

LINGUISTIC STRATEGIES IN TOURISM PROMOTION: ENHANCING CUSTOMER ENGAGEMENT

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Abstract:

This study explores the relationship between linguistic strategies in tourism promotion and their measurable impact on tourist engagement and arrivals. Focusing on India's Incredible India and Spain's I Need Spain campaigns, the research combines content analysis, tourism statistics, and interdisciplinary theoretical frameworks from linguistics, marketing, and cultural studies. The findings demonstrate that emotionally resonant language, metaphorical framing, cultural coding, and multilingual accessibility are not merely stylistic choices but pivotal tools that influence tourist perceptions and behavior. Both case studies illustrate how strategic language use can foster brand identity, increase emotional connection with audiences, and drive significant growth in tourism numbers and revenue. The paper argues for a more deliberate integration of linguistic awareness into tourism marketing and policy-making and provides actionable recommendations for destination branding in a globalized, competitive tourism landscape.

Key words: *tourism discourse, metaphorical framing, emotive language, multilingual accessibility, destination branding, cultural coding*

JEL Classification: Z31, Z32

1. INTRODUCTION

Tourism promotion is, at its core, an act of persuasion: a linguistically and culturally rich endeavor that shapes traveler desires and expectations long before a journey begins. The advertising of specific tourist destinations can be nuanced and enhanced by adequate use of metaphor and linguistic artifice. From this point of view, linguistics offers valuable insights into how language influences tourist behavior. Effective use of language in promotional materials, such as brochures, websites, and advertisements, can make a destination more attractive. Thus, it can impact tourists' perceptions and decisions, ultimately affecting customer numbers. The degree to which this increase in tourism engagement happens varies depending on multiple factors which we will endeavor to present in this article.

In an increasingly competitive global tourism market, destinations are not merely selling geographic locations; they are marketing emotions, narratives, identities, and experiences. Modern tourists want more than decent accommodation and beautiful landscapes; spurred on by social media trends, they look for romantic, exotic or unusual experiences. A key element for selling such destinations is language, which operates not only as a tool for communication but as a mechanism for framing reality. The words, metaphors, idioms, and emotional tones used in tourism campaigns can significantly influence potential tourists' decisions as to which destination to choose. As such, their importance should not be overlooked.

While the tourism sector has long relied on visual media to market destinations, recent research emphasizes the ability of language to enhance tourism promotion—especially in brochures, destination websites, and social media content. The language of tourism is anything but neutral; it carries ideological, cultural, and economic weight. As Urry argues in his theory of the “tourist gaze,” the way tourists see and experience a place is often pre-structured by how it is described to them. In other words, “When we go away and become tourists, we look at the environment... we gaze at what we encounter... and the gaze is socially constructed.” (Urry, 1990). The implication is that language sells experiences but, more importantly, it also creates them. Before reaching the actual destination, tourists already form in their minds an image of what they want to expect; this image can be positively shaped and influenced by careful use of metaphoric,

emotional or cultural language. In this study, we investigate the correlation between specific linguistic features in tourism promotional materials and their measurable impact on tourist engagement and visitation numbers. We will use information from discourse analysis, marketing linguistics and tourism statistics to try to establish a connection between linguistics and tourism studies. Our aim is to present an interdisciplinary study that can offer usable data by analyzing how elements like metaphorical framing, emotive vocabulary, multilingual accessibility, and cultural references contribute to a destination's success in attracting international travelers.

