of AI systems to reproduce these features results in translations that are communicatively weaker than their source texts. These findings support the view that human-mediated transcreation remains necessary to preserve the persuasive intent and cultural impact of advertising messages.

Despite its systematic structure, House's model presents some limitations. In particular, it does not provide explicit quantitative metrics for measuring equivalence, and the assessment of functional adequacy inevitably involves a degree of interpretation, especially in culturally sensitive domains such as advertising (Liu et al., 2022). For this reason, in the present study the model is used as a structured analytical framework, complemented by additional validation methods, including inter-rater evaluation and audience response testing, in order to enhance the reliability and robustness of the analysis.

A key limitation of House's TQA model lies in the inherent subjectivity of translation quality assessment, particularly in relation to the notion of functional equivalence. Determining whether a target text reproduces the same communicative effect as the source text necessarily involves interpretative judgment, especially with regard to dimensions such as tone, persuasiveness, and naturalness, which are not directly measurable and may vary across evaluators. As noted in the literature, subjectivity is an unavoidable component of qualitative assessment models, since evaluative decisions are shaped by individual interpretation as well as cultural and contextual factors (Tarvi, 2026; Hedayati et al., 2020). This limitation becomes especially significant in advertising discourse, where meaning is often constructed through implicit cultural references, humour, and symbolic associations. Although House's model attempts to account for these aspects through register analysis and the application of a cultural filter, it does not fully capture the complexity of socio-pragmatic effects that contribute to the persuasive power of slogans.

In comparison with alternative approaches to translation quality assessment, such as Reiss's text-type model (1981) or Nord's functionalist framework (1997), House's model (2015) offers a more detailed linguistic-pragmatic analysis but remains limited by the absence of operationalized evaluation criteria. More recent frameworks, including metrics-based models such as MQM, attempt to reduce subjectivity through standardised error categories and scoring systems; however, these approaches often prioritise formal accuracy over communicative effectiveness. Similarly, advances in automated evaluation and hybrid human-machine assessment highlight the need for more objective and replicable methodologies, while also confirming the difficulty of capturing pragmatic and cultural dimensions computationally (Rivera-Trigueros, 2022). In this respect, House's model (2015)

occupies an intermediate position: it provides a systematic and theoretically grounded framework, yet it does not eliminate the interpretative nature of evaluation.

Furthermore, the lack of explicit quantitative measures within House's TQA (2015) limits the replicability and comparability of results. For this reason, relying exclusively on this model may lead to partially subjective interpretations, particularly when analysing culturally sensitive texts. To mitigate this limitation, the present study complements House's framework with additional validation methods, including inter-rater evaluation and audience response testing, thereby enhancing the robustness and reliability of the analysis.

Within this methodological perspective, the findings indicate that literal translation strategies, whether human or AI-generated, tend to preserve semantic content but frequently fail to reproduce the persuasive and cultural functions of the source text. By contrast, localisation and transcreation demonstrate greater effectiveness, as they allow for the adaptation of persuasive messages, implicit cultural references, and culturally embedded symbols, as well as the reconstruction of emotional tone and audience resonance (Cruz García, 2018; Gromová et al., 2017; Zheng, 2018; Wojtaszek, 2025).

Consequently, while AI systems such as ChatGPT and Google Translate are capable of generating grammatically accurate and contextually plausible translations, their performance remains limited in domains where communicative success depends on cultural alignment and rhetorical impact. The application of House's TQA model therefore supports the conclusion that human-mediated transcreation remains the most effective approach for preserving the functional and pragmatic dimensions of advertising slogans, whereas AI translation is more appropriately applied to neutral or informational texts (Alisherovich, 2025).

5. Limitations of the study

This study analyses a limited set of slogans, which may not represent the full variability in advertising translation challenges across languages, cultures and different types of creative content. Moreover, this study adopts an analytical framework and does not consider empirical testing with a real target audience, which limits the generalisability of the conclusions.

Conclusions

This study shows that advertising translation is not a matter of linguistic transfer alone, but of intercultural mediation. In advertising, preserving meaning also requires preserving persuasive force, cultural resonance, and communicative effectiveness. The analysis indicates that AI-generated translations can be grammatically accurate and semantically acceptable but often fail to reproduce the rhetorical and cultural functions of slogans. By contrast, localisation and transcreation are more

effective because they adapt the message to the target culture and audience. AI can support the translation process, but in culturally sensitive and creative domains such as advertising, human intervention remains essential.

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