This study focuses on comparative data from India and Spain, two countries that have launched large-scale tourism campaigns—"Incredible India" and "I Need Spain"—which are rich in strategic linguistic elements and have been extensively studied for their economic impact and branding effectiveness. Moreover, these destinations provide a fertile seedbed for the use of metaphorical language in promoting them as tourist attraction because of their romantic and exotic nature. By examining how language contributes to real-world outcomes such as increases in tourist arrivals or online engagement metrics, we seek to show that tourism promotion literature, when written properly, can act as a measurable driver of tourism behavior. We believe that in our era of digital connectivity and globalization, where tourists often rely on destination websites and user-generated content to plan trips, the strategic deployment of language can heavily influence where people choose to go, and how they visualize a tourist destination.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study draws from multiple interdisciplinary frameworks to examine how linguistic choices influence the effectiveness of tourism promotion. Despite its importance, the language of tourism is often overlooked as an object of study. At its core, it is a combination of semiotics, branding, and cultural identity construction. These elements come together to create a highly persuasive form of communication which manages to mesmerize and attract people to the intended destinations. Tourism discourse "[...] attempts to persuade, lure, woo and seduce millions of human beings, and, in doing so, convert them from potential into actual clients." (Dann, 1996). Thus, the language of tourism constitutes a specialized genre—an orchestrated performance that invites potential travelers into a constructed vision of a place. This genre is characterized by promotionality, which can be defined as the linguistic tendency to embellish, persuade, and dramatize in order to evoke desire. Terms such as "hidden gem," "breathtaking views," or "journey of a lifetime" are not merely descriptive; they are perlocutionary acts, designed to provoke action. In this case, it provokes the decision to travel to the promoted place.

Dann identifies two dominant rhetorical strategies in tourism discourse. The first one is the authenticity appeal, which emphasizes the "realness" of cultural experiences. For example, promotional materials promising an "authentic village life" would showcase all the pastoral, traditional elements of a tight-knit and quiet rural community. To people accustomed to the hustle and bustle of city life, such an experience would be immensely attractive. The second strategy is the fantasy appeal, which presents a paradise that promises to deliver a complete break from the mundane reality of everyday life. Both strategies rely on figurative and emotional language to bridge the gap between the place as it is and the place as it is imagined. According to Dann (1996), "tourism promotion is not merely a matter of providing information; it is about creating desire." Desire is best created through two mediums: enticing imagery and honeyed words. Thus, it is no coincidence that image and metaphor are commonly used together when promoting tourist destinations. Metaphorical language is central to tourism marketing. As Lakoff and Johnson (1980) argue in their theory of conceptual metaphor, metaphors are fundamental to how we think and perceive the world. In their own words, "Metaphor is pervasive in everyday life, not just in language but in thought and action." (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980). We encounter this type of figurative language more often than we think, in situations where we might not even be aware of its influence on us. Advertising strategies tend to commonly employ them. In tourism, metaphorical framing helps structure abstract experiences like relaxation, adventure, or discovery. A

metaphorical structure like “Nature as sanctuary: escape to untouched wilderness” would arouse idyllic images of the splendor of untouched natural landscapes. Other structures can emphasize the beauty and majesty of architecture and culture: “Culture as journey: travel back in time through ancient temples”. But what do all these language structures have in common? The purpose of metaphor is to arouse emotion in its readers. Research on the persuasive powers of metaphor has shown that metaphor in political and promotional discourse serves to create emotional alignment and facilitate identification with values or ideals. “The persuasive power of metaphor lies in its ability to frame reality in a way that aligns with the speaker's objectives.” (Charteris-Black, 2011). Tourism slogans that rely on metaphor (“Incredible India,” “I Need Spain”) transform destinations into narrative objects, making them emotionally salient and memorable. The aim of these promotional materials is to allow tourists to associate positive emotional states with the imagery that is presented to them. This relates to the field of affective linguistics. At its core, affective linguistics focuses on how emotion is expressed, interpreted, and constructed through language. Tourism promotion thrives on emotional appeal, which can be expressed creatively through valence-loaded words such as “serene,” “exotic,” “thrilling”. Research has found that emotional responses to promotional content significantly influence tourists’ intention to visit: “Emotions influence various stages of the tourist experience... at the pre-travel stage, emotions play a fundamental role in tourist motivation and destination choice.” (Bigné et al., 2005). This means that tourists often choose destinations based on how it makes them feel.

Emotional language is often more persuasive than factual or neutral descriptions, especially in leisure-oriented domains like travel. Words that signal pleasure, transformation, or spiritual fulfillment create a value proposition far stronger than simply stating the physical features of a location. Thus, the importance of affective linguistics in these materials should not be underestimated. Figurative language, including metaphors and puns, plays a crucial role in shaping tourists' perceptions. For instance, describing Thailand as a “paradise” evokes specific imagery that can attract potential visitors. Such linguistic devices help in creating vivid mental images of destinations, making them more appealing.

Another important element in global tourism is multilingual accessibility. It is not necessary for the tourist to be entirely familiar with the language of the culture he is visiting. However, foreign cultures incorporate words from their native language as a form of symbolic inclusion. Research shows that code-switching (which refers to the strategic use of multiple languages or dialects within tourism-related communication, e.g., the use of the word *Namaste*, a greeting common in India and Nepal) or the integration of familiar language elements (e.g., English greetings in Japanese brochures, or words with spiritual significance like *Namaste*) increases tourists' perception of comfort, approachability, and cosmopolitanism (Lanza & Woldemariam, 2014). Furthermore, the use of culturally coded expressions (such as references to local customs, humor, or proverbs) in promotional texts increases authenticity and fosters a sense of in-group belonging for the target audience. This aligns with cultural frame switching theory (Hong et al., 2000), which posits that consumers respond more positively to messaging that aligns with their cultural schema.

To sum up, the theoretical framework used for analyzing the linguistic strategies used in tourism promotion has four main pillars. Firstly, it focuses on studying figurative language and its ability to create vivid imagery, encouraging tourists to engage imaginatively with their intended destinations. Secondly, it emphasizes the importance of metaphor as a framing tool and key element of figurative language which makes places stand out in a crowded tourism market. Thirdly, it shows the importance of emotional language as a good predictor of consumer behavior. Last but not least, it analyzes the effect of multilingual strategies which can increase a brand’s attractiveness and sophistication among international audiences.

To further contextualize the linguistic strategies explored in this study, it is useful to consider recent corpus-based approaches to tourism discourse. Bălăuță (2022), in her comparative analysis of Romanian and French tourist guides, demonstrates how genre conventions and linguistic patterns shape the promotional framing of destinations. Her research highlights the importance of

noun distribution in identifying thematic fields and offers insight into how different cultural markets construct national identity through language. This aligns closely with our own exploration of metaphorical framing, affective language, and cultural coding in tourism campaigns. Moreover, her discussion of corpus-based and corpus-driven methodologies helps situate our approach within a wider analytical tradition that balances inductive discovery with hypothesis testing. As Bălăuță notes, “the two types of corpus approaches—corpus-based and corpus-driven—are complementary... We opt for a mixed approach” (2022, p. 323), a sentiment that reflects our use of both theory-informed and data-led insights. Her findings support the view that language in tourism is not only ideologically and emotionally loaded, but structurally bound to genre and audience, and that comparative linguistic analysis—whether of guides or slogans—can reveal both universal strategies and culturally specific nuances.

3. COMPARATIVE CASE STUDY: INDIA AND SPAIN

Some of the most interesting and successful campaigns that employed all of the aforementioned elements can be found in two wildly different cultures: India and Spain. What these two have in common, in our opinion, is the exotic and romantic aura surrounding its tourist destinations, which act as a catalyst and enhancer of figurative language and metaphor. In other words, the more unusual and exotic a destination is perceived, the more of an effect metaphor and figurative language have on the imagination of the tourist.

Launched in 2002, the “Incredible India” campaign aimed to position India as a premier travel destination by highlighting its diverse culture, heritage, and natural beauty. The campaign utilized evocative language and imagery to appeal to international tourists, presenting India as an enchanting and spiritually rich destination. The campaign employed metaphors like “incredible” to encapsulate the diversity and potential variety of destinations in India, which created a sense of awe and curiosity among potential tourists. It focused on the key strengths of the country, among which the most prominent are its spiritual tradition, cultural heritage and historical landmarks. On the other side of the world, Spain’s “I Need Spain” campaign, introduced in 2010, focused on promoting the country’s lifestyle, culture, and attractions, using the same kind metaphoric and emotional language. The campaign employed emotional and aspirational language to connect with potential travelers, marketing its destinations as romantic and idyllic escapes from conventional reality. It focused on Spanish cuisine, festivals, and leisure activities, presenting them as an ideal package for tourists seeking immersive and culturally unique experiences.

Both campaigns demonstrate how strategic linguistic choices can influence tourist perceptions and behaviors. Our analysis, based on content gathered from official campaign sources such as tourism websites, promotional brochures, and videos from the Ministry of Tourism (India) and Turespaña (Spain), focuses on four key linguistic elements. Firstly, emotive language involves the use of adjectives and verbs that elicit emotional responses from the audience. Secondly, metaphors and figurative speech function as poetic devices that reframe destinations as larger-than-life, idyllic places that promise a unique and memorable experience. Thirdly, cultural references include culturally specific traditions, words, idioms, or symbols that reinforce authenticity and local identity. Finally, framing devices are linguistic structures that help define a destination’s core identity, distinguishing it from competitors in a crowded tourism market. In the “Incredible India” campaign by the Indian Ministry of Tourism (n.d.), the use of evocative language, cultural references, and spiritual metaphors plays a central role in shaping India’s image as a destination. The main slogan of the campaign is a short but all-encompassing metaphor, centered on the word “incredible,” which, according to the Oxford English Dictionary (2025), means “difficult to believe; extraordinary” and “astonishing; amazing; so extraordinary as to seem impossible.” This choice of language captures the diversity and wonder associated with India in very few words and sets the tone for the entire campaign. We can see here how much power a well-chosen word can have, especially in a metaphoric context aimed at an English-speaking audience. This is expanded upon in the rest of the promotional material, which tends to focus a lot on tradition and spirituality. The

following information is extracted from the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India (2023). India is metaphorically framed as a “journey of the soul”. Emphasis is put on the spiritual and traditional side of Indian culture, with phrases such as “experience the divine,” “awaken your soul,” and “immerse yourself in vibrant traditions.” Moreover, the material makes extensive use of superlatives: “majestic forts,” “timeless traditions,” “breathtaking backwaters.” These carefully-chosen words resonate deeply with an English-speaking audience, shaping India as more than a simple destination, but rather a unique and transformative experience. We believe spirituality plays a key role in promoting Indian culture, especially to contemporary Western audiences which are not as rooted in spiritual traditions. The phrase “Walk in the footsteps of sages.” creates a bridge between the traveler and the cultural landscape that is about to be discovered, adding a sense of mystery and anticipation. This is further intensified by the cultural coding of the campaign, which integrated numerous Indian philosophical and religious concepts e.g., Namaste, Atithi Devo Bhava meaning “the guest is god”), as well as rich references to festivals (e.g. Holi, Diwali), cuisine and Ayurveda. The campaign also includes elements of multilingual integration, as the English-language material is peppered with Hindi and Sanskrit terms, which enrich the authenticity of the material. Overall, the “Incredible India” campaign builds spiritual and emotional appeal, especially for English-speaking audiences. It positions India as a deeply enriching, almost transformational journey, inviting tourists to feel rather than just see. Its unique spiritual and cultural elements are worded in such a way so as to entice the curiosity of potential tourists, promising a unique journey of discovery and excitement for the heart and soul. As Pillai (2012) put it, “tourism promotional texts must offer more than information; they must evoke emotional responses to succeed in today’s competitive environment.”

On the other side of the world, in Spain, a similar campaign was launched by Turespaña in 2010 and ran until 2016. It aimed to refresh Spain's international image by highlighting the country's diverse offerings beyond the traditional sun-and-beach appeal. Using the same linguistic strategies, it presented Spain's image as a destination rich in art, culture, music and gastronomy, showcasing a romanticized lifestyle that greatly appealed to young and old tourists alike. The information has been recovered from Turespaña website (2024). The slogan of this campaign was “I Need Spain”, which is a declarative performative speech act. According to García and Martínez (2019), “the campaign uses the slogan ‘I Need Spain’ to evoke a sense of personal desire and necessity” (p. 32). Moreover, it’s more than just a simple slogan because it persuades by simulating the voice of a potential tourist. The reader is prompted to identify with the speaker. Similarly to India, the brochures employ language that is centered on joy and relaxation. Expressions such as “Find your joy”, “Live more”, “Feel the rhythm of Spain” appeal to individual emotion and invoke a sense of longing and desire that any tourist can personally identify with. Prominent use of the first-person narrative (e.g., “I need the sun. I need the music. I need Spain.”) is what mainly separates it from the more spiritual promotional materials of the Indian campaign. Metaphorically, Spain is described as medicine for the soul—a fulfillment of desire or a reawakening (e.g., “Reconnect with yourself in the Spanish sun.”). Whereas the Indian campaign promoted this type of experience through emphasis on spirituality, the Spanish version focuses on music and emotion. The tourist experience is portrayed as a symphony or rhythm—“Feel the rhythm of the flamenco,” “Taste the soul of Spain.”. This metaphorical framing is enhanced by two other important elements. Firstly, the promotional materials make use of strong references to the Spanish lifestyle and culture: siestas, tapas, flamenco, football. Secondly, it splits the materials into different regions in order to promote authenticity. Each region (e.g., Andalusia, Catalonia, Galicia) is given its own linguistic tone and theme. All in all, the “I Need Spain” campaign markets the country as a destination that offers emotional rejuvenation to the tourists. The message is not just about what Spain is—but what it can give to the tourists and what it can make them feel. It makes use of emotion, familiarity, and sensory cues to construct desire. Below is a comparative analysis between India's “Incredible India” campaign and Spain's tourism promotions to better showcase the differences and similarities.

Table 1. Comparative Analysis of Advertising Campaigns

Feature	India: "Incredible India"	Spain: "I Need Spain"
Tone	Spiritual, transformative	Emotional, playful, rejuvenating
Narrative Framing	Pilgrimage, journey of the soul	Sensory immersion, self-fulfillment
Linguistic Register	Elevated, poetic, sacred terms	Casual, intimate, lifestyle-oriented
Cultural Anchoring	Strong – uses Sanskrit, Hindu concepts	Strong – local customs, cuisine, music
Use of Metaphor	High – India as a spiritual path	High – Spain as emotional therapy
Visual-Verbal Blend	Word-heavy brochures, heritage-focused visuals	Highly visual, minimalist language
Multilingual Strategy	Yes – cultural integration	Yes – user accessibility

Source: Elaborated by the author

As we can see from the above table, both campaigns expertly use language not just to describe places, but to build narratives that resonate emotionally and culturally. The narrative framing is accordingly in tune with how these nations are perceived by potential tourists (highly spiritual and exotic for India, romantic and fulfilling for Spain). The linguistic register is different and tailored to the strengths of each nation's cultures and destinations. Consequently, the tone of India's campaign is more poetic and elevated, trying to evince the spiritual legacy and strength of the Hindu culture. On the other hand, Spain's is more relaxed and casual, emphasizing music, rest and a stress-free lifestyle. In our opinion, however, the cornerstone of both promotional campaigns lies in the clever use of metaphor and the way language anchors the tourist within the cultural context of each nation. They demonstrate that successful tourism language aligns with deep human needs such as spirituality, joy, and connection. Moreover, it relies on the employment of metaphors and narratives to shape perception. It also leverages cultural familiarity or curiosity to build engagement and utilizes language that is either inclusive (through multilingual strategies) or evocative (by appealing to the emotions of potential travelers). Moreover, the campaigns deployed framing strategies that align with core human motivations. By tapping into these needs, each destination extended its value proposition beyond the physical—from just a place to a story the traveler becomes part of. This aligns with recent cognitive linguistic studies showing that narrative-based promotion activates memory and empathy, increasing the likelihood of follow-through (Thompson & Lee, 2021). Below is a short comparative analysis of this process, which makes use of metaphor to elicit the emotions related to the aforementioned core human motivations. The search for spirituality and the desire to deeply connect to something emotionally are probably ranked amongst the most powerful of motivations, and it is no coincidence that they are encountered in these campaigns.

Table 2. Advertising Campaign Key Points

Motivation	India	Spain
Transformation	Spiritual journey	Emotional reconnection
Authenticity	Ancient traditions, rituals	Regional culture, festivals
Fulfillment	"Awaken your soul"	"I need joy, I need Spain"

Source: Elaborated by the author

The strategic use of language in tourism promotion is a powerful tool that can significantly influence tourist behavior and increase customer numbers. By employing figurative language, multilingual strategies, and culturally resonant messaging, destinations can enhance their appeal and competitiveness in the global tourism market.

4. IMPLICATIONS OF THE RESEARCH

This study confirms that language plays a foundational role in shaping the way potential tourists perceive and prioritize travel destinations. In both India's "Incredible India" and Spain's "I Need Spain" campaigns, linguistic elements were not ornamental but essential to the campaigns' success. In India, tourism language leaned into spiritual and poetic registers, framing the destination

as a transformative journey. This rhetorical style appeals to tourists seeking meaning, enlightenment, or authentic cultural experiences. In contrast, Spain's campaign relied on casual intimacy and sensory delight, ideal for emotionally driven travelers seeking pleasure, leisure, or reconnection with self. The data reflects the effectiveness of both approaches, especially when combined with sustained branding and policy support. India experienced a 47.9% increase in FTAs between 2022 and 2023 (Press Information Bureau, Government of India 2024), in part due to sustained promotional investment and global recognition of its cultural diversity. Spain, in 2024, received 94 million international tourists, the highest in its history, reflecting not just post-pandemic recovery but continued emotional resonance and the relevance of the brand. (Reuters 2024, January 15).

While the 47.9% increase in India's FTAs from 2022 to 2023 cannot be attributed to a single factor, it is notable that this surge coincides with the consistent use of the 'Incredible India' brand across multiple international markets. Similarly, Spain's all-time record of 94 million tourists in 2024 reflects not only pandemic recovery but also the emotional and cultural resonance built over a decade through campaigns like 'I Need Spain' (European Travel Commission, 2024). These slogans, embedded with metaphor and identity, have contributed to sustained interest and destination loyalty.

Although the "Incredible India" and "I Need Spain" campaigns were launched over a decade prior to the recent surges in tourism activity, the long-term consistency and emotional framing of their messaging appear to have played a significant role in destination loyalty and image retention. For instance, India's 47.9% increase in FTAs from 2022 to 2023, though also shaped by broader post-pandemic dynamics, occurred within the context of sustained linguistic branding efforts, including renewed focus on wellness tourism, spiritual experiences, and culturally rich narratives. Similarly, Spain's record-breaking 2024 figures align with the evolution of its brand identity toward affective and lifestyle-centered tourism, which research has shown to be a critical differentiator in competitive global markets (Morgan, Pritchard & Pride, 2011). This suggests that quantifiable outcomes, such as increased visitation, foreign exchange earnings, and destination visibility, are not solely the result of isolated advertising bursts but are likely the cumulative effect of strategic, linguistically crafted branding sustained over time.

Spain's "I Need Spain" campaign, launched in 2010 by Turespaña, strategically reframed the country as a lifestyle destination, shifting emphasis from traditional coastal leisure to include other elements such as urban sophistication, cuisine, culture, and sport. By personalizing the message with a first-person structure ("I need..."), the campaign invites emotional identification and suggests an affective need for the Spanish experience. According to Echtner and Ritchie (2003), the concept of destination image is not limited to the physical features of a place but also includes more intangible aspects such as atmosphere, local color, and symbolic meanings. The "I Need Spain" campaign is built on a combination of these aforementioned elements. The slogan's linguistic economy, metaphorical richness, and repetition across media helped create a resonant brand identity that endured beyond its initial campaign cycle. Its emotional undertones found synergy with post-pandemic trends emphasizing joy, human connection, and travel as self-fulfillment. According to recent reports by Turespaña and the European Travel Commission, the campaign's long-tail effects contributed to Spain becoming the world's second most visited country and surpassing its own tourism record in 2024. Though branding cannot act in isolation, "I Need Spain" undeniably functioned as a symbolic anchor in a broader narrative of national charm, consistency, and desirability. When strategically deployed, language becomes a competitive advantage, enabling tourism boards to differentiate their brand in a crowded market. Below is a short analysis that offers actionable insights for policymakers and tourism marketers, mirroring the strategies used in the Spanish and Indian campaigns discussed in the paper.

Table 3. Author's Recommendations

Recommendation	Rationale
Use emotionally resonant language	Builds stronger affective connections
Employ metaphor and narrative	Enhances memorability and distinctiveness
Localize campaign language	Increases trust and accessibility
Embed cultural signifiers	Boosts authenticity and uniqueness
Conduct A/B testing of slogans	Measures emotional impact before scaling

Source: Elaborated by the author

It is important to note that the main limitation of this approach lies in the inherent difficulty of accurately quantifying the isolated impact of tourism campaigns over extended periods. The tourism sector is highly sensitive to a range of external variables, including economic conditions, shifting consumer preferences, global media narratives, and unforeseen disruptions such as the COVID-19 pandemic. These factors can significantly distort longitudinal data and complicate attempts to attribute changes in tourist behavior or arrival numbers solely to promotional strategies. While causality cannot be asserted with absolute certainty, the consistent correlation observed between campaign longevity, emotional-linguistic framing, and measurable increases in tourism engagement presents a strong case for viewing language as a strategic asset in destination branding, and opens avenues to similar research in the future. The evidence suggests that when sustained over time and adapted to evolving tourist motivations, linguistically rich campaigns can exert a meaningful and lasting influence on a nation's tourism appeal. This reinforces the broader argument that language should not be viewed as a secondary concern. It needs to be used deliberately and strategically, to become a central pillar in the design and evaluation of tourism policy and promotional practice.

5. CONCLUSIONS

Although it is not possible to claim that the campaigns alone caused such results, the consistent correlation between persistent linguistic strategies and tourism growth patterns observed over the past two decades supports the argument that these campaigns have measurable and enduring long-term effects. The sharp post-2020 recovery in both India and Spain further underscores the importance of renewed messaging that remains aligned with evolving tourist values. Among them, the most important for the modern tourist are those centered on emotional appeal, cultural identity, and immersive experiential needs. This sustained alignment between language and traveler motivation reinforces the idea that strategic communication is not merely decorative but foundational to destination branding success.

This research reinforces the hypothesis that language plays a transformative role in tourism marketing, directly impacting tourist engagement, destination desirability, and economic outcomes. Through a comparative analysis of India's and Spain's flagship campaigns, the study has shown that emotionally charged, culturally embedded, and metaphorically rich language can create compelling destination narratives that resonate with global travelers and increase the number of tourists over long periods of time. India's "Incredible India" campaign employed elevated, spiritual language that aligned with its rich heritage and philosophical appeal, while Spain's "I Need Spain" leaned into sensory pleasure and lifestyle freedom, engaging tourists through direct emotional address and intimacy. In both cases, the campaigns were supported by tourism growth data that reflected their success in enhancing the countries' visibility, brand appeal, and international tourist arrivals. Moreover, the study illustrates how multilingual accessibility and culturally sensitive linguistic choices not only make content more inclusive but serve as powerful signifiers of openness and authenticity—two values deeply valued by modern travelers. As the global tourism sector continues to recover and evolve post-pandemic, the findings of this study advocate for a more deliberate, interdisciplinary integration of linguistics into tourism strategy, emphasizing that metaphor and poetic language can play a significant role in promoting destinations.

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